

## THE PRAYERS OF PAUL

### Study Questions Week 1

1. How does the Bible describe prayer?

For understanding, look up these verses:

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|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. Exodus 32:11      | h. 2 Chronicles 32:20         |
| b. Psalm 27:8        | i. Psalm 73:28, Hebrews 10:22 |
| c. Psalm 62:8        | j. Ephesians 3:14             |
| d. 1 Samuel 1:15     | k. Psalm 5:3                  |
| e. Lamentations 3:41 | l. Genesis 12:8               |
| f. Psalm 25:1        | m. Job 8:5                    |
| g. Psalm 27:7, 34:6  | n. Jeremiah 36:7              |

2. Should we pray? Why? See Isaiah 55:6, Matthew 7:7, Philippians 4:6

3. We can be confident that God will answer these prayers:

- a. If we pray for God to glorify himself (Matt. 6:9; John 17:5)
- b. If we pray for forgiveness (Matt. 6:12; 1 John 1:9; James 5:13–20)
- c. If we pray to know God better (John 17:3, 24–26, Eph. 1:15–22)
- d. If we pray for wisdom (to know how to live for God) (James 1:5–6)
- e. If we pray for strength to obey/ live for God) (Eph. 3:14–21; Matt. 6:11, 13)
- f. If we pray for the spread of the gospel (Luke 10:2; Acts 4:27–29; Col. 4:3)

When we pray for these things, we are praying in accordance with God's will and for His purposes and promises to be accomplished. How often are these your prayers? Do you see a need for you to personally pray any (or all) of these prayers?

4. The lesson talked about an understanding of biblical prayer as asking God to do what he has promised. Have you ever thought of it in that way? Review a few examples and see if it becomes clearer to you. Contrast your prayers to these prayers.
  - a. Read all of Genesis 24 for context; prayers are in Genesis 24:12,27,42,52; and Genesis 25:21
  - b. Exodus 2:23–25
  - c. 1 Samuel 2:1–10
  - d. 1 Kings 8:22-53
  - e. Matthew 6:9–13
5. Take some time to think about your praying. Do you feel that you are somehow lacking? Where would you like to improve?
6. D.A. Carson provided 8 lessons he learned about praying from more mature believers. Are any of these lessons that you need to learn?
  - a. **We must plan to pray.** If I don't have a set time to pray, most likely I won't spend much time praying
  - b. **Adopt practical ways to impede mental drift.** Carson suggests a few practical ideas to stamp out daydreaming during our prayer times

including vocalizing your prayers, praying Scripture, using biblical prayers as models, making a prayer list, or journaling your prayers.

- c. **Develop prayer-partner relationships.** Meet regularly with a small **group of committed prayer warriors or an individual prayer warrior.**
  - d. **Carefully choose models.** When we find good models, we should study their content, passion, and scope, but we should not imitate their phrasing or mannerisms.
  - e. **Develop a system for your prayer lists.** Examples include: a journal; a folder filled with names and issues; a prayer calendar on your smartphone; our church membership directory; or a prayer guide for the world such as Operation World. Pick a system and use it!
  - f. **Combine praise, confession, and intercession.** Tie your prayers closely to Scripture
    - i. Regular rejoicing, petitioning, and thanking God (1 Thess. 5:16-18)
    - ii. ACTS – Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication
    - iii. Three R's – Rejoicing, Repenting, Requesting
  - g. **If you are in any form of spiritual leadership, work at your public prayers.** We should take the privilege and responsibility of leading others in prayer seriously and seek to be effective models for other people. Remember, this could be in your Faith Group or in your home.
  - h. **Pray until you pray.** Seek to pray long enough and honestly enough in a single session that we move past formalism and hollowness and begin to delight in God's presence, to rest in his love, and cherish His will.
7. Has anyone prayed with/for you? What impact did that have on you? Did that encourage you to do that for others? If you are praying for someone, have you told them that you are praying for them and what you are praying for them? What impact did that have on them? Do you stop and pray with/for someone when they have shared a request with you? What impact did that have on them? Did that encourage you to do this more?

In preparation for next week, please read First and Second Thessalonians.