

THE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER

CHAPTER ONE

A Blueprint for Prayer

We cannot, in four brief lessons, cover such a vast subject as “prayer.” We will, however, touch on some of the things that we hope will help you in your own Bible study on the privilege of prayer.

**“And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.”
(Luke 11:1)**

In the light of I Peter chapter two, verse two, “teach us to pray” is an appropriate request.

“As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.” (I Peter 2:2)

New Believers would have no more knowledge of prayer than they would have of any other Bible theme. Knowledge of prayer is the solid foundation upon which to build a victorious Christian life; for it is God’s divine appointed way to meet the Believer’s needs, both spiritual as well as physical.

In learning the basic fundamentals of prayer there is no better place to start than where the Master Teacher started. Our Lord laid down a perfect blueprint for all who follow Him, who want to know the joys, blessings and rewards of answered prayer.

In just three brief verses (Luke 11:2-4) our Lord gives a most comprehensive, easy to understand outline on prayer. This outline on prayer is given in language that every person can understand.

Before Jesus reveals His outline on prayer, He informs His disciples of what prayer is not, or how not to pray. Our Lord gave an illustration of the opposite end of the praying system.

This Scripture teaches that public prayer is not to be used as a demonstration of holiness, and needs no interpretation. He warns them of:

(1) The prayer of the pious, self-righteous hypocrite.

**“And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.”
(Matthew 6:5)**

(2) Jesus warns them not to pray like the God-denying heathen.

“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.” (Matthew 6:7)

Jesus said not to use vain repetitions. That means we are not to “prat useless phrases.” We are not to chant words, phrases, or incantations over and over again. Jesus says “this is not praying,” and we are not to follow this type of so-called prayer.

Following these warnings Jesus lays down a blueprint for prayer. No Scripture has been viewed through the theological microscope to be analyzed, scrutinized, denied or defended as the following verses. We would save a lot of time and debate if we would accept them exactly as they are written.

**“And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.
Give us day by day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.” (Luke 11:2-4)**

In our first lesson we will cover three key elements in this model prayer, given by our Lord that are just as applicable today as the day they were recorded.

- (1) Relationship must be established.
“Our Father which art in heaven.”
- (2) Communion must be maintained.
“Hallowed be thy name.”
- (3) Petition
“Give us day by day our daily bread.”

Before one can expect to have their prayers heard or answered God must be their Father.

**“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”
(Hebrews 11:6)**

There is no room for doubt. It is not enough to just think that there is a God, or hope there is a God. You must believe there is a God; and for this God to be your Father you must be born into His family.

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3)

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” (I Peter 1:23)

How to become a son of God is recorded in John chapter one, verse 12.

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” (John 1:12)

The second element of prayer is “Communion.” Before God will hear and answer prayer there must be an open line of communion.

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (I John 1:7)

There is only one way to maintain this fellowship.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (I John 1:9)

After proper relationship has been established and we are walking in communion with our Father, the first prayer to be offered is for the soon coming of our Lord. **“Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.”**

I am well aware that this prayer is considered by some to be a dispensational prayer; however, there are lessons to be learned from all of the Bible that transcend all dispensational boundaries. There is no record in history that this prayer has been answered. This prayer is just as appropriate today as when it was uttered some two thousand years ago. Only as we grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord will we understand more fully the importance of this event. The second coming of the Lord Jesus is what every child of God should be looking for. The very last prayer in the Bible, spoken by the apostle John, is the prayer, **“Even so, come Lord Jesus.”**

The third element of this prayer is “Petition.” **“Give us day by day our daily bread.”** This confirms the truth that prayer is God’s divine and ordained way of meeting the needs of His children.

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)

James 1:17 tells us that:

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” (James 1:17)

Matthew 6:8 tells us that God knows our needs even before we ask.

“Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye him.” (Matthew 6:8)

God is only waiting for us to ask. If you are walking in fellowship with the Father, and you have a need, all you have to do is ask. **“...ye have not because ye ask not.” (James 4:2b)**

You may have been told that God answers all prayer, but sometimes He says yes, sometimes He says no, and sometimes He says wait. However, this is not what the Bible

teaches at all. We see in the following Scriptures that the only answer to prayer is receiving what we ask for.

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” (Matthew 7:7, 8)

“If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.” (John 14:14)

If your prayer is answered, you will receive exactly what you ask for; you will find exactly what they are seeking, and the door will be opened. You can expect all of this when you obey the Word of God.

Remember, first make sure that:

(1) God is your Father.

“Our Father which art in Heaven.”

(2) You are walking in fellowship with the Saviour.

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (I John 1:7)

(3) You are asking according to His will.

“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us,” (I John 5:14)

(4) We must ask in His name.

“And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” (John 14:13)

As we shall see in our next lesson, prayer is not a blank check to be cashed at will, as some would have us believe. If you have met all of the conditions taught in these Scriptures, you can expect results.

There may be a difference of opinion as to what prayers God will hear and answer; such as, does God hear and answer the prayer of the unsaved? Regarding this question, the Word of God is crystal clear as to one prayer the Lord WILL HEAR AND ANSWER.

“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.” (Luke 18:13)

“I tell you, this man went down to his house justified.” (Luke 18:14a)

The prayer of the repentant thief when on a cross (Luke 23:42) was:

“And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when

**thou comest into thy kingdom.”
And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To
day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:42, 43)**

CHAPTER TWO

Prayer—a Conditional Covenant

We hear a great deal today about prayer, but we hear precious little concerning the obedience necessary for our prayers to be answered. Prayer, unlike salvation, is a “conditional covenant” and therefore dependent upon the Believer’s submission to God.

Salvation is an “unconditional covenant” dependent upon the grace of God alone. We see from the following three Scripture verses that salvation is based upon faith alone, and received solely by the grace of God, without works.

**“Not by works of righteousness which we have done,
but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing
of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”
(Titus 3:5)**

**“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not
of yourselves: it is the gift of God:
Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8, 9)**

Prayer, being a “conditional covenant” is therefore based upon obedience. The same as with Israel, God said “if you obey, I will bless.” As the record shows, when Israel obeyed, God blessed. When Israel failed to obey, God did not bless.

We will point out in this lesson the conditions God requires for answering every prayer of His children. We will view these conditions from three perspectives.

- (1) An understanding and obedience to the Word of God.
- (2) A total surrender to the will of God.
- (3) An understanding of the Holy Spirit, as it relates to prayer.

First, all of the information we have concerning prayer, and what one must do to have prayer answered is recorded in the Word of God. We are told, in John 15:7:

**“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall
ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” (John 15:7)**

Here in plain language is the condition for assurance of every prayer being answered. He says “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you.” His Word cannot abide in you if you do not know His Word.

The evidence of abiding in Him, and His Word abiding in the Believer, is the fruit that this union will produce.

**“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and
ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit,
and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever
ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it
you.” (John 15:16)**

“Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you” It is not only “fruit bearing” but it is remaining in the state of “fruit bearing,” **“...that your fruit should remain...”** We will only be able to bear fruit as long as we walk in fellowship.

We are not left to wonder, guess or speculate what this fruit is. The Word of God makes it plain.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22, 23)

In I John 5:14 we are told to “ask according to His will.”

“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.” (I John 5:14)

We cannot know the will of God apart from knowing the Word of God. The first instructions given to a new Believer is: **“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.” (I Peter 2:2)** Peter was so convinced of this fact that he closed his last epistle with these words.

“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.” (II Peter 3:18)

Paul, also, writes with definite conviction along these same lines.

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (II Timothy 2:15)

Jesus says, in Matthew 4:4 **“...It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”** We read in Colossians 3:16a **“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom...”** Also in Psalm 119:11, **Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”**

Joshua, in the Old Testament, knew the importance of knowing and obeying the Word of God.

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.” (Joshua 1:8)

We cannot “do according to all that is written therein” if we do not know what is written therein. I trust you will understand the importance of the Word of God concerning prayer. You must know the Word of God before you can be obedient to the Word of God.

