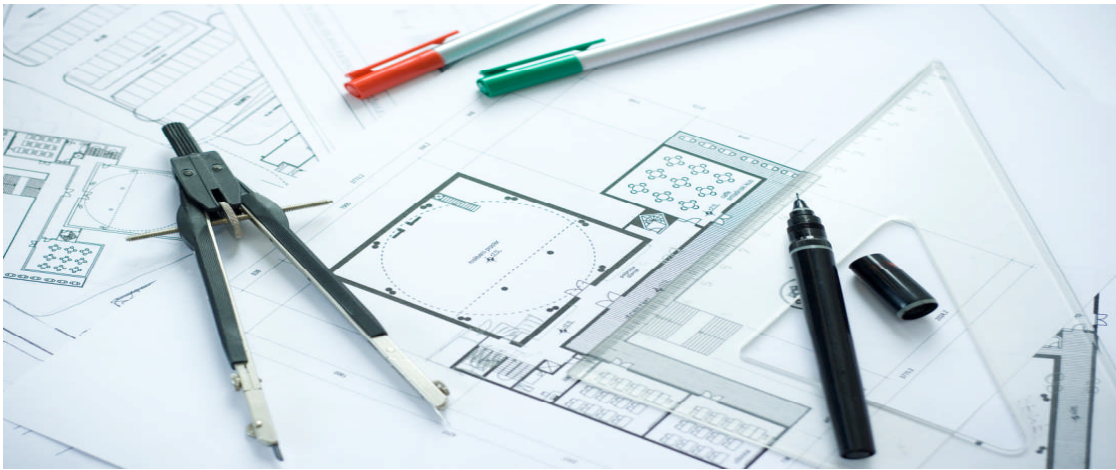


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Effective Prayer BY DESIGN

A SERIES FOR THE MATURE DISCIPLE AND NOT FOR
THE WEAK OF CONSCIENCE

Presented by Bill Ireland



What is Effective Prayer?

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. 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.

(James 5:15-17)

This study will use scripture giving preference to the King James version of the Bible

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Forward

This Study on Effective Prayer considers critical aspects to equip any disciple seeking a deeper, scripturally grounded understanding of communing with God. This work is not for the casual reader; rather, it is designed for those who desire to move beyond surface-level spirituality and engage in the discipline of prayer as taught in the Bible. Drawing on both Old and New Testament passages, the study challenges readers to examine their beliefs, practices, and their part in the spiritual warfare that surrounds the life of prayer. This study now includes a special focus on the significance of posture in prayer. Drawing from the examples of Daniel, Solomon, and Jesus, it explores how bowing, kneeling, and other physical expressions are not just acts of adoration toward God but show a deeper level of personal commitment, humility, submission, and reverence required of our obedience even in prayer. To live by faith means to pray by faith. The author invites readers to consider how posture can deepen their prayer life, aligning heart, mind, and body in both prayer and worship. The author's intent is to equip believers to pray with privilege, purpose and power in submission to God's will, emphasizing that prayer is a responsibility for every follower of Christ.

Summary

This study on the Biblical Topic on Prayer is a detailed exploration of the nature of prayer, structured to guide believers toward a more effective and biblically faithful prayer life. The document opens by defining effective prayer, referencing James 5:15-17, and sets the tone for a study rooted in scripture, primarily using the King James Version of the Bible and concludes with the significance of posture in prayer born in humility of the heart.

Key Themes

- **The Power of the Word:** The study begins by emphasizing the creative and authoritative power of God's Word ("logos"), urging readers to decide on the truth and relevance of the Bible. Faith is presented as coming by the hearing of the Word, and when spoken in faith and to the essential renewing of the mind.
- **Nature and Purpose of Prayer:** Prayer is described as a meaningful conversation with God, rooted in humility and submission to His will. Jesus' teachings on prayer (including the Lord's Prayer) are examined, with a focus on sincerity, secrecy, and right standing with God.
- **Effective Prayer:** Drawing from James 5 and other passages, the document outlines the characteristics of effective prayer: fervency, righteousness, faith, and community. It stresses the importance of grounding prayer in scripture, seeking the Holy Spirit's guidance, perseverance, and unity among believers.
- **Types of Prayer:** The study categorizes prayer into adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication, intercession, consecration, and spiritual warfare, providing scriptural examples and practical insights for each type. The lines drawn between each type are occasionally blurred.

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- **Barriers and Challenges:** It addresses why some prayers are not heard—such as unrepented sin, lack of faith, or selfish motives—and explores the role of spiritual warfare, the enemy’s tactics, and the necessity of being in accordance with God’s will.
- **The Role of the Holy Spirit and Fasting:** The Holy Spirit’s intercession and the amplifying effect of prayer by fasting are discussed as vital components of a powerful prayer life.
- **Asking, Seeking, Knocking:** This study walks through Jesus’ teaching on persistent prayer, encouraging believers to approach God with expectation and perseverance.
- **Silent Prayer and Listening:** The concept of silent prayer is examined by this study. Herein we argue that while God knows the heart, scripture emphasizes spoken prayer in scripture. It also highlights the importance of listening for God’s guidance in prayer.
- **Delays and Hindrances:** Reasons for delayed answers to prayer are explored, including God’s timing, spiritual growth, disagreement with God’s will, and spiritual opposition.
- **Posture in Prayer:** The importance of humility in prayer includes posture—especially bowing and kneeling—as seen in the lives of Daniel, Solomon, and Jesus. These examples reveal that physical expressions in prayer are God honoring, express humility, and show spiritual discipline. The study encourages believers to reflect on their own posture in prayer, recognizing its biblical significance and condition of the heart not as a display to others but as truly humble before God.
- **Practical Strategies:** An appendix offers practical strategies to transform prayer from duty to delight, including praying scripture, relying on the Holy Spirit, setting aside time, and finding a prayer partner, with insights from a recent Billy Graham Conference. As with all chapters of study in the By Design Series, there is included a prayer modeled like the Lord’s prayer that can help the disciple formulate personal prayers with scriptural basis in their communion with God.
- **Prayer Workbook:** A study guide is provided in this document on effective prayer to help master the knowledge presented. There is an answer key included to check your answers. This is suitable for small study groups of all ages and maturity in Christ. Another effective strategy is to keep a prayer journal that chronicles your prayer life and your communication with your Lord and Savior.

