

## PRAYING WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO PRAY FOR ROMANS 8:24-27

### Introduction

I want to ask each of you a question. Understand that I'm not looking for an answer to this question I'm about to ask. I just want us ALL to reflect on it! How much do you pray? I'm not talking about asking blessings over your food, but how much do you talk to God in prayer?

I know when we are in great difficulty because of some circumstances of life that we ALL find ourselves faced with at various times in our life, we may find more time to take those matters to the LORD in prayer. And **understand that I'm not being critical of that at all because Scripture invites us to pray in those times.**

*1 Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

**But Scripture also tells has some other things to say about prayer that we should take heed of:**

*Luke 18:1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that **men ought always to pray, and not to faint;***

*1 Thessalonians 5:17 "Pray without ceasing."*

**But other than asking blessings on our food and prayers when we are in difficulties, how much do we come to the LORD to be in His presence and talk to Him?**

**Prayer can be a struggle for us all!**

If there is any area where Satan attacks the Believer the most it is probably in this area of prayer. The reason being is because there is so much power in prayer!

Have you ever set a timer for five or ten minutes and try to pray the entire time. You ought to try it and see how much Satan tries to distract you in your attempt at being persistent in prayer!

It shouldn't really be that hard; after all, we sit in drive-thru lanes at fast food places for longer than that. But it feels hard sometimes, because we're forced to search deep inside of our hearts and express things that we otherwise wouldn't.

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It is so much easier to just say what we want to say and move on with our life, but that produces a shallow prayer life that doesn't really reach down to the core of our being.

Let me challenge you to try it! Start small with five minutes! Five minutes can be a long time, and sometimes we find ourselves at a loss for words as to what to actually pray for.

It's not necessarily that we're not thankful (I think most of us are), or that we don't need anything (most of us do), or that we don't have anything to say, but it's because either we feel like we've said it all before, or we don't know how to express what's on our heart!

**If that describes you, here are a few things you can start with.**

**I. REFLECT ON THE LORD'S MAJESTY AND WORSHIP HIM!**

We can't go wrong with this one. When we're struggling to think of what to pray for, just take a moment and dwell on the attributes of Jehovah God!

How grand He is,  
How powerful He is,  
How loving He is, and  
How merciful He is.

It's a tactic employed often by the psalmists.

In *Psalm 145*, David does nothing for 21 straight verses except praise God for Who He is!

If you read the Psalm, what you'll notice in addition to that is how David moves the focus from Who God is to what He's done for us!

And that's the real power of God: that although He can do anything He wants, He chooses to love and show mercy towards mankind.

Reflect on that!

**II. ASK THE LORD FOR WISDOM!**

At the start of his life, we've seen in our studies in 1 Kings how Solomon was on a roll early on in his reign. He accumulated wealth, began and finished several construction projects (including the Temple and his own palace), and he successfully made many decisions such as determining the correct mother between two warring women.

But we've seen all of this came from his noblest act—asking for wisdom!

Ironically, Solomon showed incredible wisdom in asking for wisdom when God offered him his choice of anything he could want!  
*(1 Kings 3:5-9)*

Solomon knew that the key in managing an empire such as Israel, and taking on such tasks as building the Temple, and helping God's people as he led them and judged them, wasn't in himself! He needed God's wisdom!

And so do we! We may not be in charge of an entire kingdom, but whatever we are involved in...at work, at home, at Church, or wherever our life may take us, we need the LORD's wisdom!

Oh yes we do! Desperately!

*James 1:5-8 5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. 7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. 8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*

*Reflect On The Lord's Majesty/Worship...Ask the LORD for Wisdom.*

**III. PRAY TO THE LORD WHAT HE PRAYED FOR US!**

This is one of those things that is easy in theory, but difficult in practice.

