

Lesson 2: Understanding Prayer

Every baby needs a new life, so he needs assurance of salvation. That was Lesson 1 (and 1B). When a baby has just been born, he or she needs to breathe. This lesson on prayer will teach you how to breathe in your new spiritual life.

Praying is talking with God. When you pray, you should be frank and sincere, the same way the Bible tells us that Jesus talked with God and taught his disciples.

I. Why do we need to pray?

A. It is God's command:

“You should _____ pray.” (Luke 18:1)

“And pray in the Spirit, _____.” (Ephesians 6:18)

B. It is your need to seek God's leading:

“Cast all your _____ on him because _____”
(1 Peter 5:7).

“If you _____ upon Me, I will show you _____ which
you _____” (Jeremiah 33:3).

C. Receive mercy and find grace in your time of need (Hebrews 4:16).

How should we approach God's throne of grace?

What will we receive and find?

D. What things do you need to pray for?

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in _____ by prayer and petition, with
thanksgiving, present your _____ to God. And the peace of God, which
transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus”
(Phil. 4:6-7).

II. Three Answers to Prayer

Yes - Green Light You can proceed.

No - Red Light You cannot proceed.

Wait - Yellow Light God does not respond, so you must be patient.

III. The Content of Prayer Draw a line between the verse and the correct description of prayer.

Praise: praise God's nature	1 John 1:9
Thanksgiving: thank God for his grace	Philippians 4:6-7
Ask: ask God to meet your own needs	Psalm 135:3
Intercession: ask God to meet the needs of others	1 Thessalonians 5:19
Confession: confess your sins to God	1 Timothy 2:1

IV. The Three-Fold Will of God

- A. What God has commanded us to do. This is what God has already determined; it can never be changed by what or how a person prays (e.g. love your neighbor as yourself).
- B. What God allows. Sometimes if we plead with God, He will allow us to receive something, but we should be responsible for what we receive (not God's ideal for us).
- C. What is pleasing to God (Romans 12:2).

V. New Attitudes Resulting From Prayer

Attitude	Verse
Have faith	"But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt." (James 1:6).
Have the right motivation	"You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive because you ask with the wrong motives (James 4:2-3).
Confess our sins	"If I cherish sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened" (Psalm 66:18).
Ask according to his will	"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us" (1 John 5:14).
Pray with a faithful heart	"They should always pray and not give up" (Luke 18:1).

VI. Hints for Effective Prayer

- A. Pray "in Jesus' name" (John 14:13) because we can only come before God through Jesus (John 14:6).
- B. Ending our prayer by saying "Amen" means praying with one's true heart and agreeing with what has been said. (Matthew 6:13)

- C. Prayer has many parts: praise, thanksgiving, requests, intercession, and confession. We should not favor any part and neglect the others.
- D. Pray in a natural and understandable manner; avoid babbling.
- E. Pray at any time of the day and at any place. There is no limit on the time and place of prayer.