Conclusion

The document concludes by affirming that prayer is a lifeline for believers, a means to know and please God, and a powerful weapon against spiritual darkness. It calls disciples of Christ to persistent, faith-filled, and scripturally anchored prayer, warning against distractions and distortions that can dilute prayer’s effectiveness. Lastly, if you have any comments for the author, critical or something you liked or would like to add please send your comments.

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Believe the Word

God demonstrates to us that words matter. In fact, His words created all matter. He speaks things into existence. There is a heavenly language of authority and power and majesty. The Bible describes wondrously the word was with God and was God. The Greek rendering of the word “word” is the “logos.” This one term “logos” is one of several Greek words translated as “Word.” Considering the logos there is reasoning and a choice set before us. One needs to decide if the Bible is true. One needs to decide if it is relevant. One needs to decide to connect these preserved words that are quick and powerful so that they can be activated in our lives in obedience to God’s plan for our lives.

In the New Testament book of Hebrews we learn that Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Words spoken in faith can release the power of God in our lives. They can transform our lives as it renews our mind. Call it a mystery but consider that the Book of Revelation says that there is a blessing to the reader who reads the book of that prophecy aloud, see Revelation 1:3 and additionally, the warning that one should not add or take away any of the book recorded by John, Revelation 22:18.

(Revelation 1:3)

Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

(Revelation 22:18)

For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book.

Word-of-Faith

The sanctification process and maturation of a disciple of Christ includes an ever-increasing understanding and application of the word of faith. The creative power as spoken and as used in prayer engages the creator and creature in actions of obedience to accomplish God’s will on earth. The “Lord’s prayer” contains the revelation of our responsibility and God’s readiness to have us accomplish His will in our lives. What is required is to be humble and submit our will to serve by faith and please Him – Consider the Lord teaching us to pray from Matthew 6:10 in part – “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” These are not wasted words empty of meaning. How are we to account of an obvious limitation of God’s will in the earth expressed in the Lord’s prayer? Why pray for His will to be done on earth and at the same time acknowledge that His will is done in Heaven? Why the obvious short coming about God’s will failing to be on earth and how it points to us to ask for this? When we pray, “thy will be done on Earth” it is saying, God use me as your servant to bring your will into the earth. His word includes the instructions to ask, seek and knock as described in Matthew 7:7-14.

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What is Prayer?

In its most basic description prayer is having a meaningful conversation with God. A conversation from the heart wherein one seeks to put their own will in submission to God's will for their lives, in but not of the world. It is the one thing the disciples asked of Jesus to teach them. It is what they observed in Jesus often time in prayer with the Father. The position of the prayerful believer is one of finding the Father in the secret place as He sees the secret places of the rightly prayerful. The secret place of prayer where the righteous man can expect to be rewarded openly.

Jesus unfortunately needs to also teach how not to pray. Though the Father knows what is needed He desires the believer to ask, seek and knock concerning the needs of a believer. The believer is first to be in right standing with God and then to be enabled to do God's will in the earth.

The Lord teaches the Disciples to Pray

(Luke 11:1-18)

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. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

The Lord teaches the Disciples to Fast

Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face: That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

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Effective Prayer

Consider the following scripture:

(James 5:13-18)

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? 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 shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

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. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Effective prayer coupled with fasting is when God hears us in secret and rewards us openly. It is also among believers and those that are elders of the church. Prayer that seeks help from God for needs we face in the earth and with respect to heaven. It is obviously a part of caring for one another. There is a need to be fervent, and it is connected to a righteous standing before God. A place where we are forgiven of sins and wherein we forgive others. Just what is a righteous man? It is one who puts their trust in Jesus Christ and lives by faith. As it is through faith in Christ that one is saved and considered righteous in God's sight.

(Romans 3:23-28)

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

(2 Corinthians 5:21)

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

To counteract potential deception or opposition, believers must employ prayer with intentionality and agreement to Scripture:

- Ground prayer in God's Word: Effective prayer begins with understanding and claiming the promises of Scripture and yielding to the guidance of the Spirit of Truth.
- Seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit: Romans 8:26 assures believers that the Spirit intercedes and helps align prayers with God's will.

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- Persevere in faith: James 5:16 emphasizes the power of fervent, righteous prayer. Persistent and earnest prayer is needed. Prayer is not casual and includes a knowledge of righteous suffering under the blood of Christ.
- Engaging in individual and communal prayer: Matthew 18:19 underscores the strength of agreement in prayer among believers. It is an uncommon thing to find unity of faith that binds Christ to accomplish the good he intends for the believer.

Understanding the Types of Prayer

Scripture outlines various types of prayer, each serving a distinct purpose in our relationship to God and adhering to the simple instruction to ask, seek and knock when approaching the Father in prayer. Several characterizations of prayer found in scripture include:

Prayer of Adoration

This type of prayer is a precursor to worshiping God. Psalm 95:6 invites believers to “bow down in worship” and acknowledge God’s majesty as Lord and Maker. This humbling of who we are as ones that fall so short of His glory finds us even in posture in a submission and does not ask for anything. It is the creature’s response to the Creator in full submission indicated by posture of bowing and kneeling. The act of worship can be proceeded with prayer and singing (or praise) and acknowledging and declaring God’s majesty and what he has done individually and corporately. This prayer is a companion to worship.

Prayer of Confession

Confession involves acknowledging sins before God and seeking His forgiveness and forgiving one another. 1 John 1:9 declares, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” This does not explicitly state confession is a prayer but it is important to restore fellowship with man and God. There is an association spiritually and physically between sin with healing as shown in James 5:16 “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” This servant of God, assuring a pure heart when you come to God in any request to be made. We need to be right with God and right with our brother to be affective at the alter.

