

The Ten Basic Steps: Step #4: The Christian and Prayer

Lesson 3-A Guide to Effective Daily Prayer

Objective: To apply a simple guide to your daily prayer time

Read: Acts 7 & 8

Memorize: I Corinthians 14:40

1. Adoration
2. Confession
3. Thanksgiving
4. Supplication
5. Life Application

Effective prayer cannot be reduced to a magic formula. God does not respond to our requests because we have the right ritual. He is more interested in our hearts than in our words. John Bunyan, author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, said, "In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart."

God's Word does, however, give us certain basic elements that, when included in our communication with God, will enable us to receive His answers to our prayers.

In this lesson we will consider a simple guide that you can use in your daily devotional time:

- Adoration
- Confession
- Thanksgiving
- Supplication

The guide can easily be remembered by the first letter of each word: **ACTS**.

Adoration

1. Why should we praise God? (Jeremiah 32:17, I John 4:10, Philippians 1:6)
2. What is the best way for you to show your gratitude toward God, and your faith and trust in Him in all circumstances? (Philippians 4:6) What would you conclude that God expects of us? (I Thessalonians 5:16-18)
3. How do you communicate your adoration to God?

Confession

1. Read Isaiah 59:1-2. What will hinder fellowship with God?

2. Psalm 51 was David's prayer after he had fallen out of fellowship with God. What did David conclude that God wanted of Him? (Psalm 51:6,16-17)
3. Read Psalm 32:1-7. What was David's observation about confession? What was his observation about not confessing his sin? (Verses 3 & 4)
4. What should you do when you find that your fellowship with God is broken? (I John 1:9) What sin in your life is keeping you from fellowship with God? How do you deal with that sin?

Thanksgiving

1. Let us never be guilty of being ungrateful to God. How often should we give thanks? (Hebrews 13:15) For what should we praise Him? (Ephesians 5:20) Why? (I Thessalonians 5:18)
2. What about a situation that seems adverse? (Romans 5:3-4)
3. How do you practice thankfulness when you pray? As you go about your daily life?
4. Make a list of each problem, disappointment, heartache, or adversity that concerns you. Begin to thank God for each one. Doing so demonstrates your trust in Him.

Supplication

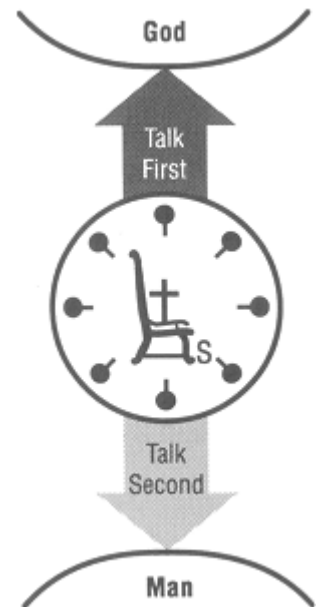
1.) Intercession. An example of intercession is provided in Colossians 1:3. What was Paul's prayer for the Christians of Colosse?

- Many times our efforts in leading people to Christ are fruitless because we forget the necessary preparation for witnessing. The divine order is to first talk to God about men, and then talk to men about God.
- If we follow this order, we will see results. Prayer really is the place where people are won to Christ; witnessing is just gathering in the results of prayer.
- As you meditate on the above, list the requests you can make to God for Christians and non-Christians.

2.) Petition. Why should we expect God to answer our prayers? (Matthew 7:9-11, Romans 8:32)

- According to Psalm 84:11-12, what has God promised to do? What part does belief have in our prayers? (Mark 11:24, James 1:6-7) Faith is necessary, what else? (Matthew 6:9-10, I John 5:14-15)
- Why will God not answer some prayers? (James 4:3) How does this relate to your prayer life?

3.) Explain II Corinthians 12:7-10 in light of Romans 8:28. What does this teach us about apparently unanswered prayer?



Life Application

1. Add other requests to the prayer list you began at the end of Lesson 1.
2. Begin using the ACTS system for prayer during your daily time alone with God. Note here how your prayers have changed.
3. List daily situations in which you could use praise and thanksgiving to help you react in a godly manner.

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