Right before Jesus' trial and crucifixion, as He's either in the Garden or still in the Upper Room with His Apostles, He "*lifted up His eyes to Heaven*" (*John 17:1*) and begins talking to His Heavenly Father.  
(That's prayer)

He prays for a few specific things, for His disciples and those who would become His disciples.

**A. He Prays For Unity In His Church! (John 17:11; 20-23)**  
Of all the things He could have prayed for—courage, an easy life, you name it—Jesus prayed that His disciples the world over would dwell together in unity.

Of course, unity for unity's sake is not real unity; real unity comes when we center our faith and our life around God's Word. Only then can we find the rallying point that our souls depend on.

**B. He Prays For His Church To Be Sanctified Through The Truth Of God's Word! (John 17:14, 17, 19)**  
Pray that we will rally around God's Word and not man-made doctrine or our own selfish wills!

**C. He Prays For Christ's Joy To Be Fulfilled In His Church! (John 17:13)**

**D. He Prays For Them To Be Kept From The Evil In This World! (John 17:14-15)**

*Reflect On The Lord's Majesty/Worship Him...Ask The Lord For Wisdom...Pray To The LORD What He Prayed For Us!*

**IV. HUMBLE YOURSELF IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD!**

*1 Peter 5:5-7 "5...Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: 7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."*

**PRAYING WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO PRAY FOR  
ROMANS 8:24-27**

Humility has to do with our attitude in prayer. Whether we realize it or not, all of us could use a good dose of humility every once in a while.

Real humility—the kind that forces us to look deep inside of ourselves and evaluate our shortcomings with an eye to fix them.

The old adage rings true: that which gets measured gets managed, and unless we're truly measuring ourselves, there's no way to fix those things that are wrong. The Word of God says that we should examine ourselves.

Remember, the greatest king to ever sit on the throne of Israel went for nearly an entire year before acknowledging that he made a mistake with Bathsheba and Uriah, so if you think you're an excellent judge of your own character, take a moment and do a full inventory of your life.

You might be right in your assessment of yourself, but the only way you'll know is if you look at yourself honestly.

*James 4:6-10 6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. 9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*

**V. CHOOSE TO FORGIVE OTHERS AND BE LONGSUFFERING AS JESUS HAS FORGIVEN YOU AND IS LONGSUFFERING!**

I'm not a big fan of the phrase "*forgive and forget*," because it's almost impossible in our world to literally "*forget*" what people have done against us.

But get this... "*Forgive and forget*" is when we choose to move past what others have done in order to salvage a relationship that will hopefully grow past this.

**PRAYING WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO PRAY FOR  
ROMANS 8:24-27**

It's a key factor in our own forgiveness, as Jesus laid out in the model prayer:

*Matthew 6:12 "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."*

*Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

If we can't forgive others, how can we expect God to forgive us?

Unfortunately, some of us refuse to forgive because it gives us some sick sense of validation. If we can hold a grudge against others, that means someone owes us something. It gives us a sense of importance due to the obligation we dangle over other people's heads.

That's why, at least in part, it's so hard to forgive other people. To forgive means to forget ourselves and work for the betterment of others – a hard pill to swallow for someone who has wronged us so dearly.

That's why we need God's help. Ask for strength to forgive other people.

**VI. ASK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE THE LORD BY SERVING OTHERS!**

Remember our recent sermons about edifying the Body of Christ? That's a good place to begin!

One thing I have found true in my own prayers is that if you ask God to open doors, He will do it, and usually in the most unforeseen ways possible.

Chances are, there are people in our Church or in our community right now that could desperately use your help, but like the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-36), we pass right on by without paying a second thought. We're either too wrapped up in our own world or we don't recognize opportunity when we see it. Ask God for opportunities to serve, and we'll most likely find them!

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**Conclusion**

*REFLECT ON THE LORD'S MAJESTY AND WORSHIP HIM!*

*ASK THE LORD FOR WISDOM!*

*PRAY TO THE LORD WHAT HE PRAYED FOR US!*

*HUMBLE YOURSELF IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD!*

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