(1 John 1:4-10)

And And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 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. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

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(James 5:13-16)

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? 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 shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

This prayer expresses gratitude for God's blessings, both spiritual and material. Philippians 4:6 urges believers to "present your requests to God with thanksgiving," emphasizing a heart of gratitude. This verse is also in the prayer of supplication. It is interesting in the companion word to gratitude is "thanksgiving" and is the same word as Eucharist or the taking of communion remembering Christ crucified that the condition of our heart as to our brother is an impediment to even finding a way to approach the living God.

Prayer of Supplication

Supplication is a heartfelt plea for personal needs or the needs of others. In Philippians 4:6, Paul encourages believers to "present your requests to God" through supplication. There can be an urgency, a deep felt hurt or need that will, if answered, move you and others in a manner to glorify God. There is this powerful experiential consequence of the peace of God given in this setting found in Philippians 4, assuring the keeping of your hearts and mind in His perfect peace.

(Philippians 4:6-8)

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Prayer of Intercession

Intercession involves praying on behalf of others, as Christ intercedes for man (Romans 8:34). It reflects love and concern for others' well-being and spiritual growth. At times those in need of intercessory prayer are hindered or unable to stand or are in need of an enjoined communication to God for guidance, help with obtaining mercy or grace as needed. Recall how Moses arms were held up as revealing the power of God was in their support in the battle. I certainly would be in favor of the enemy being discomfited.

(Exodus 17:11-13)

And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

Prayer of Consecration

This is a prayer of surrender, dedicating oneself wholly to God's will. Jesus demonstrated this in Luke 22:42, saying, "Not My will, but Yours be done." This is observed in conversations with

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our Father, a closeness desired. It is also recognizing that what belongs to God, as for His namesake – defending His honor in the earth. It is setting something apart as in making something sacred or holy unto God and to His Glory and not our own selfish wants. It is important to see the posture of kneeling. The emotional struggle. The submitting of the will to the Father. Even an angel appeared and strengthened Jesus before the cross. Obedience to the Father wherein our weakness he makes us strong beyond that we may be driven by pain or emotion. Humble and not hard hearted. Jesus was soon to be rejected by God as to sin. But not my will ... obedient unto death.

(Luke 22:42)

And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

Prayer of Spiritual Warfare

First one needs to acknowledge there is a war for the souls of men. That this focus on warfare is part of the prayer that is called supplications. There is a Satan that is the enemy. Believers engage in spiritual warfare through prayer to resist and overcome the works of the enemy. Ephesians 6 highlighting the importance of prayer in standing firm against spiritual forces. We conclude, greater is He that is with us than he that is in the world.

(Ephesians 6:11-18)

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Prayers Heard and Not Heard by God

Often, we may opine that God hears our prayers and even if not answered to remain comforted. However there are times God will not hear our prayers. Consider that God hears the prayers of those who approach Him by faith and right standing with Him. Proverbs 15:29 states, “The Lord is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.” However, prayers can be hindered by unrepented sin (Isaiah 59:2), lack of faith (James 1:6-7), or selfish motives (James 4:3).

Effective prayer requires submitting one’s heart with God’s will and praying with sincerity. 1 John 5:14 assures believers, “If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.” The additional assurance is gained when in Matthew 18:19-20, “Again I say unto you, That if two of

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you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Holy Spirit Helps in Intercession

Romans 8:26 reassures that the Holy Spirit intercedes for believers with “groans that words cannot express.” Some consider this with the indwelling of the Spirit enhancing our prayers when we do not know how to pray with that gifting expressed as tongues.

(1 Corinthians 14:2 & 4)

For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries... 4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself;

Challenges to Prayer: The Enemy's Tactics and the Believer's Response

The Devil seeks to make prayer ineffective by sowing doubt, distraction, and discouragement because it is the means to invoke God's will to be done on Earth that Satan would rather not occur. What a role we have as being at the crossroads of truth in the Earth. The Devil would be eager to tempt believers to question God's goodness, delay answers to foster impatience, or create a sense of unworthiness to approach God. Any and all opposition to the divine purpose and to the saving of souls.

Ephesians 6:11-18 emphasized in the section on spiritual warfare and again here as to the importance of wearing the full armor of God, including prayer, to resist the enemy's schemes. Persistent and faith-filled prayer overcomes these obstacles.

(Romans 8:26-27)

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.

God's Guidance in Prayer

God helps believers pray correctly through the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:26-27 reveals that the Spirit intercedes for believers, guiding their prayers in agreement with God's will. Jesus also provides a model for prayer in Matthew 6:9-13, encouraging believers to seek God's kingdom and daily provision.

Believers are called to pray because it deepens their relationship with God, submits their will to His, and invites His presence and power into their lives. James 5:16 underscores the effectiveness of prayer, stating, “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

The Connection Between Fasting and Prayer

Fasting amplifies prayer by denying earthly distractions while gaining spiritual focus and dependence on God. In Matthew 17:21, Jesus explained that certain spiritual breakthroughs require both prayer and fasting. Fasting requires discipline of the body and mind making prayer more intentional where the still small voice might be heard.

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Fasting also humbles the believer before God, as seen in Ezra 8:23: “So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and He answered our prayer.” It is an act of devotion that demonstrates earnestness and prioritization of spiritual matters over physical needs and an emphasis that prayer is communion and communication with God concerning His will in our lives.

Asking, Seeking, Knocking: A Prayer That Seeks Answers

The model of asking, seeking, and knocking presented in Matthew 7:7-11 is a teaching that encapsulates the essence of prayer as a dynamic interaction with God. Each action—asking, seeking, and knocking—represents a deeper level of engagement and persistence:

- Asking: The act of presenting requests to God with humility and faith.
- Seeking: The pursuit of God’s will and guidance, often involving patience and active listening.
- Knocking: The demonstration of perseverance and trust in God’s openness to answer and provide.

