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Prayer - Talking to God ALL the Time



Part 9 (030302AM)

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One of the first lessons we give to our infant children is how to talk. We look at them as they first learn to follow us with their eyes and say "momma...daddy" and so on. We teach them how to talk, and they learn by imitation and repetition.

One of the first lessons we need to learn from our Heavenly Father is His, "how to talk to Me" lesson. These lessons are what the Bible teaches on prayer. If you have never done so, you would be enriched beyond measure to go from cover to cover in this book and personally find out all that your Father wants you to know about prayer.

Many years ago someone challenged me, just like I am challenging you. They said to me, "Before you buy or read another book or article on prayer, take as long as it takes to listen to **EVERYTHING** the One you are **PRAYING TO** has to say about how, when, where, and why **YOU SHOULD PRAY TO HIM!**" That makes sense, doesn't it? So I took a Bible and a blue highlighter and read every word of the Bible.

GENERAL BIBLE STATISTICS

	DATA
God has Authored How many Books?	1
That Book has how many parts?	66
How many Old Testament Books?	39
How many New Testament Books?	27
How many chapters in God's Word?	1,189
• How many Old Testament chapters?	929
How many New Testament chapters?	260
How many verses are in the Bible?	31,102
• How many Old Testament verses?	23,145
• How many New Testament verses?	7,957
How many words are in the Bible?	790,871
How many words are in the Old Testament?	610,303
How many words are in the New Testament?	180,568
How many letters are in the English Bible?	3,227,553
• How many letters are in the English Old Testament?	2,487,469
• How many letters are in the English New Testament?	740,084

So, after reading each of the 31,102 verses of God's Word armed with my blue highlighter, I found there are many different references to this vital topic.

- Prayer in the Word of God is mentioned about 350 times.
- The word "pray" and "prayer" however are actually translations of ten different Hebrew words and seven different Greek words. So we might say that God offers us an amazing multitude of personalized options in our approach to Him. Each of these 17 words portrays attitudes and approaches to communing with our Great Almighty King!

An intimate look at these words gives us the very heart of praying as demonstrated in the Old and New Testaments. To Practice Biblical Praying, it is vital to grasp the richness of these key "prayer words". Through a personal prayer study, you will feel the depth of the heart's desire for God, reflected in these special words God chose in the inspiration of His Word to us.

Part: 24	Journey of Life Following the Divine Pathway of God
Part: 23	The Discipline of Meditation
Part: 22	EZRA: The Prayers of a Word Filled Life
Part: 21	EZRA: Maintaining a Word Filled Life
Part: 20	An Old Testament Giant of Meditation – Ezra and the 119th Psalm
Part: 19	Finding God in the Wilderness Times of Life
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Part: 17	The Discipline of Simplicity
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Part: 15	Devotions - Slipping Away to Spend Time Alone With God
Part: 14	Prayer - Roadblocks to Answered Prayers
Part: 13	Prayer - What Stops My Prayers?
Part: 12	Prayer - When Prayers Don't Get Through
Part: 11	Prayer - With Jesus in the School of Prayer
Part: 10	Praying Like Jesus
Part: 9	Prayer - Talking to God ALL the Time
Part: 8	What Happens in Heaven as We Give?
Part: 7	Giving that Lasts FOREVER
Part: 6	Are You Laying Up Treasures in HEAVEN?
Part: 5	The Stewardship of Giving
Part: 4	The Discipline of the Stewardship of Living
Part: 3	The Discipline of the Stewardship of Our Life
Part: 2	The Discipline of Spirit Filled Living
Part: 1	The Discipline of Scripture Reading

Prayer is often seen as being like incense in the Scriptures. Note the prayers of the saints in [Revelation 5:8](#). The famed Old Testament scholar Wilson notes this word means, "To entreat, to make earnest and fervent prayer, which ascends like incense before God. Others think the primary meaning is power and abundance, as well as sweet odor."

Now that we are in this New Year, do your plans and priorities for 2003 mirror what the Lord desires? His desires are clearly laid out in His Word.

Our key passage for this series is I Timothy 4.7. Paul says we are to discipline our selves towards godliness. What encourages a godly life? That is our current study which I call ***The Disciplines of a Godly Life***.

