

How To Pray As A Christian

INTRODUCTION: *How To Pray As A Christian* is a Discipleship Bible study that covers not only how to pray and express worship to God, but why and when. The bible study also dispels some rather silly false teachings about prayer and worship.

Online Christian Discipleship School LifeCycle Series B1

Welcome to the LifeCycles Discipleship series Growing. Spiritual growth is often difficult and painful, but offers great rewards. In this session, we will cover 4 lessons 1. How to Pray As A Christian, 2. How To Study The Bible, 3. Meaning Of Christian Stewardship, 4. What About Church Attendance? This is where the Christian "seedlings" begin to be separated between those who will grow and those who will wither and die. Many think they can avoid the work of growth, because it's a natural process, but...Growth is natural, but not automatic.

Spiritual growth requires T _____ (I Ti 4:7), T _____ (He 5:14) and more T _____ (I Co 9:25).

What is Spiritual maturity? _____ (Gen 1:26, I Jn 4:17, Ro 8:29, II Co 3:18, Ep 4:13)

Many people get to a point where they're satisfied with their Spiritual development and stop working on it. The training is over when we're like Jesus all the time.

Until I'm like Jesus, I have to keep cultivating the four elements of growth (Prayer, Bible, Fellowship, Stewardship) into my life.

Introduction: This week's lesson is on the Sunshine of prayer. We should really call it the Sonshine of prayer because prayer lets the Son of God shine into our lives. There is far more to prayer than telling God what we want. The famous philosopher A. Nonimous once said, "Prayer is when you talk to God. When God talks to you, it's insanity."

What makes this statement funny is how true it is to many people. Yet, it points to a popular idea that prayer is merely speaking into the wind or mental programming of some kind, that there is no one there who might have something to say to us. But there is Someone and He wants to talk. He also wants us to express our love for Him, our thankfulness, our willingness to be led by Him, our need for His forgiveness, our need for His protection against the devil, our recognition of His relationship with us and our belief in Him. We're going to cover worship as a sub-topic of prayer. Actually, everything we do that involves the Lord is worship, from fellowship, to giving, to Bible study, etc. For the purpose of this study, we'll use a more narrow definition, involving acts of worship, like singing, kneeling, raising hands, etc. The Word says God inhabits our praise, so acts of worship really let the Son shine in our lives. Let's get started!

1. What is prayer? Talking with God...and listening.

2. Why should I pray? _____ said to. Mt 5:44, Mt 26:41, Lk 6:28/ Jesus _____. Mk 6:46, Mk 14:32/ _____ prayed. Ac 10:9/ They ____ prayed. Ac 1:14/ Paul said to _____. Ro 15:31/ _____ said to. Ja 5:13/ Peter, too. I Pe 4:7/ John, too. I Jn 5:16/ Jude, too. Jude 1:20

At some point we get the clue that prayer is important. Everybody did it! Everybody said to do it!

3. When should I pray? Eph 6:18 __ __ _____ It's very important to have a regular, private, uninterrupted prayer time. The Bible shows Jesus doing this. Daniel did it so regularly that even his enemies knew where and when he was privately praying 3 times a day.

4. How should I pray? Be real-Mt 6:5, Be alone-Mt 6:6, Be simple-Mt 6:7, Be thankful-Ph 4:6

a. The Lord's Prayer Mt 6:9-13. This prayer was not to be repeated, but to be used as a model. Jesus said, "This, then, is ____ you should pray:

- 1) Acknowledge relationship. Vs 9 Our _____ in heaven.
- 2) Offer worship. Vs 9 _____ be your name. More on this later.
- 3) Submit to Him. Vs 10 Your _____ be done.
- 4) Make requests. Vs 11 _____ us this day.
- 5) Ask for forgiveness. Vs 12 _____ us our debts. (good time to ask Him to reveal our sin to us.)
- 6) Forgive others. Vs 12 as we _____ our debtors. (good time to ask Him who we haven't forgiven.
- 7) Ask for Spiritual protection. Vs 13 Deliver us from the _____ one.

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How To Pray As A Christian-2

INTRODUCTION: We finish our prayer study with intercession, praying in the spirit, prayer of faith and worship practices. The Discipleship Bible study covers how, why and when to pray and express worship to God and dispels some rather silly false teachings about prayer and worship.