Second, there must be a total surrender to the will of God.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (Romans 12:1, 2)

We will never know “that good and acceptable and perfect will of God,” apart from a total yielding to the will of God.

“No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (Luke 16:13)

In James we find even stronger language to rebuke those who try to walk the middle of the road.

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” (James 4:4)

You may call it “yielding,” “surrender,” “dedication,” or a “commitment,” but this must take place before you can bear fruit that will assure you of having your every prayer answered. It should not be a difficult matter to present to God something that belongs to Him, which He bought and paid for, as the Scriptures tell us.

“What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (I Corinthians 6:19, 20)

Third, we must look to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to interpret our prayers.

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” (Romans 8:26, 27)

The key to understanding these verses is the phrase “for we know not what we should pray for as we ought.” Therefore, we must look to the Holy Spirit to take our

prayers and present them to God. For God to answer our prayers, they must be according to His will. It is the Holy Spirit that makes our true motives known to God.

**“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us.”
(I John 5:14)**

The only assurance we have is to look to the Holy Spirit to take our prayers and make them “according to the will of God.”

If a born again Believer, one who has chosen God’s will instead of their own, follows God’s well defined directions laid down in the Word of God they have every reason to expect to receive everything they ask for in prayer.

By pointing out that prayer is a conditional covenant we in no way infer that the conditions are hard and difficult to follow. They are as simple as obeying the Word of God.

Let me say this as kindly as I can. If, as a new-born babe in Christ, there is no desire for the “sincere milk of the Word that we may grow thereby” (I Peter 2:2); if there is no desire to “grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour (II Peter 3:18); if there is no desire to “study to show ourselves approved unto God” (II Timothy 2:15), then we have no right to petition God for anything.

Then, too, knowing the tremendous price paid for our salvation, if we are not willing to “present our body to God,” which He paid for, I say again, if we find these conditions too difficult to meet, we have no right to petition God for anything, let alone expect Him to answer. God answers the prayers of obedient children.

**“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:
But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” (Isaiah 59:1, 2)**

“Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.” (Psalm 66:20)

There is no greater blessing to the child of God than to pray and receive exactly what they ask for.

CHAPTER THREE

Why Pray?

In our third lesson on the “Privilege of Prayer” we will give four good reasons for prayer.

(1) The best and most compelling reason for a child of God to do anything is that God has so commanded.

“And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” (Luke 18:1)

We are told in Ephesians 6:18:

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; (Ephesians 6:18)

Again, we are commanded to pray.

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” (Philippians 4:6)

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men.” (I Timothy 2:1)

The first and foremost reason for a Believer to pray is because the Word of God tells us to do so. When something as important as prayer is mentioned so often in the Scriptures we should pay attention and, more important, we should obey.

(2) The second reason for prayer is that it is God’s appointed way to meet the needs of the Believer. God could have chosen to meet our needs the same as He did the children of Israel in the wilderness, with manna or clothing that would last forty years. However, He chose the avenue of prayer.

“And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” (Matthew 21:22)

God’s promise is to supply all our needs.

“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

God knows our needs even before we ask.

“Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.” (Matthew 6:8)

Even though God knows, He has still chosen prayer as His divine appointed way to meet those needs. **“Ye have not because ye ask not.” (James 4:2b)**

(3) There is a basic Bible reason for God choosing prayer as His method of providing for His children. God’s people are to be different from the world. Because of our citizenship, we are set apart from the world; therefore, we are not to resort to the world’s methods of having our needs provided.

**“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence
also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.”
(Philippians 3:20)**

Our citizenship is not of this world. Our citizenship is in Heaven. “This world is not my home, I’m just passing through.” The Scripture says in John 15:19, **“I have chosen you out of the world.”**

**“I have given them thy word; and the world hath
hated them, because they are not of the world,
even as I am not of the world.” (John 17:14)**

**“They are not of the world, even as I am not of the
world.” (John 17:16)**

No better description can be found that separates God’s people from the world than in I Peter 2:9.

