

PRAYER THAT WORKS

7 BIBLE STUDIES PREPARED BY
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Prayer That Works

7 Studies on the subject of Prayer, prepared by Dr Andrew Corbett, the pastor of Legana Christian Church, in Tasmania, Australia.

The goal of this set of Bible Studies is to provide a Biblical grounding for prayer that will provide a sound theological basis for praying appropriately which will also inspire the believer to more apt to pray.

At the conclusion of each Bible Study lesson there is a series of challenges that are designed to help you to put into practice what we have just studied.

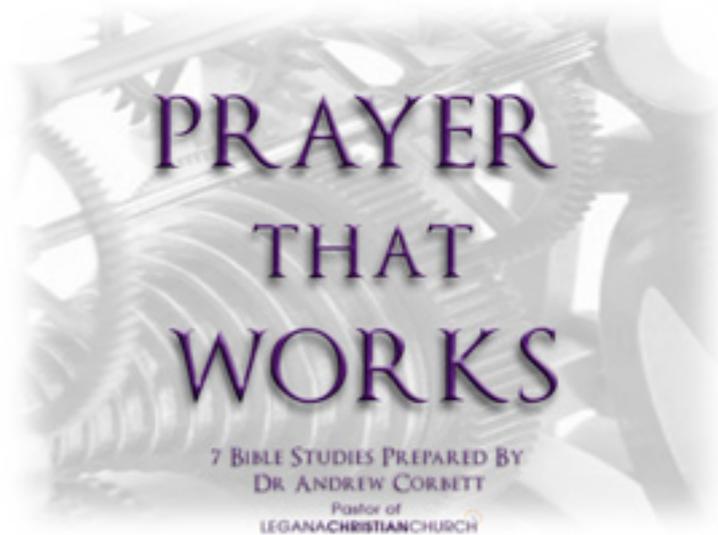
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Prayer That Works



Study #	Topic
1	Praying Privately- -What is prayer? -Singing-Reading-Writing-Reciting-Spontaneous -What praying does for God -How our prayers glorify God
2	Praying For Others- -The privilege and responsibility of prayer -What affect our prayer has on others -About Intercession -Why prayer is necessary for people to be saved
3	Praying In The Spirit- -What difference the Baptism in the Holy Spirit makes -Praying as led by the Spirit -Praying for the gifts of the Spirit -
4	Praying Scripture- -Prayerfully approaching Scripture -Praying the prayers of Scripture -Praying what we read -Shaping the way you pray through Scripture

Prayer That Works

Study #	Topic
5	Praying Publicly <ul style="list-style-type: none">-What to pray for in public-How to inspire people with your prayer-Considered praying-Ways not to pray in public
6	Model Praying <ul style="list-style-type: none">-The prayer Jesus gave-A.C.T.S.-The benefits of pattern praying-Keeping a prayer list
7	Prayer As A Lifestyle <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Pray without ceasing-Incorporating prayer into the mundane-Instant in prayer-What to do with answered prayer



Study
1

OUTLINE

- What is prayer?
- Singing-Reading-Writing-Reciting-Spontaneous praying
- What praying does for God
- How our prayers glorify God

WHAT IS PRAYER?

In its simplest sense, prayer is talking to God. But pondering prayer a little deeper, prayer is actually conversing with God. As we study what the Scriptures teach about prayer, we will see that prayer is not just *speaking* but *listening*.

1. Genesis 20:7 is the first time that prayer is mentioned in Scripture. What do we learn from this text? What do you find curious about what God said in this text? (Note Genesis 20:17)

2. What did Isaac know in order for him to do what he did in Genesis 25:21?

Praying Privately

From the earliest times it appears that people had the idea that they could seek God in prayer to meet their needs. Scripture reveals that this was done simply and privately. As people learned more about God and how to approach Him, prayer evolved from merely a private matter to become ultimately a corporate (many people together) exercise in the New Testament.

3. Do you know what you would like God to do for you? That is, what are you praying for regularly? Can you share one of those requests?

4. Read the episode of someone praying in First Samuel 1:9-18. What is perhaps unusual about this woman's prayer?

Private prayer should be an act of worship- something we do to further our surrender to God. It is also the most appropriate means to bring our deepest requests before God. But what it isn't is an opportunity to be seen by others in order to impress them with your spirituality (note Matt. 6:6). Praying privately is not for super-Christians, it's for all Christians. Will you take time to pray privately?

