

PRAYER

- The scriptures consistently command, exhort and remind us to pray
- Not all “prayer” is prayer
- Scripture gives us directives, guidelines and models for prayer
- All true prayer is *heard and answered*
- There is no such thing as “unanswered prayer”
 - There are unwanted, unheard and/or unrecognized answers
 - There are improper/improperly offered “prayers”*
 - There are the “prayers”* of unbelievers

*(which are not prayers at all)
- The notion of “saying a prayer” or “saying *our* prayers” reflects an improper view of prayer; we do not say prayers - we *pray*.

The health of our relationship with God, and our knowledge and understanding of Him and the truth of His Word, are reflected in our approach to prayer - the way we pray; who and what we pray for; when, where, why and how we pray; the way we value the privilege and use it. All of these are modeled for us in scripture.

NOTE: See separate study entitled “[Christian Maturity](#).”

Pray always and persistently

- 1Th 5:17 pray continually;
- Col 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.
- Eph 6:18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.
- Act 1:14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.
- Act 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.
- Col 1:9a For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you
- 1Th 3:10a Night and day we pray most earnestly
- 2Th 1:11a With this in mind, we constantly pray for you,
- 1Ti 5:5 The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help.

2Ti 1:3b night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers.
 Lk 6:12 One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.
 Mt 26:44 So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.
 Lk 18:1(-8) Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. (...)
 Jon 2:1 From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God. (anywhere; anytime)
 Gen 25:21 Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The LORD answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. (Isaac prayed for 20 years! <see vs 20, 26>)
 Rom 12:12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.
 Act 12:5 So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.
 Act 7:59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."
 Phl 4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
 Jude 20 But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.

Pray for everyone

1Ti 2:1 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-
 Jam 5:16a Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other
 Mt 5:44b pray for those who persecute you,
 Lk 6:28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.
 2Ki 19:4c Therefore pray for the remnant that still survives."
 Jn 17:20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,

Pray with purpose

Jer 42:3 Pray that the LORD your God will tell us where we should go and what we should do."
 Col 1:9-12 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. ¹⁰And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully ¹²giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. (What purpose! And, in addition to the requests, joyful thanks to God, acknowledging his marvelous deliverance)
 Judg 13:8 Then Manoah prayed to the LORD: "O Lord, I beg you, let the man of God you sent to us come again to teach us how to bring up the boy who is to be born."
 Mt 26:41 "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."
 Lk 21:36 Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

- Jn 17:15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.
- Rom 10:1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. (Salvation comes first - it's all that really matters!)
- 2Co 13:9b our prayer is for your perfection.
- 1Th 5:23-24 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it. (worthy purpose and confident expectation)
- Eph 1:17-18 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,
- Eph 6:19 Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,
- 2Th 3:5 May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.
- Phl 1:9-11 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ-to the glory and praise of God.
- Eph 3:14-21 For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge- that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. ²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (just 1 of many examples in scripture of worthy prayers which focus on the big picture - for eternal value)
- 2Th 2:16-17 May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, ¹⁷encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.
- 1Th 3:9-13 How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? ¹⁰Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith. ¹¹Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. ¹²May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. ¹³May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones. (How to thank God? Earnest and constant prayer, focused on the well-being of others)
- Col 4:12b He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.
- 2Th 1:11b-12 that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.

- ¹²We pray this 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. (We really must think and pray like this; get beyond the daily insignificance.)
- 2Th 3:1 Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you.
- Col 4:3-4 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. (Paul's prayers do not focus unnecessarily on himself and his circumstances.)
- Phm 6 I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.
- 2Th 3:16 Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.
- Heb 13:20-21 May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, ²¹equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Pray with confidence

- 1Jn 5:14-15 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. ¹⁵And if we know that he hears us-whatever we ask-we know that we have what we asked of him.
- Eph 3:12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. (Do we avail ourselves of this freedom, realizing what it cost?)
- Heb 4:16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
- Mt 6:8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.
- Mt 7:7-11 "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹If you, then, though you are evil, 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!
- Ps 71:5 For you have been my hope, O Sovereign LORD, my confidence since my youth.
- Pr 3:32 for the LORD detests a perverse man but takes the upright into his confidence.
- Jer 17:7 "But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him.
- 2Co 3:4 Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God.
- Heb 10:19-22a Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, ²¹and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²²let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith,
- Heb 13:5-6 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." ⁶So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" (Are we content in God and his provision; are we confident in his promise and ability to provide for, and protect us?)

