**Reflections on Prayer**

**This brief study was born out of some requests I had to speak on prayer. I am far from an expert and there will be many holes in the presentation of this vast subject. But my hope is that you will be helped to draw closer, be bolder, and join with me in coming to our Father in hopes of further honoring His Son.**

**As we start another year closer to being with Jesus, we have never needed the Lord more. Nothing makes more sense than to focus on the great resource of prayer. You need it, those you love need it, our nation needs it, and the world needs it. As many before me have said, “Let us pray!”**

**Aspects of prayer**

* **Daily, regular prayer – Phil. 1:3-4; Eph. 1:16; 1 Thess. 1:2; 1 Tim. 2:1; 5:5; 2 Tim. 1:3 “night and day”**
* **“Popcorn prayers that address specific situations that come up in life – Phil. 1:19; Col. 4:3; 2 Thess. 3:1; 1 Tim. 4:5; Philem. 22; James 5:13, 17-18**
* **Times of thanks and praise – Ps. 26:7; 50:14; 95:2; 100:4; 136:1; 2 Cor. 4:15; 9:11-12; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2; 1 Tim. 4:3-4; Rev. 7:12**

**Preparations for prayer:**

* **Instruction Ask God to teach you to pray – Lk. 11:1; Mt. 11:28-30**
* **Devotion Prayer involves being devoted to it – Col. 4:2**
* **Dependance Empty repetition/many words do not help. We are not praying to inform or explain your prayer to the Lord. God already knows what we need. We are coming to ask Him – Matt. 6:7-9**
* **Brevity Brief prayers can be effective prayers – Matt. 6:9-13**
* **Ask God wants us, indeed commands us, to ask Him for what we need – Matt. 6:7-9; 7:7f.**
* **Habit Prayer is to be a constant part of our lives – Lk. 18:1; 1 Thess. 5:16-18**
* **Forgiveness If we don’t forgive, we lose fellowship. Forgiveness is necessary for effective prayers – Matt. 6:14-15; Ps. 66:18; Eph. 4:30-31**
* **Private Prayer, giving, and fasting are not to be done for the approval of others – Matt. 6:1-6**
* **Generosity God wants to give us what is good – Matt. 7:7-11**
* **Important God cares about the smallest details of our lives – Matt. 10:29-31**
* **Limitless God’s love for us is beyond comprehension, as is His power to answer our prayers – Eph. 3:14-21**
* **Faith God’s existence, the reality that He is God, and that He is good and responds to faith are critical elements to prayer – Heb. 11:6**
* **Lifestyle Our walk with God matters to our prayer life – Prov. 15:8; 2 Pet. 3:7, 12**
* **Why not? Two of the reasons we don’t get answers to prayer are: 1) We don’t pray Jas. 4:2 and 2) When we do pray, we do so with the wrong motives James 4:3**
* **Answers God always hears and answers every prayer according to His will – 1 John 5:14-15, but as the passage that follows demonstrates, there are times are prayers will not get an affirmative answer**
* **Translation The Spirit conveys our meaning to God when we pray, even when we can’t find the right words – Rom. 8:26-27**
* **Available He is always available and is there to deliver us, 24/7 – Heb. 7:25**
* **Confidence We are to approach God confidently to a throne of grace (Heb. 4:14-16) and when we do, we can receive mercy and grace to help us in time of need**