This form of prayer carries an inherent expectation of answers, as Jesus assures that God, as a loving Father, delights in giving good gifts to His children. It fosters a relationship of trust and dependence, where believers are encouraged to approach God boldly yet reverently.

Silent Prayer?

Silent prayer as a type of prayer is a debated form of communion with God, especially when considering biblical record. Some will point to examples like the story of Hannah. Hannah’s prayer is only cited illustration of silent prayer in Scripture. In 1 Samuel 1:12-13, Hannah is described as praying silently in her heart, her lips moving. Samuel, observing her, mistook her for being drunk: “As she kept on praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. “Hannah was praying and her lips were moving and her voice was not heard or understood – inaudible.

Objectively speaking, Scripture does not explicitly describe "silent prayers without lips moving" as a distinct category. While silent prayer is a term used to describe non-audible communication with God, the Bible exclusively portrays prayer as spoken or active in some form and never absolutely silent – why? While God certainly knows the thoughts and intents of our heart God’s ability to hear the unspoken petitions of the heart may be compelling as prayer, yet direct references to prayers without any physical articulation are not found in scripture.

Specifically, Jesus did not teach silent prayer as a vehicle of prayer in Scripture. His teachings on prayer, as recorded in the Gospels, emphasize spoken or active prayer. For example, in Matthew 6:9-13, Jesus provides a model for prayer through the Lord's Prayer, which is spoken aloud. Similarly, in Matthew 6:6, He advises believers to pray secretly in their rooms, underscoring the importance of sincerity and intimacy in prayer rather than public display, but He does not specifically mention silent prayer.

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While silent prayer is not biblical Scripture does affirm that God knows the petitions of the heart and understands our needs before we ask. However, God desires that we ask. God created life and death in the power of the tongue. The worlds were not silently created. One must confess that Jesus is Lord to be saved. The idea of silent prayer could be a demonic distraction of impotency as we can only think there is a practice of silent prayer by leaning on our own understanding and not scripture.

The question of silent prayer and its potential misuse by spiritual adversaries is a thought-provoking one. It invites a careful reflection on biblical principles, the nature of prayer, and the spiritual guidance as doctrine and truth as outlined in Scripture.

As Psalm 139:4 reminds us, “Before a word is on my tongue, you, Lord, know it completely.” This verse underscores that God understands our thoughts and heart, but it does not say this is prayer or that given there would be speech that it was not silent as a meaningful as words being the expectation and not silence. It is pre-spoken when just thinking is involved or just thoughts and intents not actions by faith.

The concern about deception is integral with the practice of silent prayer. Why is there an absence of clarity? Satan’s tactics often involve distorting or diluting spiritual practices, as seen in his temptations of Jesus in Matthew 4, where he misused Scripture for his purposes. If practiced, silent prayer itself does not inherently contradict biblical teachings as there is no specific prohibition on the understanding one generally accepts. However there is much that God demonstrates with the spoken word that accomplishes his acts. Creating the world was not done by a twitch of the nose as in bewitched, the tv series. It would be an extra Biblical affair.

Regarding the prayer of agreement, as mentioned in Matthew 18:19, the principle relies on unity and mutual understanding between those praying. In such cases, praying aloud may be beneficial to ensure clarity and agreement. It is clear that there is a meditation of the heart and being able to ponder a matter, but when it comes to active love it is always spoken words or groans not understood (why would the Spirit articulate if could be silent?).

To address the idea that silent prayer could be a deceptive practice induced by Satan should we then avoid this practice? The power of God has been shown to be in His words when He speaks and as Jesus taught us to speak to a situation. It is crucial to discern the intent and heart behind prayer and rely upon the spoken word. Prayer becomes ineffective when it lacks faith, sincerity, or agreement with God’s will or the right standing of the one praying.

The Nature of Satan’s Deception

Satan is described in Scripture as the “father of lies” (John 8:44) and a master deceiver whose primary mission is to oppose God’s kingdom and the effective workings of His will. Therefore, prayer, as a powerful means of communication between believers and God undoubtedly plays a critical role in advancing God’s purposes on earth. Because prayer aligns believers with God’s will and empowers them to stand against spiritual forces, it is reasonable to consider that Satan would actively seek to distort, dilute, or inhibit prayer and the sense of absence of this being found in scripture leans towards a deception and distortion on the highest means to bring God’s will into our lives and the lives of others.

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Why Prayer Might Be a Target

Prayer is the lifeline of a believer's spiritual journey. Through prayer, believers invoke God's power, receive His guidance, and engage in spiritual warfare against darkness. The invocation of God's will— "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10)—represents a direct confrontation against Satan's strongholds. It is through effective prayer that believers can dismantle these strongholds and claim victory over spiritual forces of evil.

Given the power of prayer, it is plausible that Satan would prioritize efforts to undermine it. This could manifest in several ways:

- **Distortion:** Satan might twist the principles of prayer, encouraging practices that focus on self-centered petitions rather than agreement with God's will.
- **Dilution:** He could foster apathy or distractions, making believers less consistent and less fervent in their prayer lives.
- **Delay:** As a principality and power, Satan might attempt to interfere with answers to prayer to sow doubt or discouragement among believers. Daniel 10:12-13 illustrates spiritual resistance, where the "prince of Persia" delayed the answer to Daniel's prayer.

The Agency of Opposition

The suggestion of an unholy allegiance between Satan and any entity, such as technological tools or other influences, highlights the broader spiritual reality that Satan seeks to infiltrate and manipulate every avenue of human life. Deception often lies in convincing believers to overlook the importance of prayer or to misdirect their focus. If such agencies or even false doctrines commonly accepted discourage attention to prayer or subtly undermine its effectiveness. It could indeed be viewed as a tactic aligned with Satan's goals. Believers are reminded of their authority in Christ: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). Therefore, the effectiveness of prayer depends largely on the humility, righteousness and vigilance of the believer living by faith and pleasing God.