WHEN IS IT “HEARD”?

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. (1Jn 5:14)

But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear. (Isa 59:2)

Accompanied by confession/repentance/humility and acknowledging God’s goodness/provision/care/power

- 1Ki 8:28-30 Yet give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy, O LORD my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day. ²⁹May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, this place of which you said, 'My Name shall be there,' so that you will hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place. ³⁰Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.
- 1Ki 8:41-50 "As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your name- ⁴²for men will hear of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm-when he comes and prays toward this temple, ⁴³then hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and may know that this house I have built bears your Name. ⁴⁴"When your people go to war against their enemies, wherever you send them, and when they pray to the LORD toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name, ⁴⁵then hear from heaven their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause. ⁴⁶"When they sin against you-for there is no one who does not sin-and you become angry with them and give them over to the enemy, who takes them captive to his own land, far away or near; ⁴⁷and if they have a change of heart in the land where they are held captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their conquerors and say, 'We have sinned, we have done wrong, we have acted wickedly'; ⁴⁸and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their enemies who took them captive, and pray to you toward the land you gave their fathers, toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name; ⁴⁹then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause. ⁵⁰And forgive your people, who have sinned against you; forgive all the offenses they have committed against you, and cause their conquerors to show them mercy;
- Neh 1:6 let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you.
- Dan 9:2-23 in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the

desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. ³So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. ⁴I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed: "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with all who love him and obey his commands, ⁵we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. ⁶We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. ⁷"Lord, you are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame-the men of Judah and people of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you. ⁸O LORD, we and our kings, our princes and our fathers are covered with shame because we have sinned against you. ⁹The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him; ¹⁰we have not obeyed the LORD our God or kept the laws he gave us through his servants the prophets. ¹¹All Israel has transgressed your law and turned away, refusing to obey you. "Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against you. ¹²You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing upon us great disaster. Under the whole heaven nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem. ¹³Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us, yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth. ¹⁴The LORD did not hesitate to bring the disaster upon us, for the LORD our God is righteous in everything he does; yet we have not obeyed him. ¹⁵"Now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and who made for yourself a name that endures to this day, we have sinned, we have done wrong. ¹⁶O Lord, in keeping with all your righteous acts, turn away your anger and your wrath from Jerusalem, your city, your holy hill. Our sins and the iniquities of our fathers have made Jerusalem and your people an object of scorn to all those around us. ¹⁷"Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, O Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. ¹⁸Give ear, O God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. ¹⁹O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hear and act! For your sake, O my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name." ²⁰While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill-²¹while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. ²²He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. ²³As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the message and understand the vision: ...

2Ch 7:14-15

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 will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. ¹⁵Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place.

- Job 22:21-27 "Submit to God and be at peace with him; in this way prosperity will come to you. ²²Accept instruction from his mouth and lay up his words in your heart. ²³If you return to the Almighty, you will be restored: If you remove wickedness far from your tent ²⁴and assign your nuggets to the dust, your gold of Ophir to the rocks in the ravines, ²⁵then the Almighty will be your gold, the choicest silver for you. ²⁶Surely then you will find delight in the Almighty and will lift up your face to God. ²⁷You will pray to him, and he will hear you, and you will fulfill your vows.
- Act 4:24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. (acknowledging God and his power first)

By the godly; God's obedient servants; those who delight in Him; who fear, honor, revere and submit to Him; who seek God and His will

- Neh 1:11a O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name.
- Job 16:17 yet my hands have been free of violence and my prayer is pure.
- Ps 17:1 A prayer of David. Hear, O LORD, my righteous plea; listen to my cry. Give ear to my prayer--it does not rise from deceitful lips.
- Ps 32:6 Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him.
- Ps 34:11-19 Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD. ¹²Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, ¹³keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies. ¹⁴Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. ¹⁵The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry; ¹⁶the face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth. ¹⁷The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. ¹⁸The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. ¹⁹A righteous man may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all;
- Ps 66:16-20 Come and listen, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me. ¹⁷I cried out to him with my mouth; his praise was on my tongue. ¹⁸If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; ¹⁹but God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer. ²⁰Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!
- Jn 9:31 We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will.
- Jn 11:22 But I know that even now God will give you (Jesus) whatever you ask."
- Act 10:31 ... 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor.
- Heb 13:18 Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way.
- Pr 15:8 The LORD detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases him.
- Pr 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked but he hears the prayer of the righteous.
- Jam 5:16b The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

