–Save This Page as a PDF–

Week 3: Prayer



Blessed be the name of **the Lord**. You are a child of **God** forever by faith in **Yeshua Messiah**. You have eternal life and an eternal relationship with **the God of Isra'el** through **His Messiah**. As with all children and relationships, there needs to be growth and maturity. As you spiritually mature in your faith, you will develop an even more intimate and fulfilling relationship with **the Lord**. How does a believer spiritually grow in the faith? There are **four essential areas** that need to become more and more a vital part of our daily lives: **prayer**, **reading the Scriptures (Week Four)**, **fellowship (Week Ten)**, and **sharing our faith (Week Twelve)**.

These four areas will cover the two basic directions of your spiritual growth: the vertical (with **God**) and the horizontal (with people). **Prayer** and **reading the Scriptures** will address the vertical relationship between you and **the Lord**. **Fellowship** and **sharing your faith** will focus on the horizontal relationships between your and other people.

Spiritual growth and balance come from prioritizing all four of these values. Those missing any of these habits can become like spiritual loners, having a "specialty," but without balance or maturity. None of these four areas can be outgrown, but rather we grow deeper in them as we walk more closely with **the Lord**.

The goal of this lesson is to help you develop a prayer life: a daily, ongoing, intimate time to speak with your heavenly Father. Prayer is essentially and most importantly "talking with God." Setting aside even five minutes a day to talk with Abba (Father) can make all the difference in the world.

The Psalms are actually prayers and praise to **God**. **"I cry out to God Most High, to God who will fulfill His purpose for me" (Psalm 57:2 NLT). King David** authorized 73 of the 150 psalms. **David** was thankful that he could **"cry out"** to **God**. In Hebrew, *karah* actually means, "to cry or call out loudly." This teaches us that private prayer is not to be a mere formality, but sincere, or with purpose and meaning.

We can genuinely express to **God** our feelings, thoughts, frustrations, will, or concerns about anything. **God** can take it; **He** won't be offended or shocked. **He** actually desires and expects an open relationship with us. When we are real with **God**, we receive real help from **God**: comfort for our pain, encouragement in our disappointments, power for our weakness, renewed love when we are resentful, and forgiveness when we stumble. The Bible reiterates this truth: **casting all your worries upon Him, for He cares for you (1 Peter 5:7)**.

God cares about our lives and can help us in the midst of difficulty. Because of our relationship with **God**, we have freedom in our prayer life to totally give all our burdens to **the One** who really loves us.

In **Psalm 57:2**, **David's** confidence was not only that **God** would not only hear **his** deepest cry, but also that **God** would accomplish all things for **him**. All believers in **the Messiah** can have this same confidence. **Yeshua** said, **"If you ask for anything in My name** (in **My will**)**, I will do it" (John 14:14).** Asking in **His** name is not some magical phrase, where we can get anything we want. It means aligning our will with **His**. When we do this we are asking in **His** authority, for **His** reputation and honor, and in light of **His purposes** and **will** as revealed in the Bible. If we seek to align our **will** with **His, God will fulfill His purpose for** you. All things that are good, profitable, wholesome and wise.

God always answers prayer; however, His answer may be . . .

* "Yes" (because it is appropriate for you now)

* “Not at this time” or “Wait” (because it may only be appropriate for you in the future)

* “No” (because it is inappropriate for you at any time, or may harm you)

We trust in **God’s** power to provide, but also in His wisdom to provide that which is in our eternal best interests. Please read these verses: **Now this is the confidence we have before Him – that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have the requests we have asked from Him (First John 5:14-15).** What does it mean that **He hears us**? **John** means that **God** does not ignore us; if we **ask** according to what is **His** will for us, **He** will fulfill our request. So according to these verses, how can you be confident that **He hears** you?_____
___

_____

The key to our prayer life and our requests of **God** is to know **His** _____. But how can we know **His** will? **God’s** Word, the Scriptures, is the revealed will of **God**. As we come to know **His** Word, we learn **His** will, desires, and concerns for us. We better understand **God’s** character, values, priorities, and **His** perspective on life.

Please read **First John 5:14-15** again, this time replacing we and us with “I” and “me.” **Now this is the confidence ___ have before Him – that if ___ ask anything according to His will, He hears ___. And if ___ know that He hears ___ – whatever ___ ask – ___ know that ___ have the requests ___ have asked from Him.**

Now please read this verse, **“If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear” (Psalm 66:18).** Since **God** knows all things (this is called omniscience), we know **He** always **hears** us. In this verse, the phrase **will not hear** refers to **the Lord** not responding positively to our requests. The Hebrew word for **regard** is *rayiti*, which means *to consider* or *gaze at*. If we *consider* something evil or improper for ourselves, or others, it is just plain wrong. **The Lord** will not **hear** or respond to evil.

According to **Psalm 66:18**, where do you regard good or evil? ___ ___ _____.

Yes, in your **heart**. Let us understand the *internal* priorities of prayer. Regardless of what we say with our lips, it is the inner person that spiritually communicates with **the Lord**. *External* expressions of prayer are so others can join with us in prayer and praise to **God**.

What specific **sins** or wickedness may possibly be in your **heart** in the following areas?

* Your personal life?

* Your family life?

* Your financial or business life?

* Your community life?

After thinking about these areas, did you find some that you are not pleased with? What can you do about the **sins** or wickedness in your **heart**? Consider **First John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from *all* unrighteousness."**

Confess in the original Greek language is *homologeo*, meaning *to agree with another* or *speak the same*, in this case *to agree* with **God**. In other words, when we admit or confess our **sins** to **God** we are finally agreeing with **Him** about what **He** already knows – that our **sinful** thoughts, attitudes, or deeds are unjustifiable, but not unforgivable.

What is done in the **heart** only is a **sin** against **God** and must be **confessed**. If you **sin** outwardly, you are **sinning** against **God** and others. You need to **confess** your **sins** in either case: often to the person against whom you have **sinned**, as well as **the Lord**, as all **sin** is rebellion against **Him (Matt 5:22-25, 18:15; James 5:16)**.

Rather than the **sin** being clever, cute or a matter of "she started it," **sin** is contrary to **God's** character and **His** revealed will in the Bible. We can truly praise **God**, because when we admit our **sinful** thoughts and deeds, **He** forgives and cleanses us as a result of **Messiah's** shed blood on the cross as payment for our **sins**.

Personalize **First John 1:9** using "I", "my" and "me". **If __ confess ___ sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive ___ sins and to cleanse ___ from *all* unrighteousness.**

For further reading on prayer, read **Exodus 33:12-19**, the **Psalms**, and **John 17**.

Please memorize **First John 1:9**.

Please commit yourself to begin a minimum of five minuets of prayer daily. Make it a time when you are awake, alone, and able to quiet your thoughts before **God**. If you are not sure how to structure your prayer time, a help for many believers is the acronym **PTA**.

Praise God for **His** attributes, love and goodness. Then, in the light of **Who He** is,

Thank Him for **His** forgiveness, cleansing, and the many blessings of **Yeshua** in your life.

Ask Him to supply your needs as well as the needs of others.

Take time each day also to be quiet before **the Lord**. That way, **He** gets to minister to your heart as **the Spirit of God** uses **the Word of God** to remind you of **His** great love for you! Prayer is the means believers have to talk to **the Holy One of Isra'el**. What a privilege!