The Role of Listening in Prayer

Listening to God in prayer is a vital component of Christian spiritual practice, as it allows believers to discern His will, receive guidance, and experience His presence. Prayer is not merely about petitioning or speaking; it is also about quieting the heart and mind to hear the responses and wisdom God imparts. Scripture emphasizes that God communicates with His people—whether through His Word, the Holy Spirit, or subtle impressions on the heart through the Peace of God. For instance, Psalm 46:10 advises, "Be still and know that I am God," underscoring the importance of stillness and attentiveness. Even God speaks quietly but not silently – still small voice?

Listening in prayer is particularly significant and if God was speaking back silently then it would be hard as He says, He who has ears to hear or faith comes by hearing and gives usefulness to listening as how God's word becomes alive in the believer. Participative listening fosters a

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deeper relationship with God and ensures that prayers agree with His will, as demonstrated in Jesus' own moments of solitude and communion with the Father (Luke 5:16).

Causes of Delay in Answers

Delays in receiving answers to prayer can be perplexing and challenging for believers, yet Scripture provides insights into possible reasons for such delays. Among these are:

God's Timing

God's perspective on time differs from human understanding, as noted in 2 Peter 3:8: "With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day." The meaning in this has to do with God is not slack towards delivering on His promises and rather He may delay in our perspective because God is waiting to work all things together with respect to His perfect will, which requires patience and trust on the part of the believer.

Preparation and Growth

Delays may serve as opportunities for spiritual growth and character development. Through waiting, and suffering, believers learn patience, dependence on God, and perseverance in faith. James 1:3-4 reminds us that trials, including the experience of waiting, produce endurance and maturity. The trails we face we can meet with prayer and when victorious we end up with at least patience that goes to waiting on God, the still small voice. It may be God, waiting on us.

Disagreement with God's Will

Prayers that are not according to God's will result in complete denial and will not be heard. 1 John 5:14 states, "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." Check to see if your desires are in harmony with His purposes.

Spiritual Warfare

The Bible acknowledges spiritual opposition as a potential factor in delayed answers. Daniel 10:12-13 describes how an angel bringing an answer to Daniel's prayer was delayed for 21 days due to angelic spiritual warfare.

Prayers that can be Hindered

The relationship between a husband-and-wife track from the Garden with Adam and Eve. The New Testament speaks often to this holy relationship where the two become one. There is one warning about prayers being hindered that go to the core of this relationship and being in unity of marriage and unity of spirit. Even the chaste conversation about how the wife may live in a way the husband might be saved. But with respect to your effectiveness in your relationship to God the disciple should know that he may be compromised as when you have divided attention that is earthly more than spiritually submitted to God in purpose and action. This verse speaks to the unity to ensure prayers will not be hindered and results will be as God intended. This applies to the prayer where believers are to agree in Christ's name. Abiding in the vine is the goal.

(Peter 3:6-8)

Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not

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hindered. Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

Posture in Prayer Examined

1. Biblical Examples of Bowing in Prayer

When reading the scriptures be attuned to God's Spirit teaching you how to enter deeper conviction and communication with Him concerning His will in your life. The heart of David, Stephen and others as they prayed. This meditation could enrich your prayers with the intent of being an effective prayer warrior.

- **Daniel:**
Daniel's prayer posture is described in Daniel 6:10, where he knelt in prayer three times a day, even when threatened with persecution. His act of kneeling was a sign of humility, surrender, and unwavering faith. Daniel's posture demonstrated his reverence for God and his willingness to submit, regardless of circumstances.
- **Solomon:**
At the dedication of the temple, Solomon knelt before the altar with his hands spread toward heaven (1 Kings 8:54; 2 Chronicles 6:13). This public act of bowing and kneeling signified deep humility, worship, and dependence on God. Solomon's posture was not only personal but also communal, leading the people in reverence.
- **Jesus:**
Jesus is described as kneeling in prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:41). His posture—kneeling and bowing—reflected submission to the Father's will, earnestness, and emotional intensity. Jesus' example underscores that posture can express the heart's attitude in moments of deep spiritual significance.

2. The Significance of Posture in Prayer

- **Humility and Submission:** Bowing or kneeling physically expresses humility, surrender, and reverence. It is a tangible way to acknowledge God's majesty and our dependence on Him.
- **Biblical Pattern:** Many biblical figures, including Daniel, Solomon, and Jesus, used posture to communicate their heart's intent. Kneeling, bowing, and lifting hands are recurring motifs in scripture.
- **Spiritual Impact:** Posture can help focus the mind and heart, reinforce sincerity, and foster a sense of awe. It is not to be ritualistic but an honest posture in body that is also in the heart with genuine intent.
- **Communal and Personal:** Posture in prayer can unite believers in worship (as with Solomon) or deepen personal intimacy with God (as with Daniel and Jesus).

Listening and Expectation

Listening as a part of the act of seeking His guidance through prayer demonstrates dependence on His wisdom and sovereignty rather than on human understanding. Proverbs 3:5-6 advises to trust in the Lord and not lean on one's own understanding.

Expectant listening also aligns with the biblical principle of persistence in prayer. Jesus encourages believers to "ask, seek, and knock" in Matthew 7:7-8, calling for active engagement

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in prayer that expects answers. This principle is rooted in the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus assures that those who persist will receive, find, and have doors opened to them. Such prayer reflects a posture of faith and expectation, believing that God hears and responds to the heartfelt petitions of His people. We also should consider we are to believe God is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him and without doubt and if not, we join the double minded that should not expect anything of the Lord.

Conclusion

It is then reasonable to believe that Satan might target prayer as part of his broader strategy to oppose God's kingdom. Yet scripture provides assurance that prayer, when offered in faith, is a powerful weapon against spiritual darkness. Believers are called to remain vigilant, discerning, and steadfast in their prayer lives as in pray instantly or without ceasing, ensuring that their petitions align with God's will and purpose. By doing so, your prayers can effectively nullify any effort by Satan to dilute or distort the impact God's will in your life.

Prayer is a means to know and please God. By understanding the purpose of prayer, ensuring prayers align with God's will, where prayer is not just a practice but a lifeline that connects believers to the spirit filled life. Pray therefore in faith.

