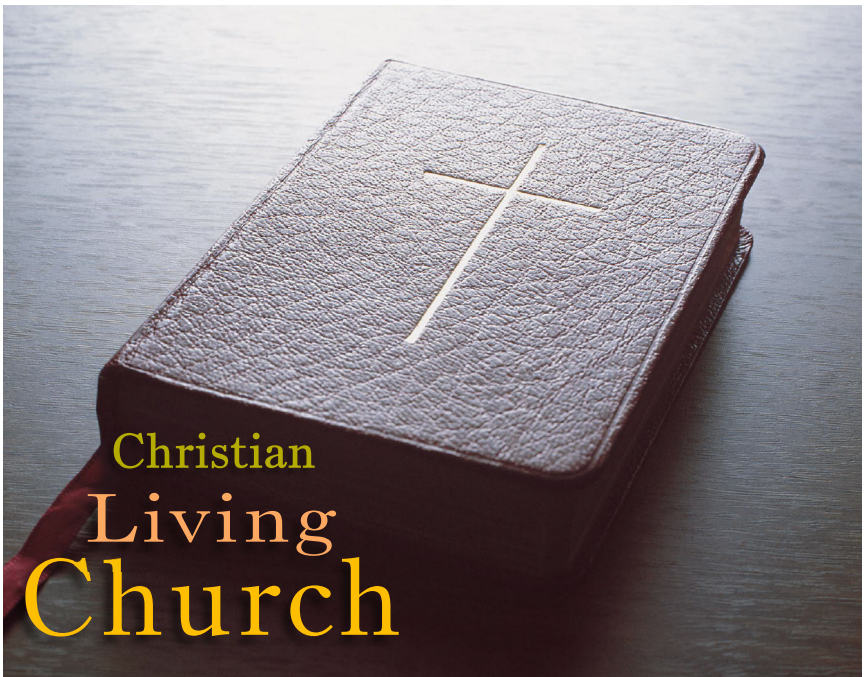


# Prayer

*“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”*



Christian  
Living  
Church

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This series of lessons has been designed for private study or classroom presentation. The purpose of this foreword is to explain certain conventions utilized throughout the program. The overall concept is to begin with the basic concepts necessary for the new convert to understand and progress toward more complex doctrine. The lessons are numbered in order to maintain the proper sequence of study.

When Scripture references are encountered in the text, various actions are recommended. When in parenthetical bold (**Genesis 1:1**) the verse is to be looked up and read right away. Frequently, the next textual statement will comment on that verse. Reading verse and text in proper order will enhance one's understanding of the verse. Direct quotes from Scripture will be "*bold italicized and contained in quotation marks*" and, unless otherwise noted, will be from the King James Bible. When the reference is in parenthetical non-bold (Genesis 1:1) it is to provide the Scriptural basis for the statement if confirmation is desired. References in blue [Genesis 1:1](#) will be listed in the lesson section entitled **FURTHER STUDY**.

**FURTHER STUDY** is the "homework" section. Its purpose is to encourage Bible study at home. The referenced verses have a short summation to assist the student desiring more knowledge about a subject to find what they are looking for.

The **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** section is primarily for classroom use. Open discussion with the exchange of ideas produces growth for all involved. Most of the time the answer is contained in the referenced Scripture but sometimes the question is offered for open discussion. Even in private Bible study, analysis of the question and the search for its answer can be rewarding.

This work is offered to anyone with a desire to better understand God's Word. It is our hope and prayer that the person studying these lessons will come away with a better understanding of God's will and a closer walk with our Lord, Jesus Christ.

With Loving Concern for all those seeking God's Message  
The Church of God Rocky Mount  
Rocky Mount, Virginia

## Key Verse: 2 Chronicles 7:14



*“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”*

### Discussion Question:

What does this Key Verse mean to you?

Prayer is the method through which the Christian communicates with God. Our expressions of repentance, thankfulness, petition, and praise are channeled through the vehicle of prayer. Prayer is as individual as the petitioner's relationship with the Creator. Each of us establishes a bond with the Father that is harmonious with our personality and our understanding of Him. Through prayer we communicate with God to seek and receive answers to the daily trials we encounter.

Obedience is needed for prayer to be answered (**1 John 3:22**). Keeping His commandments and doing those things that please Him are acts of obedience. The obedient Christian has humbled himself before God and has surrendered to His will. He will not grant the unrighteous prayers of the disobedient. Scripture does not say He will not hear their prayers, for how could they pray for salvation if they were never heard, but the union with their Creator is not as close as the obedient Christian's (**Proverbs 15:29**). As stated in the Key Verse, if the wicked turn from their wicked ways He will hear their prayer and forgive and heal them.



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A common subject in prayer is the petition for forgiveness. The model prayer taught by Jesus in the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew instructs us to pray for our *daily* bread. In order to do this, prayer must be a *daily* thing; therefore asking for forgiveness of sin is a daily thing. There is a caution, however, and that caution is that you must forgive in order to be forgiven (**Mark 11:26**). When you begin to pray, failure to render forgiveness when it is due can be an obstacle to your prayer (**Mark 11:25**). It would be an exercise in futility to ask for forgiveness while refusing to forgive someone else.