Scriptural guidelines and models; God's criteria and His promises

- Ex 33:17 And the LORD said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."
- 1Jn 3:21-22 Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God ²²and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.
- Jn 8:29 The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him."
- 1Ki 3:5-13 At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." ⁶Solomon answered, "You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day. ⁷"Now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. ⁸Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. ⁹So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?" ¹⁰The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. (Is God pleased with what we ask for?) ¹¹So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, ¹²I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. (Because God was pleased with Solomon's request, it was thoroughly granted.) ¹³Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for-both riches and honor-so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings. (and God opens the floodgates of heaven's blessings!)
- Isa 37:14-22 Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the temple of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD. ¹⁵And Hezekiah prayed to the LORD: ¹⁶"O LORD Almighty, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. ¹⁷Give ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; listen to all the words Sennacherib has sent to insult the living God. ¹⁸"It is true, O LORD, that the Assyrian kings have laid waste all these peoples and their lands. ¹⁹They have thrown their gods into the fire and destroyed them, for they were not gods but only wood and stone, fashioned by human hands. ²⁰Now, O LORD our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all kingdoms on earth may know that you alone, O LORD, are God." ²¹Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent a message to Hezekiah: "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Because you have prayed to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria, ²²this is the word the LORD has spoken against him: ... (Hezekiah didn't pray out of desperate fear, but laid out the truth before God, acknowledged his need and inability to overcome without God's deliverance, and had a worthy purpose in his request: that God would be known. Hezekiah's own appropriate interests in the situation were not paramount in his prayer.)

- 1Ki 8:22-26 Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the whole assembly of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven ²³and said: "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth below-you who keep your covenant of love with your servants who continue wholeheartedly in your way. ²⁴You have kept your promise to your servant David my father; with your mouth you have promised and with your hand you have fulfilled it-as it is today. ²⁵Now LORD, God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father the promises you made to him when you said, 'You shall never fail to have a man to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your sons are careful in all they do to walk before me as you have done.'
²⁶And now, O God of Israel, let your word that you promised your servant David my father come true. (praying according to God's promised word)
- Gen 32:9-12 Then Jacob prayed, "O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, O LORD, who said to me, 'Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper,' ¹⁰I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two groups. ¹¹Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children. ¹²But you have said, 'I will surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted.'" (humility in claiming God's promises)
- 1Ki 18:36-39 At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. ³⁷Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again."
³⁸Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. ³⁹When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The LORD-he is God! The LORD-he is God!" (focused on God's interests, honor and vindication; pleased that God is reconciling others, not pleading that He will punish them)
- 2Ch 20:1-12, 15b, 17-22 After this, the Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to make war on Jehoshaphat. ²Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the Sea. It is already in Hazazon Tamar" (that is, En Gedi). ³Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. ⁴The people of Judah came together to seek help from the LORD; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him. ⁵Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the LORD in the front of the new courtyard ⁶and said: "O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you. ⁷O our God, did you not drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend? ⁸They have lived in it and have built in it a sanctuary for your Name, saying, ⁹If calamity comes upon us, whether the sword of judgment, or plague or famine, we will stand in your presence before this temple that bears your Name and will cry out to you in our distress, and you will hear us and save us.' ¹⁰"But now here are men from Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, whose territory you

would not allow Israel to invade when they came from Egypt; so they turned away from them and did not destroy them. ¹¹See how they are repaying us by coming to drive us out of the possession you gave us as an inheritance. ¹²O our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you." ... ^{15b}This is what the LORD says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's. ... ¹⁷You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you.'" ¹⁸Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the LORD. ¹⁹Then some Levites from the Kohathites and Korahites stood up and praised the LORD, the God of Israel, with very loud voice. ²⁰Early in the morning they left for the Desert of Tekoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful." ²¹After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: "Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures forever." ²²As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.

