

PRAYER

BY KEITH GREER

Today we want to discuss what the Bible says about prayer and the importance of praying on a regular basis.

Addressed to God the Father. *“In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.” {Matthew 6:9}* Many misunderstand the prayer recorded in Matthew 6. This prayer is NOT the Lord’s Prayer—it is His teaching how to pray. Jesus taught His disciples to address their petitions to the Father in heaven.

In the name of Christ. *“And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.” {John 14:13,14}* Christ is our Mediator, *1 Timothy 2:5*. When one prays “in the name of Christ,” we do so by His authority, in search of His answers to our requests.

Prayed by a faithful servant. *“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 3:22}* God’s ears are opened and receptive to the prayers of His children who strive to live in accordance with His will. *“For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.” (1 Peter 3:12)*

Prayed in faith. *“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. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord, he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.” (James 1:5-8)* Why would we pray if we didn’t believe that God could answer our prayers? God’s children must pray fervently and be prepared to accept the Father’s answer—no matter what it may be. Some people, because they did not receive what they requested, have said that God did not answer their prayers. Christians who pray in faith know that God is aware of what is best for them and what is needed most!

Ask according to His will. *“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. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.”* (James 4:2,3) Our prayers must be in accordance with God’s revealed will. Would God answer my prayer if I asked Him to do evil things to a person or persons I consider my enemy? No. God instructs us to love our enemies and pray for them, *Matthew 5:44; Romans 12:17-21*. Knowledge of His will is a must to ensure that our personal prayers are in accordance with that will.

A part of our daily lives. *“Pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:17,18) Sadly, many Christians look at prayer as a safety valve to be turned to only when we are in trouble or need. Prayer is one of our greatest spiritual blessings—the ability to communicate with God and bring our petitions before His throne of mercy and grace. Only those in God’s family have continual access to His throne. True, God hears and sees everything. Yet, He obligates Himself to answer only His children’s prayers. Over the years, I’ve found that those who fall away from the Lord and His people pray very little. God’s children need to see the value in a healthy prayer life. When times are good, we need to thank God for His blessings and the love He freely bestows upon us daily. If we don’t pray to God when things are good, we won’t turn to Him when they are bad. Dear reader, how much do you talk with God? Do you sometimes feel that you need to reintroduce yourself to God when you pray? Too busy to pray? Change your schedule!!!! ***