One of the most important elements of prayer is the realization of the need for the expression of thankfulness (**Colossians 4:2**). The entire Creation comprising the environment in which we live is a gift from God. The food we eat, the air we breathe and the strength to live and work and

play are all freely given to us by a loving Father in Heaven. Ingratitude is not a Christian trait. It is entirely proper and is also an invitation to God's peace in our lives to always express our awareness of the thanks we owe for what we have. Being mindful of the goodness of this life that we enjoy, such as being born in a country where we can worship freely, the fellowship of Christian brethren and the luxurious plenty that we daily take for granted demands our attention to giving thanks (**Colossians 3:15-17**).

Faith is essential to answered



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prayer. Anyone who prays without believing in the power of God to answer it is being a hypocrite. Why ask for something if you don't expect to receive it? The answer obtained may not be the one expected or even desired, but just because things didn't turn out according to *your* plan does not indicate an unanswered prayer (**James 1:5-6**). Strength and traits of character can all be obtained with prayer. Wisdom, faith itself or even compassion and sensitivity can be granted to you by God if you ask Him for it and it is His will for you to have it. Don't waver in your belief that He can and will grant your request. Sometimes we have to be persistent and keep asking (**Luke 18:1-5**). The reason for God's delay may be timing or perhaps the answer to your prayer would hamper someone else. Keep asking and through the influence of His Spirit you will become aware of the cause of the

delay and either change the perspective of your prayer or patiently wait for the answer.

One of the most joyous of prayers is when we pray for one another. Any Christian is delighted at the prospect of giving Christian brethren a pleasant gift. What could be more pleasant than good health, peace and a secure life protected by angels? These are ours to ask for and God's to give. Through prayer we have a warehouse with shelves filled with good gifts and all we have to do is request for a loved one to receive the ones they need. How much better chance of understanding God's will do we have if each of us is engaged in prayer for all the others to do so (**Colossians 1:9**)? If there was some way to determine it, an astounding truth would be discovered: the most arousing sermons are delivered by inspired ministers after a week of prayer by the congre-

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gation in the minister's behalf (**2 Timothy 1:11**). The strong church gains strength through the self-generating power of prayer for each other.

God has given us every good thing that we have. The only thing that we can give Him is our praise and love. Even the ability to do that comes from Him but it is in our province to give it. The prayer of praise gives thanks to God for God Himself, for His mercy, love, and guidance. The greatest praise of all is for His Son, without Whom there would be no eternal life. Jesus, God's greatest gift to man, has authorized each one of us to approach the throne of God and make our petition known (**John 14:13**). Without this gift we would have no direct contact with God through prayer. Reflecting on the consequences of such a state of affairs it becomes plain that the gifts of redemption and prayer are due bountiful praise, deliv-

ered directly to the Father's throne through prayer.

Just as prayer is individual, the method of prayer is determined by location, subject, and time of day. One's position while praying is addressed several times in the Scriptures. Kneeling with hands spread upward (**1 Kings 8:54; Ezra 9:5**), standing with head bowed (**Luke 18:13**), standing with eyes raised to Heaven (**John 11:41; John 17:1**) or leaning on the top of a staff (**Hebrews 11:21**).

Prayer can take place anywhere but one common aspect is privacy. When possible to select the location where you intend to pray, emphasis is directed to a confidential spot where only the Father can hear you (**Matthew 6:6**). If you are outside, seek an isolated place (**Mark 1:35**). If an isolated place can't be found outside, the privacy can still be maintained (**Genesis 24:42-45**).

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Prayer does not have to be audible to the human ear. It is always heard by the One to Whom it is directed.

There is no absolute time of day for prayer. To determine such a thing would be to prohibit prayer at certain times. Prayer can take place any time during daylight hours (**Psalms 55:17**). Bedtime is probably the most universal time of prayer, even if one retires

rather late (**Psalms 119:62**).

Pray whenever the need to pray is present. Many a prayer has been made behind the wheel of an automobile. At moments of danger, when that feeling of thankful awe comes over you or when an event occurs that prompts a spontaneous outpouring of thankfulness, pray whenever you want (**Psalms 119:164**).





# Prayer



## Discussion Questions:

1. What could prompt God to ignore a person's prayer?

**Proverbs 28:9**

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2. What prayer will He always hear? **KEY VERSE**

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3. Can prayer change God's mind? **Isaiah 38:1-5**

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4. Can God be pushed so far He will forbid prayer?

**Jeremiah 7:14-16**

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# Prayer



## **FURTHER STUDY:**

**Proverbs 15:8** the prayer of the upright is his delight.

**Daniel 6:10** gave thanks before his God

**Philippians 4:6** with thanksgiving let your requests be made known

**James 4:2-3** desire to have and cannot obtain because you ask amiss

**James 5:16** pray one for another

**1 Peter 3:12** his ears are open unto their prayers

# Prayer



Notes:

# Prayer



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