

August 16
Prayer, Daily Disciple, page 237



[Psalm 106:4-5](#)

[Mark 11:22-24](#)

Digging Deeper: Finding out, discussion and sharing

1. The passage selected from the Psalms may be classified as prayer-wish. The Psalmist is expressed his heart's desire about what he wants God to do for him. According to Psalm 106:4-5 what 2 things does he want God to help him do?
2. What 3 results does he see coming out of this divine help? (hint: each result in the biblical text is preceded with the word "that").
3. Do you agree with Robert Milligan's assessment that next to repentance prayer has the most transforming power in a person's life?
4. How does God purify the heart through prayer?
5. How can prayer make the human heart fit as a temple for the Spirit?
6. Can prayer bring new life and energy to the soul? In what way?
7. Read Mark 11:22-24. This is a troublesome passage for many on prayer. Could the disciples have been able to toss a mountain into the sea?
8. What is the relationship between faith and prayer?
9. How often do we thank God that he has heard our prayers?
10. Is it appropriate to approach God in prayer and ask Him to increase our faith?
11. Read the section below on "Function of Prayer Wish." After looking up all the references in Paul's writings where he utilizes the prayer-wish form, make a list of all the things he wishes for. Can we express the same desires in our prayers today?
12. There are many examples of powerful prayer in the Bible. Share your most favorite prayer story from Scripture. Why is this your most favorite, and how has it shaped your personal practice of prayer?
13. Read [James 1:5-7](#). What important aspects of a powerful prayer life do you find in this passage?
14. What does James remind us about the prayer of a righteous person in [5:13-18](#)?
15. What examples does James give regarding the power of prayer?
16. Why does it seem that certain places help us pray better?
17. What difference does it make in our prayer life if we look it as conversation between ourselves and God?
18. Look up different Psalms for each of the times of the day where the composer mentions "morning," "noon/midday," and "evening."
19. What would you say keeps us from believing in the power of God being tapped by our prayers?

PRAYER

Function of Prayer Wish

Prayer-wishes abound in Scripture. Many are found in the Psalms and in Paul's letters. These are desires turned into prayers addressed to God with the faith that He alone can fulfill them. These prayer wishes are expressed in the optative mood (the mood of wish or volition) in the New Testament. They are rarely used, but are significant when found. The following references are from Paul's writings--[2 Timothy 1:16, 18](#); [Romans 15:13](#); [1 Thessalonians 3:11-13](#); [5:23](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:16-17](#); [3:5, 16](#). They are somewhat easy to spot in the English Bible because they begin with the word "may." Fundamentally, this is an expression or desire where a person wants God to do something.

The Power of prayer

This is probably the most accepted teaching about prayer, and yet the most misunderstood. Technically, it is not prayer that is powerful. It is the connecting of human faith and divine response where the power is witnessed. Prayer is merely the conduit through which God works. In Mark 11 Jesus challenges his disciples to pray with faith. Such faith results in two things: an actual result of something happening, preceded by an actual belief that such a thing is possible! The disciples saw the power of prayer in Jesus' life and requested that he teach them how to pray. Perhaps we often overlook this aspect of prayer—that a powerful prayer life needs to be modeled and demonstrated. What we call "The Lord's Prayer" is a model prayer that alerts us to the fundamental aspects of a powerful and effective prayer life.

Prayer as Presence

Often we are ushered into the very presence of God in the context of our prayer life. This is more real than often imagined. We are not praying to ourselves or about God. Rather we are pouring our hearts to our God who is personal, real and spiritual. Presence is not the same thing as place. We may feel more in the presence of God at a certain place, but the two are not identical. For this reason, we can be in the presence of God, with prayer in our hearts being shaped by our lips, any where and at anytime. When we view prayer as presence, two things happen: there is a two-way conversation going on between us and God. God speaks and we listen. We speak and God listens. Presence is rooted in relationship.

Prayer as a Practiced Discipline

We all have to admit that our prayer lives sometimes at best are haphazard. Because of our schedules, the hectic pace of life, or even the compounding of one crisis on top of another we rarely find time and the discipline to be engaged in prayer. An ancient Christian practice of prayer recognized a routine of prayer where it was engaged in daily at 8 set times. We may think that a little overdone and too much, but what is our alternative model? We go the other extreme and have little practice and no discipline! I am intrigued that in the Psalms the composer is aware of set prayer times. He wakes up in the morning waiting in expectation as God answers his prayers. He has prayer at noontime. He engages in prayer in the evening. He even prays to God in the middle of the night. Though written long ago, the Psalms themselves portray the depth and width of one's prayer life. May we learn from our religious heritage such discipline!