

# Scriptural Prayer

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## **Introduction**

God speaks to us through His word; Christians communicate with Him through prayer. In this lesson, let us consider several important aspects of scriptural prayer.

## **Prayer Involves Faith**

Meaningful prayer comes from a heart that places its trust in God. A confident prayer life is built on faith in God's redemptive plan and pattern (Heb. 11:1, 6; cf. James 1:5-8; 5:14-16).

## **Prayer Involves Worship**

Prayer is an expression of adoration and praise. Before heaven's throne, angels hide their faces and cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 6:1-3). In like manner, disciples should manifest a deep reverence for God (Ps. 8:1-9; 29:1-2; 95:1-6).

## **Prayer Involves Confession**

Proper realization of God's holiness demands an acknowledgement of our unworthiness (Isa. 6:5). While sin harms self and others, ultimately it is an offence against God (Ps. 51:4). Therefore, let us humbly confess our transgressions (1 John 1:9), and make necessary corrections (Ezra 10:1-4).

## **Prayer Involves Thanksgiving**

Sinners have no right to spiritual blessings, nor any claim upon divine mercy. Nevertheless, God has provided a way of escape from the curse of sin. If we render obedience to the gospel, He will graciously accept us as His own. Ingratitude is characteristic of the ungodly (Rom. 1:21); believers, in contrast, live thankfully (Eph. 5:18-20; Col. 3:17; 1 Thess. 5:16-18).

## **Prayer Involves Dedicated Action**

Prayer is no substitute for good works. Christ wept over Jerusalem in compassionate prayer, and afterwards entered the city to give His life a ransom for many. We arise from bended knee, and bend our backs in strenuous effort. Authentic prayer leads to dedicated action (Exod. 14:13-18; Josh. 7:6-15; Heb. 5:8-9; James 1:25).

## **Prayer Involves Proper Request**

God's holy and wise purpose does not permit Him to grant every petition just as it is asked. Several hindrances to answered prayer are mentioned in the Bible: iniquity and sin (Isa. 59:1-2; 1:15), disobedience and rebellion (Jer. 14:10-12; 1 John 5:16-17), self-promotion and self-righteousness (Matt. 6:5-6; Luke 18:11-14), unbelief (Heb. 11:6; James 1:5-8), unforgiveness (Mark 11:25-26), wickedness (Ps. 66:16-20; Prov. 28:9), and worldliness (James 4:1-4).

More positively, God has promised to answer our requests when we believe that we will receive what we ask (Mark 11:22-24), when we ask in Christ's name (John 14:13-15), when we abide in Christ and His words (John 15:5-7), when we obey the Lord's commandments (1 John 3:21-22), and when we ask according to His will (1 John 5:14-15).

## **Conclusion**

Prayer is a request to a personal God who hears and answers in the way that He deems best. Trusting in God and rendering obedience to His word, let us avail ourselves of the awesome power of prayer (James 5:16; Phil. 4:6-8; 1 Pet. 5:6-7).