First, we examined ***The Discipline of Scripture***. Time alone with God in His Word, the Scriptures, is the great necessity of our spiritual lives. We need to be alone with God daily! We need to find times to get away alone. [Psalm 16:11](#) You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. The Lord God of the Universe wants to arrange your life, and accompany you on your trip through life, and authorize everything needed from now on. Wow! That is the best life there is.

Second, we examined ***The Discipline of Spirit Filled Living***. Jesus explained the Holy Spirit in our lives by using the image of a strong river of water flowing out of us. John 7.37-38. [John 7:37-39](#) On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and **drink (present active imperative)**. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Rivers of water is the way Jesus describes the normal life of believers, His children.

Third, we examined ***The Discipline of Stewardship***. Last time we saw the stewardship of our lives, the stewardship of living. A life given back to God as an offering is what stewardship is all about. Stewardship is not about money, it is about life itself. Time and life are far greater treasures than money and possessions. God wants you first and foremost! **A GODLY STEWARD KNOWS THAT GOD OWNS HIM AND EVERYTHING HE HAS.** [Romans 12:1-2](#) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. [2 Corinthians 5:15](#) and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

Now we are going to examine ***The Discipline of Supplication***. All of us need to exercise ourselves in ceaseless prayer. As Jesus told His disciples in Mark 9, there is territory we will never enter for Him without learning the secret of Supplication which is fasting (denying ourselves) and praying (seeking God's intervention and help in specific events and people). So, we need to discipline ourselves for the purpose of prayer!

1. **Exercise the Discipline of Supplication to** Pray all the time.
2. **Exercise the Discipline of Supplication to** Pray like the Saints of God's Word.
3. **Exercise the Discipline of Supplication to** Pray like Jesus taught us.
4. **Exercise the Discipline of Supplication to** Pray with your family.
5. **Exercise the Discipline of Supplication to** Pray All the Time.

I read an article in a missions newsletter once called NON-STOP PRAYER that got me started on cultivating some fresh habits of prayer. In [1 Thessalonians 5:17](#) Paul says pray without ceasing. So if the Word of God says, "Pray without ceasing," we can. Right? If you'll just start practicing this concept, you will be taking vital steps toward obeying this teaching.

Here are just a few simple habits that many of us have learned to practice. These simple methods can revolutionize the prayer life of those who find extended prayer difficult:

- **READING PRAYER:** Don't simply read through letters, but read and pray. After each paragraph quickly pray about what you just read.
- **WATCHING PRAYER:** When you watch something take place live, or on TV, immediately pray about what you are seeing. Especially do this after news programs.
- **TALKING PRAYER:** When you talk on the telephone, pray for the person you're talking with. If it is a believer, you can pray together on the phone. This will likely lead you to a double ministry of prayer and encouragement!
- **LISTENING PRAYER:** As you hear things in a meeting, on the radio, or almost anywhere, quickly lift to God in prayer what you are hearing.
- **WRITING PRAYER:** As you shoot off emails – send them with a touch of God requested by prayer. When you write a letter or card (which is a great ministry in itself), pray about what you are writing and, of course, to whom you are writing.

Prayer is the **ONLY KEY** to unlock God's Provisions for us. [Matthew 7:7-11](#) "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

WE MUST PRAY OR WE BECOME DISOBEDIENT. We can only avoid sin, disobedience, and temptation by prayer.

[1 Samuel 12:23](#) Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way.

[2 Chronicles 7:14](#) if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

[Matthew 9:38](#) Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

[Matthew 26:41](#) Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Ephesians 6:18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

WE MUST PRAY OR WE BECOME WEAK. We can only experience the power God has for us as we wait upon Him, seek the fullness of His Spirit, and yield to His work through us moment by moment.

Mark 9:29 So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."

Psalm 119:28 My soul melts from heaviness; Strengthen me according to Your word.

WE MUST PRAY OR WE BECOME BLIND. We can only understand and comprehend the ways of the Lord in His Word through prayer for illumination, guidance, and obedience.

Luke 24:45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

Psalm 119:18 Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law.

WE MUST PRAY OR WE BECOME FOOLISH . We can only have wisdom when we ask of God who loves to give His wisdom and direction.