- 2Ki 13:4a Then Jehoahaz sought the LORD's favor, and the LORD listened to him,
- 2Ch 33:12-13a In his distress he sought the favor of the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. ¹³And when he prayed to him, the LORD was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea;
- Ps 34:4a I sought the LORD, and he answered me;
- 2Ch 30:18b-20 But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, "May the LORD, who is good, pardon everyone ¹⁹who sets his heart on seeking God-the LORD, the God of his fathers-even if he is not clean according to the rules of the sanctuary." ²⁰And the LORD heard Hezekiah and healed the people. (Seeking the Lord sincerely with our hearts trumps religious ritual.)
- Ps 27:4 One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple. (There are wonderful things to ask for!)
- 1Jn 5:14-15 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. ¹⁵And if we know that he hears us-whatever we ask-we know that we have what we asked of him.
- Jam 1:6 But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. (Are we being tossed about or are we anchored in him? <Heb 6:19a>)
- Mt 21:22 If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." (Do we believe? Really? <Obviously, scriptural qualifications apply.>)
- Mk 11:24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.
- Lk 11:10 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

- Jer 29:12-13 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.
- Mt 7:11 If you, then, though you are evil, 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!
- Jn 15:7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.
- Mt 18:19 "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.
- Jn 14:13-14 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.
- Jn 16:23-24 In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ²⁴Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.
- Jn 15:16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit-fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.
- 2Co 12:8-9a Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. ⁹But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (Do we accept God's answer when it isn't what we want, or do we keep nagging and complaining that He doesn't answer?)
- 1Sa 8:19-22 But the people refused to listen to Samuel. "No!" they said. "We want a king over us. ²⁰Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles." ²¹When Samuel heard all that the people said, he repeated it before the LORD. ²²The LORD answered, "Listen to them and give them a king." (When we ask contrary to God's will, He sometimes grants our request to teach us a lesson.)
- 1Sa 12:13 Now here is the king you have chosen, the one you asked for; see, the LORD has set a king over you.
- Num 11:18-20 "Tell the people: 'Consecrate yourselves in preparation for tomorrow, when you will eat meat. The LORD heard you when you wailed, "If only we had meat to eat! We were better off in Egypt!" Now the LORD will give you meat, and you will eat it. ¹⁹You will not eat it for just one day, or two days, or five, ten or twenty days, ²⁰but for a whole month--until it comes out of your nostrils and you loathe it--because you have rejected the LORD, who is among you, and have wailed before him, saying, "Why did we ever leave Egypt?" "'
- Ps 106:14-15 In the desert they gave in to their craving; in the wasteland they put God to the test. ¹⁵So he gave them what they asked for, but sent a wasting disease upon them.
- Ex 16:8-9 Moses also said, "You will know that it was the LORD when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the LORD." ⁹Then Moses told Aaron, "Say to the entire Israelite community, 'Come before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.'" (Do we grumble before and against God?)
- Dt 3:26 But because of you the LORD was angry with me and would not listen to me. "That is enough," the LORD said. "Do not speak to me anymore about this matter. (Do we make the Lord angry with us so that He will not listen?)

- 1Ki 22:5 But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, "First seek the counsel of the LORD." (Do we seek the Lord's counsel? First?)
- Ps 106:13 But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his counsel.
- Ps 40:1 I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry.
- 1Sa 23:4a Once again David inquired of the LORD, and the LORD answered him,
- (Jos 9:14 The men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the LORD.)
- (1Ch 10:13-14a Saul died because he was unfaithful to the LORD; he did not keep the word of the LORD and even consulted a medium for guidance, ¹⁴and did not inquire of the LORD.)
- (1Ch 15:13 It was because you, the Levites, did not bring it up the first time that the LORD our God broke out in anger against us. We did not inquire of him about how to do it in the prescribed way.")
- Jam 4:2-3 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. (Where do we look to satisfy our needs? Are they really needs?)
³When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. (Do we despise God's blessings and his power? Do we use him as a good luck charm?)
- Jos 10:12-14a On the day the LORD gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the LORD in the presence of Israel: "O sun, stand still over Gibeon, O moon, over the Valley of Aijalon." ¹³So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar. The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day. ¹⁴There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the LORD listened to a man. (Joshua asked according to God's will and plan, and used the blessing provided for God's glory; to accomplish His purpose.)
- Num 21:2-3 Then Israel made this vow to the LORD: "If you will deliver these people into our hands, we will totally destroy their cities." ³The LORD listened to Israel's plea and gave the Canaanites over to them. They completely destroyed them and their towns; so the place was named Hormah. (Their vow was in keeping with God's prior instructions; since they intended to carry out the Lord's will, He listened and provided.)
- 1Ch 5:20b He answered their prayers, because they trusted in him. (Do we trust him?)
- Ps 69:33 The LORD hears the needy and does not despise his captive people. (Are we needy or just asking for "more?" Are we "his people?")
- 1Ki 8:59b that he may uphold the cause of his servant and the cause of his people Israel according to each day's need, (Do we trust God's judgment of each day's need? Are we content with his provision?)
- Neh 4:9 But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat. (prayer accompanied by action)
- Neh 2:4-5a The king said to me, "What is it you want?" Then I prayed to the God of heaven, ⁵and I answered the king, (He asked the king, but relied on God.)
- 2Sa 15:31b So David prayed, "O LORD, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness." (David relied on God to undo the conspiracy.)
- 1Ki 8:28b Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day. (Do we enter into, and are we aware of his presence? Do we respect it?)
- 1Ki 8:54 When Solomon had finished all these prayers and supplications to the LORD, he rose from before the altar of the LORD, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out toward heaven. (What is our "posture" before God?)