**“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood,
an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should
shew forth the praises of him who hath called you
out of darkness into his marvelous light.” (I Peter 2:9)**

One of the ways we may show forth His praises is through answered prayer. When we see the difference between the children of God and the world, we can easily understand why God would not want His children to use the same method the world uses to have our every need provided. The contrast is made plain in James 4:1-4.

**“From whence come wars and fightings among you?
come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in
your members?
Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and
cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not,
because ye ask not.
Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye
may consume it upon your lusts.
Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the
friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever
therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of
God.” (James 4:1-4)**

This is the world’s way of receiving, not God’s way. In these four verses James is taking these Believers to task for resorting to the world’s way of doing business. He gives two reasons why they do so. (1) **“Ye have not because ye ask not.”** (2) **Ye have not because ye ask amiss that ye many consume it upon your own lust.”**

The child of God is to be different from the world. They are to have their needs met simply by “asking;” a fact that a lot of Believers should keep in mind.

(4) Answered prayer is a sure way to show the world that God is “a rewarder of

them that diligently seek Him.” Answered prayer will silence some of those who doubt the Word of God.

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

Not only are we to believe that God is, but we must believe that God answers prayer. I am talking about answers to prayer that leave no room for doubt that God has answered. As Nicodemus said, **“No man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him.” (John 3:2b)**

Elijah is given as an example of this Bible truth. There are two prayers offered by Elijah for which he received exactly what he was asking.

“Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.” (James 5:17, 18)

It is Elijah’s third prayer to which we call your attention. It was a direct answer to this prayer that turned the children of Israel from the worship of Baal to worship the true and living God.

“And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.” (I Kings 18:21)

To set the stage for this remarkable prayer, following Elijah’s ultimatum to the people, he proposes a challenge.

“Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under.” (I Kings 18:23)

Elijah, knowing the outcome, let the prophets of Baal go first. What a show they put on. They called on Baal from morning until noon. They leaped upon the altar. They called aloud and cut themselves until the blood gushed out. The outcome was never in doubt. **“...there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.” (I Kings 18:29b)**

We can learn an important lesson from Elijah about having our prayers answered. We read what he did in I Kings 18:30-32.

“And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto

me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.” (I Kings 18:30-32)

First, Elijah built an altar, (v. 32). This is important. If you want your prayers answered there **MUST BE UNBROKEN COMMUNION WITH GOD.**

Elijah was so positive that God would answer his prayer that he went beyond the challenge.

**“And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.
And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time.” (I Kings 18:33, 34)**

This was a most unusual request, because water was the most precious commodity in the land.

The prayer of Elijah itself was only some sixty four words and takes less than thirty seconds to read.

**“And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.
Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.” (I Kings 18:36, 37)**

Elijah gives the true reason for receiving the answer to his prayer. “**I HAVE DONE ALL THESE THINGS AT THY WORD.**”

**“Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.
And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God.” (I Kings 18:38, 39)**

If you ask according the God’s Word you can expect the same results.

CHAPTER FOUR

Asking and Receiving

One definition of prayer is “an offering up of our desires unto God for things agreeable to His will; and confession of our sins in the name of Jesus with thankful acknowledgement of His mercies.” Prayer is often times defined as praise, meditation, thanksgiving and communion. Certainly we ought to recognize these as important elements of prayer. However, the Bible defines prayer as “asking” for something specific. And the answer to prayer is receiving what you ask for.