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b. Pray for others, or intercession: Ja 5:16-"...pray ___ each other..." / He 13:19 "..._____ so that I may be restored..." / II Th 3:2 "And pray that ___ may be delivered" / Ep 6:18 "...keep on praying for ___ the saints."

c. Pray in the Spirit: Eph 6:18 "And pray in the _____ on ___ occasions..." / Ro 8:26-27 "...We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the _____ himself intercedes with _____ that words cannot express." / I Co 14:14-15 "I will pray with my s_____...I will sing with my s_____/ Jd 1:20 "_____ in the Holy Spirit.

Since Paul says prayer in the Spirit is like "groans" and our "mind is unfruitful" no one can say what prayer in the Spirit is. If someone offers to show you how to do it-ignore them! If someone tells you it isn't done any more-ignore them. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and _____" He 13:8. The Bible is clear that every Christian can pray in the Spirit. In fact, Paul says for us to do it "at all times". How can we do it at all times and not know what it is? This is one of the great mysteries in God's Word. I believe we are to go through life in a continuous attitude of prayer. Sometimes the prayer is out loud, sometimes quiet, sometimes in words that are understood, sometimes not, but always open to God. Living in Christ means living in mystery.

If God is small enough for us to understand, He isn't big enough to help us.

d. Pray in faith: How faith works in prayer is a great paradox in our understanding of God's Word. Rather than give you my interpretation, I want you to wrestle with the seeming contradictions and arrive at your own conclusion. You can use as many Scriptures as you want. I'm going to list only three which I feel are representative:

Jn 15:7-10 "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love."

I Pe 3:7 "Husbands...be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with

respect...so that nothing will hinder your prayers."

Mt 21:22 "If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."

Write one sentence that blends the three conditions above into one statement about how faith works in prayer:_____

The Lord, like any loving Father, will not give you anything that would harm you, another, or His perfect will. He answers every prayer. His answer is either "yes" or "I have something better for you." (See Mt 7:7-11)

5. Avoid these shams from the flim-flam-man:

a. The 'name-it-claim-it' false teaching that says the strength of your faith can force God to do your will. Jesus taught us to pray "thy will be done." That's the "prayer of faith" because it's faith in God's ability to know better than us, what to do. I've watched two families lose a young loved one to cancer while some whacked out "Christian" comforted them with statements like, "If he had enough faith he could get up and walk out of here." Faith says God knows best even when we don't understand and don't know how to pray.

Faith isn't measured by God doing what we ask, but by us doing what He asks. (See Hebrews 11)

b. The false teaching that says if you quote certain phrases, especially Scripture, in your prayer it will force God to do what you ask. God isn't a vending machine! He will honor all His promises to the ones he made them to. Guess Who's in charge of deciding how and to whom those promises apply. Look! Any teaching that says God must do what we ask is out of balance, not taking into account the whole counsel of God's Word on the subject of answered prayer. There were times when Jesus "couldn't" do miracles (Lk 5:17, Mk 6:5). Did He forget the magic words?

c. The false teaching that says using certain language in your prayer can make or break spiritual "curses". Prayer isn't witchcraft unless you're praying to the wrong god.

6. Expressions of Worship: I Co 14:25 "..._____ down..."/ Ps 95:6 "Come let us _____ in worship, let us _____ before the Lord our maker."/ Lk 2:20 "..._____ and _____ God..."/ Ps 47:1 "_____ your hands, all you nations; _____ to God with _____ of Joy."/ Ro 15:11 "_____ the Lord..._____ praises to Him..."/ II Sa 6:14 "David... _____ before the Lord with all his might."/ Ro 12:1 "...offer your _____ as living sacrifices...this is your Spiritual act of _____."/ Lk 2:37 "_____ night and day, _____ and _____."/ He 12:28 "...let us be _____, and so worship God with _____ and _____."/ Ps 33:3 "_____ to him a _____ song; _____ skillfully..." Ps 63:4 "...I will _____ up my hands."

This is just a partial list of Biblically acceptable forms of worship to God. Anything that's done to express love to God is worship.