- Ps 141:2 May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice. (What are our prayers like?)
- Act 10:4 Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked. The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. (How about ours?)
- 2Ch 6:29a and when a prayer or plea is made by any of your people Israel-each one aware of his afflictions and pains, (Are we aware of our afflictions and pains?)
- 1Pe 4:7 The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.
- 1Pe 3:7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.
- Dan 6:13 Then they said to the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day." (Do we let fear of anyone or anything hinder our prayers?)
- Lk 9:45 But they did not understand what this meant. It was hidden from them, so that they did not grasp it, and they were afraid to ask him about it. (We should never be afraid to ask him; or are we afraid of the answer?)
- 1Ch 17:25b So your servant has found courage to pray to you. (Is our faith courageous?)
- Dt 4:7 What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him? (Do we remember this?)
- Ps 109:4b but I am a man of prayer. (Are we people of prayer?)
- Mt 15:28a Then Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." (Do we pray in 'great faith'? <Jam 1:6a>)
- 1Sa 1:10, 12a, 13a, 16b In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the LORD ...
¹²As she kept on praying to the LORD, ... ¹³Hannah was praying in her heart, ...
¹⁶I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief."
- 1Sa 1:20 So in the course of time Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, "Because I asked the LORD for him." (because she had asked properly; in God's will and with pure and right heart/motives)
- 1Sa 1:27 I prayed for this child, and the LORD has granted me what I asked of him. (After God graciously granted her desire, she acknowledged his provision.)
- Ezr 8:23 So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.
- Ezr 9:6 and prayed: "O my God, I am too ashamed and disgraced to lift up my face to you, my God, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens. (yet he gathers himself to pray anyhow)
- Job 42:9-10 So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite did what the LORD told them; and the LORD accepted Job's prayer. (Job's prayer for his friends was accepted because they did what God told them to do.)
¹⁰After Job had prayed for his friends, (at God's command) the LORD made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before.
- Act 22:10 "'What shall I do, Lord?' I asked. "'Get up,' the Lord said, 'and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do.' (Do we ask excitedly, 'What shall I do?' - Are we ready for our assignment?)
- Phl 1:4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy
- Mk 11:25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."
- Mt 6:5-8 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell

you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ⁶But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. (Do we remember this?)

(Lk 18:11a

The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself)

Act 28:8

His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him. (God's will and guidance is sought first.)

Rom 15:30

I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. (Of all the ways Paul could ask, he covets their prayers as a way to "join" him in his struggle.)

2Co 1:11

as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many. (Paul truly sees the aid and value of prayer and God's grace and favor in his answers.)

Heb 5:7

During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.

When it's time to get up and get going!

Jos 7:6-12

Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell facedown to the ground before the ark of the LORD, remaining there till evening. The elders of Israel did the same, and sprinkled dust on their heads. ⁷And Joshua said, "Ah, Sovereign LORD, why did you ever bring this people across the Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? If only we had been content to stay on the other side of the Jordan! ⁸O Lord, what can I say, now that Israel has been routed by its enemies? ⁹The Canaanites and the other people of the country will hear about this and they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. What then will you do for your own great name?" ¹⁰The LORD said to Joshua, "Stand up! What are you doing down on your face?" ¹¹Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant, which I commanded them to keep. They have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied, they have put them with their own possessions. ¹²That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies; they turn their backs and run because they have been made liable to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction

2Sa 12:19-23a

David noticed that his servants were whispering among themselves and he realized the child was dead. "Is the child dead?" he asked. "Yes," they replied, "he is dead." ²⁰Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they served him food, and he ate. ²¹His servants asked him, "Why are you acting this way? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but now that the child is dead, you get up and eat!" ²²He answered, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, 'Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me and let the child live.' ²³But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again?"