“Ask, and it shall be given you.” (Matthew 7:7a)

“For everyone that asketh receiveth.) Matthew 7:8a)

“Ask and ye shall receive.” (John 16:24b)

**“And all things, whatsoever ye ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”
(Matthew 21:22)**

“How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him.” (Matthew 7:11b)

“If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.” (John 14:14)

**“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find;
knock, and it shall be opened unto you:
For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh
findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”
(Matthew 7:7, 8)**

Prayer, then, is “asking,” and the answer to prayer is “receiving exactly what you ask for.” Here (Matthew 7:7, 8) prayer is defined as “asking, “seeking” and “knocking.” One who asks should expect exactly what they ask for. **“...if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?” (Luke 11:12)**

When we go to the store for a pair of pants we do not expect the sales person to show us a pair of shoes. When we ask for bread, we do not expect to receive a watermelon. One who is seeking should expect to find exactly what they are seeking. If we are seeking a shirt, finding a pair of socks is not the answer. When we knock we expect a door to be opened, not a window. The answer to prayer, then, is receiving what you ask for.

When you pray and ask for something and you do not receive an answer, this should set off an alarm. When you turn on a water faucet and receive no water, or when you turn on a light switch and the light does not come on, you take immediate steps to remedy the problem. The same should be true in the Christian’s prayer life.

When God says “no” it could very well be because of one or more reasons given in these Scriptures. A Believer should not be satisfied with a “no” answer. God is not

honored when He has to say no. The Word of God makes it plain that God desires to answer every prayer request with exactly what His child asks for; so a child of His should know why their prayers are not answered. When a prayer is not answered the first thing one should ask is, why?

(1) Make sure you are a child of God.

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” (II Corinthians 13:5)

To be a child of God, you must receive Him. Make sure you have received Him.

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them believe on his name.” (John 1:12)

(2) Make sure you are walking in fellowship with the Lord Jesus.

“If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.” (I John 1:6)

If fellowship is broken, the way to restore fellowship is to obey the Word of God, and confess our sins.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (I John 1:9)

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (I John 1:7)

(3) Make sure you are asking according to His will.

“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.” (I John 5:14)

“Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” (James 4:3)

Many today equate material gain with godliness, or wealth as a true sign of the blessings of God. I Timothy chapter six, verse five, tells us a different story.

“Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such such withdraw thyself.” (I Timothy 6:5)

The Bible warns against such lustful desires.

**“But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.
For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” (I Timothy 6: 9, 10)**

A Believer should never pursue such corruptible practices.

**“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”
(Hebrews 13:5)**

**“For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.
And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.” (I Timothy 6: 7, 8)**

“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned , in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” (Philippians 4:11)

We come now to a most interesting aspect of prayer. Sometimes God says “wait” for an answer to our prayers. Many times this is most difficult to understand; yet this is the easiest mystery of all to solve.

After our Lord gave His model prayer to His disciples, when they asked Him to “teach us to pray,” He continued His instruction with an interesting parable.

**“And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, friend, lend me three loaves;
For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?
And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.
I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.”
(Luke 11:5-8)**

Prayer is not to be taken lightly. It is a very serious business. If your prayer is not worth pursuing it is not worth asking in the first place. If you don't mean business don't pray.

The word “importunity” will define the seriousness of your prayer. It means to continue to pray with intensity. Not only will you receive what you ask for, but more. This man received not just the three loaves, but as many as he needed.

“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.” (Ephesians 3:20)

If you have never experienced receiving exactly what you ask for in direct answer to prayer you have missed the greatest blessing, apart from the gift of salvation, that God has ever bestowed upon His children.

The privilege of prayer is within the grasp of every believer; the young, as well as the old, the learned as well as the unlearned. When we come to God in prayer, His way, there is no need that will not be met. There is no cry that will not be heard.

“Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.” (Psalm 37:4)

Prayer is a vital element in the Believer’s life. It is the very lifeline of the Believer’s hope, joy, peace and expectation.

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” (Philippians 4:6)

The Scripture says “Be careful for nothing,” or “be anxious for nothing.” These words are often overlooked when reading this verse; however, their meaning is clear. It means for us not to have:

- (1) extreme uneasiness of mind, brooding about some contingency, or worried.
- (2) Causing anxiety, worrying.
- (3) Ardently or earnestly wishing.

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)

We are to come “boldly,” which means:

- (1) With confidence
- (2) Bluntness
- (3) Frankness

God could not have devised a better plan to meet the needs of His children. **“Ask and ye shall receive.”**