



# Prayer That Works

Grace Growth Group

# Study Plan

## Prayer That Works

- Opening thoughts
- **Why pray?**
- What is prayer?
- When should we prayer?
- Where should we pray?
- How should we pray?
- What are the keys to effective prayer?
- How can we pray for an hour?

Why Pray?  
The motive and  
purpose

Prayer  
That Works

Why Pray?  
The motive

# Wrong Motives

#1 For recognition: not about **looks**

Matt. 6:5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that **they may be seen of men.**

# Wrong Motives

#2 For religiosity: not about **length**

Matt. 23:14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a **pretence make long prayer**: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

# Wrong Motives

#2b For religiosity: not about **lots of repetition**

Matt. 6:7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their **much speaking**.

# What are vain repetitions?

- Mindless babbling: impersonal perspective of God
- Endless prayers: improper perspective of God

# Wrong Motives

#3 For wrong personal reasons:

James 4:3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

# Wrong Motives

Why pray?

Not for...

- recognition
- religiosity
- wrong reasons

# Wrong Motives

Why pray?

The right reason is RELATIONSHIP.

Why Pray?  
The purpose

# Why Pray?

**Because God hears our prayers.**

Ex 2:23-25 And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.

# Why Pray?

**Because prayer changes things.**

Ex. 32:9-14 And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that **I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.** And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? **Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people.** Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. **And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.**

# Why Pray?

“[My prayers] have not advised or changed God’s mind—that is, His over-all purpose. But **that purpose will be realized in different ways** according to the actions, including the prayers, of His creatures.”

—C. S. Lewis

Prayer can change the course of history!

# Why Pray?

“In prayer you **align yourselves to the purpose and power of God** and He is able to do things through you that He couldn't do otherwise... For God has left certain things open to prayer—things which will never be done except as we pray.”--Dr. E. Stanley Jones[1]

“**Prayer can do anything that God can do.**”[2]

[1] Eastman, Dick. 1978. The Hour That Changes the World. Baker Books, 13.

[2] R. A. Torrey, The Power of Prayer and the Prayer of Power, Zondervan Books: Grand Rapids, MI, 1971, 17.

# Why Pray?

**Prayer works when connected to the proper purpose.**

**What is the proper purpose of prayer?**

# Why Pray?

**The chief purpose of prayer is  
to advance God's will.**

# Why Pray?

“One of the purposes of prayer is to discover God’s will in order that we might do it.”[1]

[1] Strauss, Lehman. 1974. Sense and Nonsense about Prayer, 54.

# Why Pray?

What is God's will?

- **advancing the kingdom**

Matt. 6:10 Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done in earth, as it is  
in heaven.

# Why Pray?

What is God's will?

- advancing the kingdom: **more witnesses**

Matt. 9:36-38 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

# Why Pray?

What is God's will?

- advancing the kingdom: **more willing hearts connected to the gospel**

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

# Why Pray?

What is God's will?

- advancing the kingdom: **more willingness**

Matt. 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth (including our hearts).

# Why Pray?

**For God's glory:** for people to know God, make Him known (Matt. 6:13, 1 Kings 18:16-41)

**For God's grace:** help with sin (Heb. 4:15-16), forgiveness (1 John 1:9), affliction (Ja. 5:14), healing (Ja. 5:14), temptation and spiritual attacks (Matt. 26:40-41, Eph. 6:18), spiritual health (Eph. 1:15-23, 3:14-21)

# Why Pray?

“I believe that those who are not eminently holy pray little, and those who are eminently holy pray much.”—J. C. Ryle[1]

“Prayer will promote our personal holiness as nothing else except the study of the Word of God.”[2]

[1] J. C. Ryle, *Call to Prayer*, Audubon Press, Laurel, MS: 1996, 11.

[2] R. A. Torrey, *The Power of Prayer and the Prayer of Power*, Zondervan Books: Grand Rapids, MI, 1971, 17.

# Why Pray?

“There is no true spiritual growth apart from the devotional habit. Consistency in prayer is the evidence of true commitment.”[1]

[1] Eastman, Dick. 1978. The Hour That Changes the World. Baker Books, 14.

# Why Pray?

**To access God's power:** "Prayer is the slender nerve that moveth the muscles of omnipotence." [1]

**To access God's promises/blessings** (Matt. 7:7-11)

**To access God's peace** (Phil. 4:6)

[1] Dick Eastman, *The Hour That Changes the World*, Baker Book: Grand Rapids, MI, 1978, 11.

# Why Pray?

**To see people trust in Jesus**

**To praise and thank God:** “Prayer without thanksgiving is ineffective...praise is essential to prayer.”[1] “If we only would pause and reflect on the many gifts God, in His grace, has granted us, we could pray with a greater measure of accuracy.”[2]

[1] Strauss, Lehman. 1974. Sense and Nonsense about Prayer, 58.

[2] Strauss, Lehman. 1974. Sense and Nonsense about Prayer, 57.

# Why Pray?

**In summary, prayer that works prays for things  
God wants.**

# Conclusion



- The motive of prayer is not for self; we pray for God.
- The chief purpose of prayer is to advance the God's will.

# Prayer in Practice



This week...

- Review this lesson and included Bible verses.
- Focus on praying according to God's will.
- Write down some specific prayer items.
- Read this week's memory verses every day.
- Listen to a recommended audio resource on prayer.

# Memory Verses

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John 15:4-7

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.