By the godless/sinners/disobedient/rebellious/stubborn

- Isa 59:2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.
- Lam 3:8 Even when I call out or cry for help, he shuts out my prayer.
- Lam 3:44 You have covered yourself with a cloud so that no prayer can get through.
- Isa 1:15 When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood;
- Isa 16:12 When Moab appears at her high place, she only wears herself out; when she goes to her shrine to pray, it is to no avail.
- Job 35:12-13 He does not answer when men cry out because of the arrogance of the wicked. ¹³Indeed, God does not listen to their empty plea; the Almighty pays no attention to it.
- Job 27:8-10 For what hope has the godless when he is cut off, when God takes away his life? ⁹Does God listen to his cry when distress comes upon him? ¹⁰Will he find delight in the Almighty? Will he call upon God at all times?
- Jer 6:16 This is what the LORD says: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But you said, 'We will not walk in it.' (Is this us? And when we ask, are we determined to implement God's answer, or have we already decided upon our own answer?)
- Pr 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked but he hears the prayer of the righteous.
- Pr 28:9 If anyone turns a deaf ear to the law, even his prayers are detestable.
- 1Sa 14:37 So Saul asked God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will you give them into Israel's hand?" But God did not answer him that day. (Saul had abused his relationship with God.)
- Isa 58:2 For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them. (Are we eager, or do we just seem so? Do we do right or forsake God's commands?)
- Eze 8:18 Therefore I will deal with them in anger; I will not look on them with pity or spare them. Although they shout in my ears, I will not listen to them."
- Eze 14:3 "Son of man, these men have set up idols in their hearts and put wicked stumbling blocks before their faces. Should I let them inquire of me at all?
- Eze 20:3 "Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel and say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Have you come to inquire of me? As surely as I live, I will not let you inquire of me, declares the Sovereign LORD.'
- Eze 20:31 When you offer your gifts-the sacrifice of your sons in the fire-you continue to defile yourselves with all your idols to this day. Am I to let you inquire of me, O house of Israel? As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I will not let you inquire of me.
- Jer 10:21 The shepherds are senseless and do not inquire of the LORD; so they do not prosper and all their flock is scattered.
- Zep 1:6 those who turn back from following the LORD and neither seek the LORD nor inquire of him.
- Mal 2:13-14 Another thing you do: You flood the LORD's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them

with pleasure from your hands. ¹⁴You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. (Is my wife my partner; are we in union with him?)

- Mal 2:17 You have wearied the LORD with your words. "How have we wearied him?" you ask. By saying, "All who do evil are good in the eyes of the LORD, and he is pleased with them" or "Where is the God of justice?" (Does the LORD weary of our immaturity, rebellion and twisting of his clear teachings?)
- Mal 3:8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, `How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings. (Do we wonder why our prayers are ineffective while we are robbing God?)
- Mic 3:4 Then they will cry out to the LORD, but he will not answer them. At that time he will hide his face from them because of the evil they have done.
- Zec 7:11-13 "But they refused to pay attention; stubbornly they turned their backs and stopped up their ears. ¹²They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry. ¹³"When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen," says the LORD Almighty.
- Mk 12:40 They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely."
- 1Pe 3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

For those who do not honor God

- Jer 7:16 "So do not pray for this people nor offer any plea or petition for them; do not plead with me, for I will not listen to you.
- Jer 11:11-14 Therefore this is what the LORD says: 'I will bring on them a disaster they cannot escape. Although they cry out to me, I will not listen to them. ¹²The towns of Judah and the people of Jerusalem will go and cry out to the gods to whom they burn incense, but they will not help them at all when disaster strikes. ¹³You have as many gods as you have towns, O Judah; and the altars you have set up to burn incense to that shameful god Baal are as many as the streets of Jerusalem.' ¹⁴"Do not pray for this people nor offer any plea or petition for them, because I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their distress.
- Jer 14:11 Then the LORD said to me, "Do not pray for the well-being of this people.