

METAMORPHOSIS

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Learning to Pray

Remember what Paul has already taught us about prayer;

Eph 1:18 I 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, 19** and his **incomparably great power** for us who believe.

Eph. 3:14 For this reason I kneel before **the Father, 15** from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. 16 I pray that out of **his glorious riches** he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp **how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19** and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be **filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.**

1. Eph 1: We pray to a God of incomparably great power. We pray as those who are inheriting the resources of God himself.
2. Eph 3: We pray to a good Father, abundant in wealth with an attitude knowing that we are loved beyond measure and that God himself dwells with us and in us.

Effective prayer starts before you open your mouth. It starts as you grasp the love, goodness and unlimited resources that God our Father has made available to us.

On that Foundation we read Ephesians 6

Ephesians 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.

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, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

How to pray (v18)

1. Pray in the spirit

Rom. 8:26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

2. All occasions & always keep on praying

Colossians 4:2 “Devote yourselves to prayer”

And it is not surprising that this word “be devoted to” or “persevere in” or “continue in” occurs six times in the New Testament in relation to prayer. (Acts 1:14, Acts 2:42, Acts 6:4, Romans 12:12, **Ephesians 6:18**)

“What does this mean? You pray often and you pray regularly. Prayer is not infrequent and prayer is not hit and miss. Being “devoted to” prayer means that you are not haphazard and you are not forgetful. It means you take steps to see that it is part of your regular life, the same way eating and sleeping are.” John Piper

Question – am I devoted to prayer? Dictionary definition means to give a large part of ones time to something.

You will never achieve lasting motivation through guilt. Lasting motivation only comes from thirst.

3. All kinds of prayers and requests

- a. Use different models
 - i. A.C.T.S (Adore, Confess, Thanksgiving, Supplication (requests))
 - ii. the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)
 - iii. Concentric circles (me, family, church, work, world)
 - iv. The hours (fixed model of prayer at 5 to 7 set times of the day)
- b. Place – anywhere – but sometimes a special place. Sitting, standing, lying, walking.
- c. Your own words, Scripture, prophecy, dreams, longings, sermon, speaking in tongues/praying in the Spirit

“Spiritually we inhale God’s word and we exhale prayer:

4. Be alert!

- a. Perhaps most important is the command to stay awake and therefore alert (verse 18). It goes back to the teaching of Jesus himself. He emphasized the need for watchfulness in view of the unexpectedness both of his return and of the onset of temptation
- b. Without prayer we are much too feeble and flabby to stand against the might of the forces of evil.
- c. Be alert to the 3 most common lies about prayer –
 - i. I find prayer difficult – it’s just the way I am. Some find it easy.
 - ii. My prayers are ineffective because of who I am.
 - iii. My prayers aren’t answered - not every prayer is answered. This is a good thing!

What to pray (v19)

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, 20

for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

1. Words to be given whenever he opens his mouth

(appeal for clarity)

2. Freedom from fear (twice)

(appeal for boldness)

Paul would like to be released but his primary prayer is to be free to preach the gospel. Chained on the outside free inside.

Conclusion

Eph. 6:23 Peace to the brothers, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.