

Clearly Caring in Prayer

Pray continually. (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

In a world in which families suffer, health crises abound, and heartache is all around, prayer is needed as much today as when we spoke our first one. There are, however, sharply different approaches to prayer. Some people barely remember prayer at mealtime or bedtime. Others toss prayer around like it is some sort of trite dialog with a good buddy.

A proper balance to prayer is found in understanding what it is and why we do it. The model prayer was presented by Jesus, and it contains these basic components:

1. An understanding to whom you are praying.
God hears prayer — not a good buddy or the “big guy upstairs.” This is your perfect Creator, the One who out of love sacrificed His Son, Jesus for your sins. Prayer, therefore, is always to be understood in the context of ultimate respect.
2. The salvation of souls.
For the kingdom of God to come is to ask for that which God wants — the salvation of all people. Our first concern for others is not for their earthly happiness but for their eternal welfare [their salvation].
3. The will of God which reigns supreme.
When we ask God to bless our efforts, improve our health, increase our income, help our personal relationships, etc. we do so presupposing we do NOT want it if it is outside of His will. A clearly caring prayer understands the first priority goes to God.
4. God’s providence and care of us.
Because all requests are subordinate to the will of God it is not wrong to ask for our own personal care. However, it is also important to ask for His guidance that we might learn contentment as well.
5. The salvation of our souls.
The forgiveness of sins is of paramount importance. Our worthiness to even pray is jeopardized by our sins yet is made possible by the work of Jesus Christ. Humility and a keen sense of this reality are crucial components of prayer.
6. Our lack of invincibility.
Lest we assume to act like the Apostle Peter, confident of our abilities to withstand all tests, we need to ask God’s assistance to avoid temptation and escape evil in our lives. While on this earth these realities must be faced by sinners. We need His help.
7. Praise.
It is incredible how much prayer found in Scripture is not so much asking but proclaiming the greatness of God.

All prayer – whether for ourselves or for others – is rooted in a deep sense of understanding that the most important thing in life is the right relationship with God. A clearly caring prayer keeps that concern front and center at all times.

For additional information and resources in dealing with this life topic, visit the Christian Life Resources website at www.ChristianLifeResources.com or call us at 1-800-729-9535.