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

Joshua 9:14 Then the men of Israel took some of their provisions; but they did not ask counsel of the Lord. (cf. **Joshua 9:3-27**).

WE MUST PRAY OR WE BECOME SPIRITUALLY POOR.

We can only lay up treasures in Heaven by prayerful life on Earth.

We can only fill our bowls of worship around God's Throne by prayerful living.

We can only stay in touch with God by prayer.

We can only stay in love with Jesus by prayer.

We can only stay in step with the Spirit by prayer.

We must discipline ourselves to prayer or we are getting poorer and poorer. Prayerlessness leads to poverty in all that REALLY matters!

James 4:2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.

We have no idea how much He wants to do in and through us UNTIL WE ASK! What are you and I wasting by not asking?

God wants to do something we can't plan, that we can't program, that we can't calculate – so that when He does it – HE GETS ALL THE CREDIT!

- **Matthew 21:22** And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."
- **Mark 11:22-26** So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. 23 For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. 24 Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. 25 "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. 26 But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."
- **John 14:13** And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.
- **John 16:23** "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.
- **Colossians 3:17** And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.
- **1 John 3:22** And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.
- **1 John 5:15** And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

Exercise Daily the Discipline of Prayer by following these simple habits.

- **MAKE THE TIME TO PRAY.** Take time! You cannot "find time". Prioritize the time God gives you and you will be more effective for the things eternally important. **Matthew 6:33** But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.
- **CHOOSE A PLACE TO PRAY.** Set a specific place to pray, as Jesus had a "solitary place" (**Mk. 1:35**) and spoke of entering into an inner room or closet (**Mt. 6:6**).
- **PRAY AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE.** Pray many times during the day, and at night (**Ps. 55:17; 1 Thess. 5:17-18**).

PRAY SPECIFICALLY FOR INDIVIDUALS. See persons as prayer signals (**Neh. 1:11; 2:4; etc.; Lk. 22:31, 32**).

PRAY SYSTEMATICALLY. Paul called it the "care of the churches" (**II Corinthians 11:28**). Be organized. Use means, but depend on the Lord, not on the means.

- A prayer list or prayer book can help!
- Take advantage of time to pray during showers, shaving, or putting on cosmetics, mowing the lawn, driving, walks, waiting in a dentist's office, changing oil in a car, calisthenics, and other things that allow the mind freedom to do this.
- Start a family system of Prayer each day emphasizing a different element of prayer each day of the week.

PRAY WITH PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE DAY. Seek out some meaningful opportunity to pray with others (**Mt. 18:19**; note that most of the passages on prayer in Acts are group prayer situations, as **Acts 13:1-2**).

- Pray with your marriage partner to start the day.
- Pray with your children to start their day.
- Pray in the car before you drive away.
- Pray at the airport when departing and at arrival.
- Pray with THANKSGIVING when you hear good news and with INTERCESSION when you hear bad news.
- Pray on the phone when people call and ask for help, or share their burden.
- Close phone calls to loved ones with a prayer.
- Pray at meals to show thanksgiving.

Secondly, Exercise the Discipline of Supplication to Pray like the Saints of God's Word

Twenty Words On Prayer—

"Shaal": Request Of Prayer - 331;
 "Ana" And "Na": Entreaty Of Prayer - 332;
 "Chanan": Attitude Of Prayer - 332;
 "Athar": Fragrance Of Prayer - 333;
 "Paga": Insistence Of Prayer - 334;
 "Palal": Habit Of Prayer - 335;
 "Tsela": Humility Of Prayer - 336;
 "Siach": Meditation Of Prayer - 337;
 "Tephillah": Individualism Of Prayer - 337;
 "Chalah": Pleading Of Prayer - 339;
 "Lachash": Whisper Of Prayer - 340;
 "Beah": Fervency Of Prayer - 340;
 "Deesis": Supplication Of Prayer - 341;
 "Deomai": Matter Of Prayer - 343;
 "Enteuxis": Intercession Of Prayer - 343;
 "Erotao": Benefit Of Prayer - 343;
 "Euche": Inness Of Prayer - 344;
 "Proseuche" And "Proseuchomai": Fire Of Prayer - 344;
 "Parakaleo": Help Of Prayer - 345;
 Waiting On The Lord And What It Means – 347

A LIFE LONG HABIT OF PRAYER

Our second word we will study is the word, PAHLAL. Young of the analytical Concordance defines this word as, "To judge self, to pray habitually. This type of prayer life describes a whole host of dear Old Testament saints, among them Hannah, Daniel, Samuel, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Abraham, Ezra, Nehemiah, Job and Jonah. All of them had two special traits in common: They judged themselves and they prayed habitually. In other words, their lives were open before God, and He could cleanse them and commune with them at all times. This quality is vital in making us ever able to be in touch with our God.

