

Questions / Answers

1. Why should we pray humbly and respectfully?
Because God is the great Creator of the universe.
2. What does the Lord's Prayer teach us to include in our prayers?
Praise God, pray for the Kingdom to come, for our basic needs, for forgiveness, for guidance to please God, praise and thanks.
3. What is a mediator?
Someone who takes a message from one person to another.
4. Why do we pray through Jesus Christ?
The death of Jesus opened the way to God. He takes our prayers to God.
5. Does it matter how and where we pray?
No God cares about what we say in our prayers.
6. Does God always answer our prayers?
God answers our prayers according to what is best for our eternal good.
7. Why should we pray 'if it is Your will'?
We should want to be in the Kingdom so much that we accept that God knows what is best for us.
8. How did God answer Jesus' prayer asking not to suffer on the cross?
God did not take away the suffering, but helped Jesus to endure it.
9. What are the three answers God may make to our prayers?
Yes. No. Wait.
10. If God does not seem to answer, how might we need to pray in a different way?
Pray if it is God's will, pray regularly, ask for forgiveness, be patient, think whether God has answered in a different way, do our part.

Memory verses

Psalm 37:4 Ecclesiastes 5:2 Romans 8:28 Hebrews 10:19—22

Discussion

What should we pray for? Are there things we should not pray for? How should prayer change the way we live?

Writing

Read Luke 6:28; Colossians 4:3; James 5:16—18; Job 42:8. What do these verses teach us about who we should pray for. Make a list of people you will pray for next week.

CBM Senior Lessons

Lesson 34 Prayer



READING Ecclesiastes 5:2; Hebrews 10:19—22 & 11:6; John 15:7; Psalm 66:18; Matthew 6:9 -13 & 7:7 & 11; Romans 8:28; Mark 11:25-26; Proverbs 15:29;

LESSON

The word for prayer in the New Testament means to take our desires to someone. When we pray to God we should take all the desires of our heart to Him. Our desire should include a deep awareness of our sins and our need for God's forgiveness. Our great desire should also be for God's Kingdom.

Prayer is one of the greatest blessings we have. God is the great Creator of the universe, but He will listen whenever we speak to Him. We can speak to God at any time, in any place, but we must never forget that we are talking to the great Creator. We are only one person out of all His creation. We must always pray humbly and with respect. Solomon said, "Be not quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few." (Ecclesiastes 5:2).

Expressing our thoughts and feelings to God in prayer is part of our relationship with God. God really wants to hear from us, so prayer needs to be a regular and important part of our life. Conversation is an important part of any relationship and requires effort. But we know that God will always listen to our prayers.

When we pray to God we must believe that He hears us and that He will answer our prayers. "Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." (Hebrews 11:6).

Jesus prayed to his Father for many hours. Sometimes he prayed all night. Jesus taught his disciples a model prayer - the Lord's prayer. This prayer shows us all the important things we should pray for. It starts by praising God. Praise for God should always be in our hearts. It asks for God's Kingdom to come very soon. This should be our greatest desire. It asks for our basic needs. It prays for God's forgiveness—but only as we forgive others. It prays for guidance on our journey to the Kingdom. It ends by giving praise and glory to God.

In the Old Testament people had to sacrifice an animal to have their sins forgiven. People had to come to God through the priests. When Jesus gave his perfect life and died, the veil of the Temple was torn in two. This showed that the way to God had been opened. Jesus opened the way into the presence of God for us. (Hebrews 10:19–22). It is through the death of Jesus that our sins can be forgiven. Jesus is our Mediator. A mediator is someone who takes a message from one person to another. God is too holy and too righteous for us to approach Him directly. Jesus takes our prayers to God and pleads for us. Our prayers need to be made through Jesus. He will take them to God for us.

How and where should we pray? Elijah shut the door and prayed, Peter prayed on the roof, Nehemiah prayed silently before the king, Daniel prayed facing Jerusalem, Cornelius prayed at the ninth hour, Elijah put his head between his knees, David sat before the Lord, Solomon spread out his hands toward heaven. These Bible examples show us that we can pray to God anywhere, at any time and for anything. God cares about what we have to say, not about where or when we say it. If we pray with the right attitude God will always hear us.

Prayer does not need to take a lot of time. But some quiet time with God each day is very necessary for a good relationship with Him. We need some time on our own to concentrate on praying to God. We need to think carefully about what we want to pray about each day. It is not good to just say the same things every day without really thinking about our prayers. We need to think carefully about our prayer before we start praying. We could make a list of people who need our prayers. We should always be truthful in our prayers. We should not be selfish, just asking things for ourselves. When we ask for God's help to overcome our sins, we must remember to try not to sin during the day. We must be ready to listen and wait for God's answer to our prayers.

What should we pray for? Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. If you ... know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!" (Matthew 7:7 & 11) and, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you." (John 15:7). God is our Father and cares about us just as a father cares about his child.

The Bible gives us some examples of what people prayed for: Paul prayed for people to grow spiritually, Daniel thanked God three times a day, Christians prayed for Peter when he was in prison, Jesus prayed that God would protect his disciples, Paul asked for his 'thorn in the flesh' (probably an illness or poor eye sight) to be taken away, Hannah asked for a son.

God will not just give us everything we ask for. If we pray with the right attitude then God will always listen to our prayers. He will answer them in the way that is best for us. God does not promise that He will take away all the problems in our life or give us everything we want. Paul tells us, "We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28). God wants us to be in His Kingdom and our salvation is the **good** thing He has promised to those who are faithful. Whatever happens to us now, God is working for good in our lives. God answers our prayers in ways which help us to prepare for His coming Kingdom.

Sometimes our parents do not give us what we want. Our parents know what is best for us. It is not always good for us to have what we want. We may feel cross with our parents, but when we are older we understand that they did know best. How much more does God know what is best for us! We should always pray, 'If it is Your will.' We should want to be in the Kingdom so much that we accept that God knows what is best for us.

In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus prayed that he might not have to suffer death on the cross. If that prayer had been answered then there would have been no hope of salvation for us. But Jesus prayed, "Your will be done." God did hear and answer the prayer of Jesus. God did not take away the suffering on the cross, but He helped Jesus to have the strength to endure it.

God always hears our prayers. Sometimes the answer is Yes, sometimes it is No and sometimes it is Wait. If God does not seem to be answering our prayers we must not become disheartened. Perhaps we need to pray in a different way. Perhaps what we are praying for is not according to His will. Perhaps we are not praying regularly about it. Perhaps we are not asking forgiveness for a sin and this may be getting in the way of our prayers. (Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 15:29; Mark 11:25–26). Perhaps we are not being patient and we need to wait for God to answer. Perhaps God is giving us a different answer to the one we expected. Perhaps we need to do our part. For example, if a student prays for good exam results and then does not bother to study, God will not answer that prayer.

Prayer is an extremely important part of our life. If our attitude is right, God will always listen to us. God will give us what is best for our eternal good to help us to come to His Kingdom. We should read God's word to learn about Him and His purpose. We should keep our prayers simple and give praise and thanks to God. We should pray for forgiveness as well as asking God for what we need in our life now. May our prayers bring us into a close relationship with God as we walk to His Kingdom.