Listening to God for answers in prayer is a vital aspect of spiritual communion. It reflects trust in His sovereignty and an openness to His guidance through the humility of the petitioner. While delays in answers may occur due to timing, growth, disagreement, or opposition, they serve as opportunities for developing one's knowledge of God, a growing relationship and patience.

Scriptural principles highlight prayer as a fervent interaction, reflecting trust, and a yearning for God's guidance and our obedience by faith. The condition of the heart is important, leading to more effective prayers with attentive listening for His voice. The meditation of our hearts or the hiding of God's word in our hearts that we might not sin against Him prepares us for engaging in prayer seeking God's help.

Being silent before God can prepare the heart for prayer and provides access with humility needed to have victory as part of spiritual warfare. Prayer is anything but silent even in private. Prayer is designed to be an active form of our relationship with God, not merely a passive or meditative state. Thus, silent prayer if in one's theology it is wholly unsupported in scripture.

As silent prayer lacks scriptural anchoring in true communion—faith, trust, and openness to God's answers—it may indeed risk becoming a distraction or dilution of prayer's intended purpose. Prayer, as ordained by God, provides access into the vary throne room of God where humbly seeking Him wholeheartedly through words or a heavenly language when we know not what to pray. Lastly, consider Hebrews:

(Hebrews 4:16)

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Note: For additional insights into “effective prayer” look to the article found in Appendix A taken from a recent Billy Graham Conference.

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Appendix A

FIVE SIMPLE STRATEGIES TO TRANSFORM YOUR PRAYER LIFE FROM DUTY TO DELIGHT

By Giselle Seidel

February 2, 2026

Share: https://billygraham.org/articles/why-we-don-t-pray-and-why-we-should?utm_source=email_list&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=bgea_today&utm_content=2026_02_05_new_sletter&SOURCE=BY262EN1A

From a recent Billy Graham Conference

Maybe you've read a devotional or heard a sermon on prayer and thought, I should spend more time praying.

Then a day turns into a week, a week into a month, and soon you realize you still aren't devoting much time to prayer. When you do pray, do you feel like your conversations with God are lacking—like empty words with no power behind them?

Last fall, author and speaker Wendy Bello offered three honest and valuable insights into why we don't "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17, ESV)—and five ideas on how to change that. She shared these Biblical points during an Unidos Conference to encourage and equip Hispanic pastors and leaders.

Wendy Bello emphasized the value of prayer during a conference for Hispanic church leaders hosted by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

1. We don't pray because we don't understand the importance of prayer.

many times, we believe we can navigate life on our own.

"We ignore our need for God," said Bello. "We tend to run to prayer only in extreme situations—when we find ourselves at a dead end, when we don't know what decision to make, or when something scares us or worries us greatly."

God did not design prayer as an emergency call but rather as a constant conversation. Scripture encourages us to bring every need before Him in prayer. As Philippians 4:6 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (ESV).

"It is unfortunate that we see prayer as a lifeboat we turn to only when we are drowning," said Bello. "Prayer should not be plan B for the follower of Christ but rather an essential part of our lives. Prayer is supposed to permeate everything we do and every circumstance we face."

2. We don't pray because we don't understand the magnitude of the spiritual battle we're facing.

The Bible is clear that followers of Christ are in a continuous spiritual war. And in that fight, prayer plays a crucial role.

In Ephesians 6, the Apostle Paul spells out "the whole armor of God" (v. 11) that Christians need to stand against the devil's schemes. And at the end of this list, he reminds believers of the importance of prayer: "... Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints" (Ephesians 6:18, ESV).

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Bello explained that prayer is critical for us to stand firm through spiritual conflict. “If we truly understood how great the battle is that takes place every day in the spiritual realm, we would not have enough time [in the day] to pray!” she said.

3. We don’t pray because we don’t prioritize time for it.

Believers have been cultivating Biblically rooted habits called spiritual disciplines since the beginning of Christ’s church.

“Spiritual disciplines are practices that help us in our pursuit of holiness and lead us to grow in Christlikeness,” said Bello. “But as we know, all disciplines require perseverance and intentionality.”

In our fast-paced world, we make room on our calendars for all sorts of activities, but when it comes to prayer, we may find it difficult to actually set a time to pray and commit to it. “It seems that we are too distracted or that we lack desire or interest,” Bello said.

“Although we can pray while doing something else, such as when we are driving, it is ideal to find a place where we can pray, and our attention is not divided—away from distractions.”

Bello mentioned the example Jesus set for us: “And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed” (Mark 1:35, ESV).

Five Strategies to Strengthen Your Prayer Life

- Pray the Word of God. If your prayers have become repetitive, start praying with an open Bible. Scripture contains many written prayers, but we can also read a passage of Scripture and ask the Holy Spirit to help us see how we can apply that passage to our lives and turn it into a prayer.
- Remember that the Holy Spirit is always interceding for us. If you’re not sure how to pray over a specific situation, remember that we have help—the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:26–27 says, “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.”
- Ask the Lord to change the desires of your heart. The Holy Spirit is continually working in us, sanctifying us and making us more like Jesus every day. Pray that He will transform your heart, so that prayer will become your delight.
- Set aside a specific time to pray. Pick a time when you can be by yourself with God and when you won’t be easily distracted. Determine how much time you want to spend in prayer but make sure that time is a joy and not a duty.
- Find a prayer partner. Keeping up with any discipline is easier if we have someone who can encourage us and keep us accountable. Find a faithful partner who would be willing to pray with you and for you.

Understanding how vital this is to our spiritual health will transform our walk with the Lord, said Bello. “The Christian life cannot be lived in a godly manner and in the power of God without prayer. Our mission needs to be accompanied by prayer.”