Let's study this special prayer portrait in some biographies of Old Testament Prayer Saints:

- **HANNAH** prayed in [I Samuel 1:10](#), 12, 26-27; 2:1. She was in a time of bitterness that drove her to prayer.
- **SOLOMON** prayed as he dedicated the Temple in [I Kings 8:28](#), 30, 33, 42, 44, 48. In these prayers he refers to conscious needs of his people that were God's people and how they pleaded for help. He directed prayer toward the great name of God.
- **HEZEKIAH** prayed in [II Chronicles 30:18-20](#). There was sin in the nation that he dealt with as king and then prayed and God answered.
- **NEHEMIAH** prayed in [1:4,6](#) and [2:1](#) after the report about the condition of Jerusalem came to him. It was always a part of his daily life to pray.
- **JOB** prayed in [42:10](#) for his friends and God heard him. Note how he first came to a proper view of himself before he interceded for others.
- **DANIEL** prayed one of the great prayers of the Bible in [9:4-20](#). He first identified with the sin problems of the people as an intercessor.

Thirdly, Exercise the Discipline of Supplication to Pray Like Jesus Taught Us by His Life and Words

When we think of the apostles, those early leaders of our church, we think of an example of godly living to follow. What did they commend to us as a way of spiritual priority? (Paul, [1 Tim. 2:1](#), 4:6)

Why would the priority of these who had lived and walked with Jesus Christ be prayer and the word? Of course, it was because that was the Master's life priorities. He was ever in communion with God (prayer) and seeking God's will (the word). So if we seek to be like them following the Master, let us start with a priority on prayer. ([Heb. 10:7](#) Prayer - talking to God and the Word - doing God's will)

Luke records nine occasions when Jesus prayed:

- at His baptism ([Luke 3:21](#)); CONSECRATION FOR MINISTRY
- after a day of miracles ([Luke 5:15-16](#)); DAILY STRENGTH
- before choosing His disciples ([Luke 6:12](#)); SPECIFIC GUIDANCE
- before the first prediction of His death ([Luke 9:18](#)); PERSONAL ENCOURAGEMENT
- on the Mount of Transfiguration ([Luke 9:29](#)); AWESOME WORSHIP
- before teaching the disciples to pray ([Luke 11:1](#)); WISDOM IN MINISTRY
- when the seventy returned with their report ([Luke 10:21](#)); INSIGHT FOR MINISTRY
- in the garden of Gethsemane ([Luke 22:39-46](#)); PERSONAL VICTORY
- on the cross ([Luke 23:34](#), 46). STEADFAST OBEDIENCE

OUTLINE:

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S PROTECTION while facing the great crises of His life.

He was found seeking God during:

- His baptism (Lk. 3:21-22)
- Choosing the twelve (Lk. 6:12-13)
- Preparing for the cross (Lk. 9:18, 21-22)
- His transfiguration (Lk. 9:28-36)

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S PREPARATION for the great events and challenges of His ministry:

- Feeding the 4,000 (Matt. 15:36)
- Feeding of the 5,000 (Jn. 6:11)
- Walking on the water (Matt. 14:23-33)
- Healing the insane boy (Mk. 9:14-29)

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S HELP IN MAINTAINING a proper focus in success. He was strengthened by prayer:

- After feeding 5,000 (Matt. 14:23)
- After raising Lazarus (John 11:41)

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S DIRECTION for facing the stresses of life. He was found in prayer when facing:

- Multitudes (Lk. 5:15-16)
- Sick folks (Mk. 1:35 [wilderness, v. 33 - whole city at door,])
- Ministry needs (Lk. 4:42)
- Urgent situations (Jn. 6:15) [human efforts and ambitions vs. God within]

