



A Disciple's Guide to Biblical Praying

Introduction

The early followers of Jesus were disciples first. Later, others gave them the label of “Christians.” Modern Christians have separated the two and made being a disciple an optional second step after becoming a Christian. This is not the way God sees it.

A real disciple of any master tries to do several things:

- Voluntarily puts himself under the master’s oversight
- Copies the master’s ways
- Learn’s the master’s techniques
- Obeys the master’s instructions
- Looks for the master’s approval
- Accepts the master’s correction
- Loves and hangs around with other followers

Relatively soon in the relationship, it becomes apparent to the master whether the disciple/apprentice is actually interested in learning and growing in abilities to be like the master.

“As He was praying ... when He ceased, ... one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples” Luke 11:1.

Praying is difficult. Our Master, Jesus, has given us His example and Word to teach us how to pray. In His Word, He has given us promises, examples, commands, and teaching concerning prayer. This little pamphlet seeks to bring many of these details from the Scripture into one place for our motivation and learning about prayer. May it help you to deepen your prayer life as you learn to pray like He did.

“A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher” Luke 6:40

“He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked” 1 John 2:6.

Biblical Prayer Promises

(In each of these promises, consider carefully what is promised if the conditions are met. What does it say about the usual interpretation of ‘yes,’ ‘no,’ or ‘wait’?)

Persistently - Matt 7:7 Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Agreement - Matt 18:19 Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.

Believing - Mark 11:24 Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*. **See also:** Matthew 21:22

In Jesus' Name - John 14:14 If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*. (Also John 16:23)

Abide in Christ John 15:7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

Bearing Fruit - John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

Obediently - 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.

According to God's will - 1 John 5:14-15 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

Humbly and Repentant - 2 Chron 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.

Biblical Prayer Admonitions

(As you read these admonitions, consider how your praying aligns with the motivation, goals, and focus our Master expects.)

Continually, Steadfastly - Ro 12:12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;

Always - Luke 18:1 Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,

1 Thess 5:17 pray without ceasing,

Boldly - Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Giving Thanks – Phil 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

...For all things - Eph 5:20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Confessing and Forgiving- Matt 6:12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.

Confessing our sins – 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Fervently - Jas 5:16 Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Earnestly and Vigilant - Col 4:2 Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;

Watchfully, Spiritually - Eph 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.

Watchfully - 1 Peter 4:7. But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.

Alone – Matt 5:6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Without empty repetitions – Matt 6:7 And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.

For Christian workers to be sent – Matt 9:37 Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.

For those who hurt you - Matt 5:44 Pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.

For All in Authority – 1 Timothy 2:1–2 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

In Spiritual Struggle – Matt 17:21 This kind [speaking of a particular demon] does not go out except by prayer and fasting.

For Wisdom – James 1:5-8 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given him. But 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.

For the Sick – James 5:14-15 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

Examples of Biblical Prayers

Knowledge of God's Will for Self and Others

Colossians 1:9-11 - That you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;

Wisdom and Greater Knowledge of God and His Power

Ephesians 1:17-20 - That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and

what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

Spiritual Strength - Ephesians 3:16-19 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Growth in Love and Holiness - 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

Fruitful Spiritual Life - 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Fruitful Spiritual Life - Philippians 1:9-11 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

God's Work in Your or Someone's Life Hebrews 13:20-21

Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Joy and Peace - Romans 15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Steadfastness in Life - 1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Complete Sanctification – 1 Thess 5:23-24 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

Blessing - Numbers 6:24 The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.

Growth in Grace – 2 Peter 3:18 But grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Grant Boldness - Acts 4:29 Now, Lord, look on their threats and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word.

Effective Word - 2 Thess 3:1 Finally, brethren; pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you.

Open Door - Col 4:3 Meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ.

Good Conscience – Hebrews 13:18 Pray for us; for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably.

Examples of People Praying

Alone - Matt 14:23 And when He [Jesus] had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there.

Mark 1:35 Jesus departed to a solitary place to pray.

For Children – Matt 19:13 Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray.

Church Together, Continually - Acts 12:5 Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.

Together, Continually, Steadfastly - Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Together, in one accord - Acts 1:14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Jesus said to pray in this manner:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. (Matt 6:9-13)

Examples with appeal to God's promises, God's strength, His reputation, and His glory.

(As you read these examples, watch for ways the prayer focuses on God's character and promises. Think about how you might be able to do similarly in your prayer.)

1. Moses' Intercession for Israel (Numbers 14:13-19)

"Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth'? ... **Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy**, just as You have pardoned them from Egypt until now. ... **And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken**, saying, 'The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression...'"