5. Observe what Jesus was doing in Luke 6:12. Why did He do this?

When we pray privately, there is no right way to pray. That is, there are no magic words to utter, no mystical phrases that must be cited, or no sacred expressions to be repeated.

SINGING-READING-WRITING- RECITING-SPONTANEOUS PRAYING

Perhaps the most common type of private praying is the whispered or mental prayer. But prayers do not have to be spoken.

6. Consider the Book of Psalms. Randomly select a Psalm. Discuss whether this Psalm is a "private" prayer and whether it was meant to be prayed by the reader. Give reasons-

The Book of Psalms is generally considered to be a collection of prayers to be sung. Singing prayers is a legitimate way to pray. Singing prayers engages the pray-er's heart and mind. It also helps the pray-er to recall God's faithfulness and presence at those times when praying is difficult. The next time you find it hard to pray and you're alone, try singing your prayers.

I was speaking with someone recently who told me that they weren't particularly emotional. As such, they found it easier to pray by reading the prepared prayers of others. In particular they found the Anglican Common Book of Prayer very helpful for their prayer life. The next time your heart is dull toward prayer, try reading some classic prayers.

Another great way to pray is by writing. Some refer to this type of prayer as "Prayer-Journaling". Christian Bookstores sell blank Prayer-Journals but your local stationery store sells blank exercise books which can serve the same purpose for a fraction of the cost of a printed Prayer-Journal. The next time you find it difficult to speak your prayers, try writing a daily prayer down in a Prayer-Journal.

Praying Privately

7. Some people regard reading the prayers of others as insincere. What do you think?

Writing your prayers down also has the added benefit of having a record to which you can refer back to when your prayer is answered.

8. Some scholars regard Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians as a written prayer. Can you see why they might think that? Could you give an example of what Paul prayed for for the Ephesians?

Some believers have found great comfort and strength from reciting prayers. Repeating prayers is however seen by some as pointless because God doesn't forget what we pray so why keep praying the same thing?

9. Read Matthew 26:40-44. What do we learn about praying from the Master of Prayer in this passage?

Some of the prayers of famous past Christians have been recited by other Christians down through the centuries. Do you know of any of these type of prayers? As a young boy I grew up in a family where at meal time we prayed the same prayer each time-

*Thank You Lord for the world so sweet
Thank You Lord for the food we eat
Thank You Lord for the birds that sing
Thank You Lord for everything.*

Praying Privately

While there is great benefit to be gained from praying prepared prayers, there is the need for each of us to develop spontaneous prayers.

10. Consider the prayer of Nehemiah 1:4-11. Do you think this prayer was spontaneous? Did Nehemiah intend for this to be a private prayer?

11. How is this prayer of Nehemiah (1:4-11) different to his prayer in Nehemiah 2:4?

When praying privately you have the wonderful privilege of being able to pray unscripted, spontaneous prayers. You can pray at any time, from your heart, using words that you might not otherwise use in public because they are too personal. Spontaneous prayers don't have to be long. These spontaneous prayers might be just two words! (Like, "God, help!")

WHAT PRAYING DOES FOR GOD

12. What does First Peter 3:12 tell us about God's response to His people praying?

Several times in Scripture God is described as being enveloped in clouds of glory. One contribution of the source of these glory clouds in Revelation 5:8.

13. Read Revelation 5:8 and discuss what this source of glory is.

Praying Privately

14. How does Mark 11:24 encourage us in prayer? (Matt. 21:22)

When we pray and God answers, God is glorified! Far from being a selfish thing to present our petitions to God, it is ultimately a God glorifying act to pray. If God chooses to grant our request it also brings glory to Him. Therefore, we should be pray-ers who live to give God glory and especially pray that He will be glorified in our lives.

15. In what way does praying affect our eternal condition-

By praying for our bills to be paid we are paying our eternal debts to be cleared.

If we pray for God to change our character and to help us to become like Christ.

If we pray for others to be blessed God will surely bless us for eternity.

By praying for souls to be saved we will be given bigger mansions in heaven.

16. According to Romans 12:12 how much time should a growing believer be devoting to prayer everyday?

Your homework for our next Bible study meeting is to do the following-

1. Pray daily for the needs of those in your Bible Study Group (you'll need to note what those needs are)
2. Write a "Life Prayer" for yourself that you can share with the group.
3. Find a classic prayer that you can relate to and share it with the group (see if you can also get the story behind the prayer as well)

Amen.