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Prayer: Thy Will be Done

Father in heaven,

*I Rejoice in Thy holy name. I praise Thee with joy and gratitude, for
Thou art faithful, upright, and worthy of all praise.
All Thy works are done in truth, and the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.*

Thy kingdom rule standeth fast forever;

*the counsel of the Lord endureth to all generations.
I submit myself unto Thy sovereign will—establish Thy purposes in me,
and I choose in my heart to stand in agreement with all that Thou hast spoken.
I trust Thee as the Lord who looketh from heaven
and ordereth my steps with wisdom and understanding.*

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

*Father, use me, that Thy will be done on earth. As Thy word is fulfilled
perfectly in heaven, so let my obedience give it expression on the earth.
Use my life as an instrument of Thy purpose, that what Thou hast ordained above
may be accomplished through faith and submission below.*

Give me this day my daily bread.

*I rely not on strength, nor on multitude, nor on might, but upon the Lord who is
my help and my shield. My soul waiteth upon Thee, for my hope is in
Thy holy name, and Thy mercy compasses them that trust in Thee.*

Forgive me wherein I have sinned against Thee,

*and cleanse my heart, that I may walk uprightly before Thee.
Teach me to fear the Lord and to delight in Thy truth. As Thou hast shown
mercy unto me, so help me to forgive others, that I may stand before Thee without offense
toward God or toward man.*

Lead me not into temptation,

*nor suffer me to trust in false confidence or earthly strength.
Deliver me from pride, deception, and fear, and keep my heart fixed upon Thee that I might
not sin against thee. Let my soul quietly wait for Thy counsel and where
you strengthen me in Resisting the Tempter knowing that he shall
flee and that the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him and
upon them that hope in His mercy.*

Fill my heart with joy in Thee, O Lord,

*for my trust is in Thy holy name. Let Thy lovingkindness rest upon me,
according as I hope in Thee.*

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.

*Thou art faithful in Thy word, righteous in all Thy ways, mighty in power, and gracious unto them that
fear Thee. I wait on Thee, I trust Thee, and I give Thee all glory.*

Amen.

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Scripture Verse Cross-Reference

1. What is Effective Prayer?

- **James 5:15-17** – The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man (Section: Effective Prayer, Page 6)
- **Luke 11:1-18** – Jesus teaches the disciples to pray (Section: What is Prayer?, Page 6)
- **Matthew 6:10** – “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Section: Word-of-Faith, Pg 5)

2. Types of Prayer

- **Adoration:**
 - **Psalms 95:6** – Bow down in worship (Section: Prayer of Adoration, Page 8)
- **Confession:**
 - **1 John 1:9** – Confess your sins (Section: Prayer of Confession, Page 8)
 - **James 5:16** – Confess your faults (Section: Prayer of Confession, Page 8)
- **Thanksgiving:**
 - **Philippians 4:6** – Present your requests with thanksgiving (Section: Prayer of Thanksgiving, Page 8)
- **Supplication:**
 - **Philippians 4:6-8** – Prayer and supplication (Section: Prayer of Supplication, Page 9)
- **Intercession:**
 - **Romans 8:34** – Christ intercedes (Section: Prayer of Intercession, Page 9)
 - **Exodus 17:11-13** – Moses’ hands held up (Section: Prayer of Intercession, Page 9)
- **Consecration:**
 - **Luke 22:42** – Not my will, but thine be done (Section: Prayer of Consecration, Page 9)
- **Spiritual Warfare:**
 - **Ephesians 6:11-18** – Armor of God (Section: Prayer of Spiritual Warfare, Page 10)

3. Prayers Heard and Not Heard by God

- **Proverbs 15:29** – The Lord hears the prayer of the righteous (Section: Prayers Heard and Not Heard by God, Page 10)
- **Isaiah 59:2** – Sin separates from God (Section: Prayers Heard and Not Heard by God, Page 10)
- **James 1:6-7** – Lack of faith (Section: Prayers Heard and Not Heard by God, Page 10)
- **James 4:3** – Selfish motives (Section: Prayers Heard and Not Heard by God, Page 10)
- **1 John 5:14** – Ask according to His will (Section: Prayers Heard and Not Heard by God, Page 10)
- **Matthew 18:19-20** – Agreement (Section: Prayers Heard and Not Heard by God, P10)

4. Holy Spirit Helps in Intercession

- **Romans 8:26** – Spirit intercedes (Section: Holy Spirit Helps in Intercession, Page 10)

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- **1 Corinthians 14:2 & 4** – Speaking in tongues (Section: Holy Spirit Helps in Intercession, Page 10)

5. Challenges to Prayer & Spiritual Warfare

- **Ephesians 6:11-18** – Armor of God (Section: Challenges to Prayer, Page 11)
- **Romans 8:26-27** – Spirit intercedes (Section: Challenges to Prayer, Page 11)

6. God's Guidance in Prayer

- **Romans 8:26-27** – Spirit guides prayer (Section: God's Guidance in Prayer, Page 11)
- **Matthew 6:9-13** – Lord's Prayer (Section: God's Guidance in Prayer, Page 11)
- **James 5:16** – Effective prayer (Section: God's Guidance in Prayer, Page 11)

7. Fasting and Prayer

- **Matthew 17:21** – Prayer and fasting (Section: The Connection Between Fasting and Prayer, Page 11)
- **Ezra 8:23** – Fasting and petition (Section: The Connection Between Fasting and Prayer, Page 11)

8. Asking, Seeking, Knocking

- **Matthew 7:7-11** – Ask, seek, knock (Section: Asking, Seeking, Knocking, Page 11)

9. Silent Prayer

- **1 Samuel 1:12-13** – Hannah's silent prayer (Section: Silent Prayer?, Page 12)
- **Psalms 139:4** – God knows words before spoken (Section: Silent Prayer?, Page 12)

10. Spiritual Opposition and Delay

- **Daniel 10:12-13** – Spiritual resistance (Section: Causes of Delay in Answers, Page 14)
- **2 Peter 3:8** – God's timing (Causes of Delay in Answers, Page 14)
- **James 1:3-4** – Trials produce endurance (Causes of Delay in Answers, Page 15)
- **1 John 5:14** – Ask according to His will (Causes of Delay in Answers, Page 15)
- **1 Peter 3:6-8** – Prayers hindered by relationships (Causes of Delay in Answers, Page 15)