2. Hezekiah's Prayer Against Assyria (Isaiah 37:15-20)

When the Assyrian king threatened Jerusalem and mocked God, Hezekiah spread the letter before the Lord and prayed:

"O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, who is enthroned above the cherubim, **You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth.** You have made heaven and earth. ... Now, O Lord our God, deliver us from his hand, **that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, O Lord, are God.**"

3. Daniel's Confession and Plea for Restoration (Daniel 9:4-19)

And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments.... O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day... To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him. We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws... we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth. And now, O Lord our God we have sinned, we have done wickedly! "O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate. We do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

4. Jehoshaphat's Prayer in Crisis (2 Chronicles 20:5-12)

Facing a vast enemy army, King Jehoshaphat prayed before the assembly:

"O Lord, God of our fathers, **are You not God in the heavens? And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand** so that no one can stand against You. ... **Did You not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land** before Your people Israel and **give it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?** ...And now, here are the people of [the land] ... rewarding us by coming to throw us out of Your possession which you have given us to inherit. **O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude, ... nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on You.**"

5. Solomon's Prayer at the Temple Dedication (1 Kings 8:23-30, especially v. 23-26)

"O Lord, God of Israel, **there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness** to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart... You have kept Your promise to Your servant David my father; with Your mouth You have promised and with Your hand You have fulfilled it..."

6. Abraham's Intercession for Sodom (Genesis 18:23-33)

When God revealed His plan to judge Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham boldly interceded:

"Will You indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? ... **Far be it from You** to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike. **Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?**"

7. Hannah's Prayer of Thanksgiving and Vow (1 Samuel 2:1-10)

After God answered her prayer for a son (Samuel), Hannah prayed in praise:

"My heart exults in the Lord; my horn is exalted in the Lord... **There is no one holy like the Lord**, indeed, **there is no one besides You**, nor is there any rock like our God... The Lord kills and makes alive; He brings down to Sheol and raises up... **The Lord will judge the ends of the earth**; and He will give strength to His king..."

8. David's Prayer of Praise and Remembrance (1 Chronicles 29:10-13)

As David prepared for Solomon to build the temple, he prayed publicly:

"Blessed are You, O Lord God of Israel our father, **forever and ever**. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed **everything that is in the heavens and the earth**; Yours is the dominion, O Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all... **But who am I**, and who are my people, that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from You, and from Your hand we have given to You."

9. Nehemiah's Prayer for Favor (Nehemiah 1:5-11)

Upon hearing of Jerusalem's ruined state, Nehemiah prayed:

"I beseech You, O Lord God of heaven, **the great and awesome God**, who preserves the covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments... **Remember the word which You commanded** Your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful I will scatter you among the peoples; but if you return to Me and keep My commandments... I will gather you...' Now therefore, O Lord, I beseech You, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant... **and grant him compassion before this man** [the king]."

11. David's Prayer for the Throne Promise (2 Samuel 7:18-29; paralleled in 1 Chronicles 17:16-27)

After God promised through Nathan that David's throne would be established forever (the Davidic covenant), David prayed in response:

"Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? ... **You have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come**... And now, O Lord God, **confirm forever the word that you have spoken** concerning your servant and concerning his house, and **do as you have spoken**. And your name will be magnified forever... For you, O Lord God, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever."

12. Jacob's Vow and Reminder at Bethel (Genesis 28:20-22; echoed in later prayers like Genesis 32:9-12)

When fleeing Esau, Jacob vowed at Bethel after God's dream-promise:

"If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God... Later, facing Esau (Genesis 32:9-12): "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, '**Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will deal well with you**'... **Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother**..."

13. Elijah's Prayer for Fire on Carmel (1 Kings 18:36-37)

At the contest with Baal's prophets, Elijah prayed publicly:

"O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, **let it be known this day that you are God in Israel**, and that I am your servant... **Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to you again.**

14. Peter's Prayer for Boldness (Acts 4:24-30)

After threats from authorities, the believers prayed together:

"Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, '**Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain?**' ... for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus... And now, Lord, look upon their threats and **grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness**, while you stretch out your hand to heal..."

How to Scripturally Pray for the Lost

Lord, as I pray for _____, I ask that you would:

1. Bring them under the proclamation of the gospel because you have said in your Word that the gospel is the power of God for salvation to anyone who believes. Romans 1:16
2. I pray that you would grant them the gifts of faith and repentance, and that you would not let them become like Esau who found no place for repentance. Eph 2:8-9; 2 Tim 2:25; Acts 11:18; Hebrews 12:16-17
3. I pray that you would bring them under the New Covenant in which you promise to replace the stoney heart and give them a heart of flesh and your Holy Spirit and cause them to walk in your ways. Ezekiel 36:25-27
4. I pray that you would convince and convict through your Holy Spirit because you said that this is the Spirit's ministry. John 16:8
5. Please open their heart to listen to the gospel as you did for Lydia. Acts 16:14
6. Just as you did at creation when you said, "Let there be light," please command light to shine in their heart as you describe in 2 Corinthians 4:6
7. God, be pleased to reveal your Son in them just as you did to the Apostle Paul many years after you separated him from his mother's womb and called him through your grace. Galatians 1:15
8. Lord, "my heart's desire and prayer to God for _____ is that they may be saved" (See Romans 10:1).

Bottom Line:

The Bible says this about our praying: “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For **we do not know what we should pray for as we ought**, but the **Spirit Himself makes intercession for us** with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

“It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who **also makes intercession for us**” (Romans 8: 26-27, 34).