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S COMFORT. His Emotions were sheltered by resorting to prayer when he encountered:

- Uncaring friends (Matt. 26:36-46)
- Discouragement at misguided disciples (Jn. 6:15) (their v. 39 lack faith)
- Unbecoming attitudes and words of friends (Jn. - confident in God)
- The pain of His calling – the cross (Jn. 12:28)

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S WILL in the consummation of His life. He was met in prayer during:

- His last breath on the cross (Lk. 23:46)

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S GOALS. His earthly prayer life may be seen as:

- Harmony with God's plan was His passion (Jn. 17:4)
- Thankfulness was a part of all His life (Lk. 10:21)
- Perfection was His for He never confessed sin (1 Pet. 2:22; Jn. 8:29)
- God's glory, not His personal needs, was primary
- Confidence: He always had a confidence in God's hearing and answering (Jn. 11:42)
- Submission: Every part of His life demonstrated submission (Lk. 22)
- Intercession was always on His heart:
 - For His disciples' growth (Lk. 23:31)
 - For His enemies needing saving grace (Lk. 23:34)
- In all truly selfless (Jn. 17:11)

Is prayer a priority in your life? Is the Word a priority in your life?

Fourthly, We Need to Exercise the Discipline of Supplication to Pray With Your Family

It is good to introduce a note of variety into family prayer. For instance, each day of the week you can concentrate on a different prayer project. At one time our prayer week ran something like this-

Monday: The prayer of faith. Each member of the family picks out a prayer project with the objective of obtaining an answer before the week is out. It is important to distinguish between the different kinds of prayer because each prayer has a different objective, and a different approach. If we come to prayer in a vague way, we may pray well enough, but we may pray the wrong kind of prayer for that particular situation. A prayer of faith has as its objective getting a job done. A more detailed description of the prayer of faith follows in the next section. It is a basic prayer. You will incorporate many of its principles into the other prayers that come up during the week.

Tuesday: Prayer for family, far or near. Each one picks a relative or a member of the immediate family, and prays for some specific need which that person may have.

Wednesday: The Lord's Prayer. Here you can introduce interesting variations. The Father can pray the Prayer a sentence at a time. Then the members of the family can offer petitions which make specific each thing the Lord's Prayer deals with. Under "Thy Kingdom come" may come a prayer for the peace of His Kingdom to come in our own home, or in our nation. Under "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us" may come the confession of a resentful and unforgiving attitude toward a playmate.

Thursday: Prayer for missionaries. Each one picks a missionary and prays for him. This helps project the family's concern for Christ's Kingdom 'to the ends of the earth.' Sometimes it is fun to introduce a note of variety by first praying silently for one's particular prayer project. Afterwards, each one can act out his missionary or family member or prayer of faith as a charade, while the others try to guess who or what he prayed for.

Friday: Prayers of confession. Each member openly confesses one sin which has disturbed the peace and harmony of the family. To begin with, this may well be more difficult for the parents than for the children. Children are used to being corrected and chastened within the family, but not the parents. Yet parents, too, stand in need of forgiveness. Here is a setting in which irritations and resentments can be dealt with, not in the context of anger and recrimination, but in the healing light of forgiveness. One Friday one of our children seemed at a loss to recall anything to confess, and said, "Well, I'm open for bombardment. ..." Brothers and sisters make fine auxiliary consciences! Parents, too, can both give and receive suggestions, in order that genuine sins and hurts are brought out. Of course the parents must watch closely the way in which this kind of thing is done, that no spirit of impudence or bitter accusation enter in. Where it is done in love, it can beget genuine and even deep repentance.

Saturday: Prayers for our church. Each one picks out some aspect of the Sunday services to

pray about-Choir, Sunday School, Sermon, Holy Communion, particular individuals in the congregation-whatever has to do with our common life and worship in the Body of Christ.

Sundays: Prayers for our worship. Because so much time is invested by our family within the congregation, this worship as a Body usually takes the place of our regular family devotions, unless it be a special time of song and praise around the dinner table, or by the fireplace in the evening.

These ideas were in an article by *George Verwer*, Interest Magazine, 9/91, p. 13.

Larry Christenson, *The Christian Family*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1974, pp. **174-176**.

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