



# develop the habit of prayer

To develop a habit of prayer, we must give it high priority and do it consistently. Like successful athletes, we must have DISCIPLINE. We must pursue, with great fervor and dedication, habits that can deliver our goals. Jesus Christ had a similar system and discipline – His habit of praying was consistent (Mark 1:35, Luke 6:12, Matthew 14:23). As followers of Jesus, we too must become men and women of prayer.

## **persistent prayer** (Luke 11:5-13)

In the parable of Jesus, the neighbor helped the one in need not just because he is a friend but because the other man was so PERSISTENT - bold, shameless, tenacious, and insistent. What is Jesus saying? Just like the persistent friend in the story, we must be persistent in prayer. Jesus tells us to “keep asking, keep seeking, and keep knocking”. In other words, we must not give up praying. Prayer is about a relationship with God – a relationship best exemplified by the relationship of a father and a son. Jesus explained that if men, who are naturally evil, will not withhold good things for their own children, how much more GOD (Matthew 7:11)? Therefore, we must come to the Lord as our “Good Father”. We can have complete trust and freedom to approach Him anytime and anywhere. Many times, God does not answer our prayers immediately because He wants us to experience the blessing of persistent prayer. As we pray and wait for His answer, our faith grows, our character is changed, and our motive is purified and sanctified. Hebrews 4:16 tells us to draw near with confidence to the throne of grace! To develop this habit, we must remember the P.A.T.H. Principle.

### **this week's memory verse**

discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come.

1 TIMOTHY 4:7-8

## develop the habit of prayer

- **PRIORITY** – we must treat prayer as a very important element of our relationship with Him. It is a habit we must learn to prioritize because it is a great privilege given by God for us to enter His presence.
- **ADMIT** – we must admit that we cannot develop the habit of prayer on our own. Our willpower is inadequate like the experience of the Apostle Paul (Romans 7:15,18-19). Desiring things or having a goal is not enough. God understands our limitation.
- **TURN TO JESUS** – As Paul pointed out in Romans 7:24-15, it is only through the power of Jesus that our lives can be transformed (2 Corinthians 5:17). It all begins with Jesus Christ!
- **HABITUALIZE** – Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:27 that he “disciplined” his body. We need to have a system to continue practicing habits (Philippians 4:9) until they become second nature to us! Galatians 6:9 encourages us not to lose heart in doing good because it will eventually bear fruit! We were taught the principle of the “compounding effect” – the small choices we make today can lead to the successes and failures we experience tomorrow. We must be able to develop good habits, starting with our prayer life. It must become a way of life.

Luke 11:13 promises us our Helper and Advocate, the HOLY SPIRIT, will empower us to continue building this God-glorifying habit. Let us develop the habit of prayer and enjoy the benefits of having direct access to our Loving Father through Christ Jesus our Lord!

### discussion questions

Why do you think prayer is important?

On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the lowest, 10 the highest, how is your prayer life?

What steps can you take to cultivate the habit of prayer today?

What would you like to pray for?

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