11. Posture in Prayer Examined

- **Daniel 6:10** – *Daniel knelt in prayer three times a day (Section: Posture in Prayer Examined)*
- **1 Kings 8:54; 2 Chronicles 6:13** – *Solomon knelt before the altar at the temple dedication (Section: Posture in Prayer Examined)*
- **Luke 22:41** – *Jesus knelt and prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane (Section: Posture in Prayer Examined)*

12. Conclusion

- **Hebrews 4:16** – Come boldly to the throne of grace (Conclusion, Page 16)

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Effective Prayer Workbook

Here is a workbook to accompany the lesson from BY DESIGN on Effective Prayer. The workbook includes multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and open-ended questions, each numbered and cross-referenced to an answer key at the end. The questions are designed to reinforce key concepts and encourage deeper reflection [1] [2].

Effective Prayer Workbook

Section 1: Multiple Choice

1. According to the lesson, what is the primary purpose of prayer?
 - a) To get what we want
 - b) To have a meaningful conversation with God
 - c) To impress others
 - d) To meditate silently
2. Which scripture is cited as describing the “effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man”?
 - a) Matthew 6:10
 - b) James 5:15-17
 - c) Philippians 4:6
 - d) Romans 8:26
3. What is NOT listed as a type of prayer in the lesson?
 - a) Prayer of Adoration
 - b) Prayer of Confession
 - c) Prayer of Meditation
 - d) Prayer of Supplication
4. What can hinder prayers, according to the lesson?
 - a) Lack of sleep
 - b) Unrepented sin
 - c) Eating before praying
 - d) Praying in public
5. Which practice is said to amplify prayer by increasing spiritual focus?
 - a) Singing
 - b) Fasting
 - c) Reading
 - d) Silence
6. Which biblical figure is specifically described as kneeling in prayer three times a day, demonstrating humility and unwavering faith?
 - a) Solomon
 - b) Jesus
 - c) Daniel
 - d) Moses

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Section 2: Fill in the Blank

1. The Greek word “logos” refers to the _____ of God.
2. The lesson teaches that faith comes by _____ and hearing by the Word of God.
3. Jesus taught the disciples to pray, “Thy will be done on _____ as it is in heaven.”
4. According to Philippians 4:6, believers should present their requests to God with _____.
5. The lesson warns that _____ prayer lacks scriptural support and may compromise effectiveness.
6. At the dedication of the temple, _____ knelt before the altar with hands spread toward heaven, showing deep humility and worship.

7. Section 3: Open-Ended Questions

8. Explain the significance of “agreement” in prayer as described in Matthew 18:19-20.
 9. Describe the role of the Holy Spirit in helping believers pray effectively.
 10. What are some reasons the lesson gives for delays in answered prayer?
 11. Discuss the relationship between fasting and prayer, and why fasting is important.
 12. Reflect on the dangers of Satan’s deception regarding prayer practices. How can believers guard against these?
 13. The believer is encouraged to pray in secret. Why do you think believers are to pray in secret?
 14. Discuss how Jesus’ posture in the Garden of Gethsemane (kneeling and bowing) reflected submission to the Father’s will and emotional intensity. Why is physical posture significant in prayer?
-

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Answer Key

Multiple Choice

1. b) To have a meaningful conversation with God (see “What is Prayer?”)
2. b) James 5:15-17 (see “Effective Prayer”)
3. c) Prayer of Meditation (not listed; see “Understanding the Types of Prayer”)
4. b) Unrepented sin (see “Prayers Heard and Not Heard by God”)
5. b) Fasting (see “The Connection Between Fasting and Prayer”)
6. c) Daniel (see “Posture of Prayer Examined”)

Fill in the Blank

1. Word
2. Hearing
3. Earth
4. Thanksgiving
5. Silent
6. Solomon

7. Open-Ended

8. Agreement in prayer is powerful because Jesus promises that when two or more agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done by the Father in heaven. This unity strengthens faith and binds Christ to accomplish good for believers (see “Effective Prayer” and “Prayers Heard and Not Heard by God”).
9. The Holy Spirit intercedes for believers, helping them pray according to God’s will, especially when they do not know how to pray. The Spirit’s guidance aligns prayers with God’s purposes (see “Holy Spirit Helps in Intercession”).
10. Delays in answered prayer may be due to God’s timing, preparation and growth, disagreement with God’s will, spiritual warfare, or hindered relationships (see “Causes of Delay in Answers”).
11. Fasting is important because it humbles the believer, increases spiritual focus, and demonstrates earnestness. It is often required for spiritual breakthroughs and amplifies the effectiveness of prayer (see “The Connection Between Fasting and Prayer”).

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12. Satan's deception can distort, dilute, or delay prayer, making it ineffective. Believers must ground their prayers in scripture, persevere in faith, and remain vigilant to guard against these tactics (see "Challenges to Prayer: The Enemy's Tactics and the Believer's Response" and "The Nature of Satan's Deception").
13. Believers are instructed to pray not like the hypocrites who make a big show or repetitious prayers and look like they are suffering when fasting. The benefits of praying in secret include God will hear in secret and reward you openly.
14. Jesus' posture in the Garden of Gethsemane—kneeling and bowing—demonstrated profound submission to the Father's will and revealed the depth of his emotional struggle. By kneeling, Jesus physically expressed humility, surrender, and reverence, showing that prayer is not only a spiritual act but also involves the whole person—heart, mind, and body. His posture reflected earnestness and intensity, as He prayed, "Not My will, but Yours be done," even while facing immense suffering. This act teaches believers that physical posture in prayer can reinforce sincerity, focus, and awe, helping align our attitudes with God's purposes. Bowing or kneeling is a tangible way to acknowledge God's majesty and our dependence on Him, following the biblical examples of Daniel, Solomon, and Jesus.

Notes: