

## *How Do You Pray? (Part 1)*

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**Introduction:** Prayer is often a neglected area of the Christian's life.

A. Paul commonly expressed the concern that Christians obtain the full extent of the blessings God has for them. **(Eph 1:18-20)**

1. Prayer is the door which God expects us to regularly walk through.

**(James 4:2-3)**

2. Prayer as with anything that relates to God has rules! There is a right way and a wrong way to pray.

3. Above all we must have a faithful heart. **(James 1:6-8)**

B. In this series we will examine the components of prayer: **Praise, Confession, Petition and Intercession.**

1. By a careful study of these elements we can see how our prayers could be more effective!

2. The Apostles after observing Jesus pray realized they needed more teaching! **(Luke 11:1)**

3. A question for your consideration: "How do you pray?" Take these four components and consider where the bulk of your prayers stand.

4. Most Christian's prayers center in petition.

### *I. The Value of Praise and Thanksgiving*

A. Praise is good for us. **(Psa 33:1-2)**

1. Praise is not an elaborate process. How many times have you seen the creation and expressed thanks. **(Psa 8:3-4, 9; 9:1)**

2. One of the necessities of thankfulness is that selfishness must be eliminated. You must be looking at something other than yourself.

B. To what extent should we be thankful? **(1 Thess 5:18)**

1. Notice that it is not "for" everything, but "in" everything.

2. Ex. One man who had a miserable day prayed: "O Lord, we thank you that every day is not like this one."

#### **Homemaker's Prayer**

**Lord, we thank you for this sink of dirty dishes, for we have good food to eat.**

**Thank you for this pile of dirty laundry, for we have nice clothes to wear.**

**I would like to thank you for all these unmade beds, for they were all comfortable last night.**

**My thanks for this bathroom, complete with soggy towels, splattered mirror and grimy laboratory, it is still very convenient.**

**Thank you for this finger smudged refrigerator that needs defrosting so badly, for it has served us faithfully and inside are cool drinks and enough leftovers for another meal.**

**Thank you for this oven which absolutely must be cleaned today, for it has baked us many good things over the years.**

**Our whole family is thankful for the tall grass we are mowing, for we are grateful for our private yard.**

**Thanks for the slamming door, for the children are healthy and able to run and play.**

**Lord, the presence of all these chores awaiting me is witness that you have richly blessed this family.  
I shall do them all gratefully and cheerfully.**

- C. Ignoring thanksgiving is the first step to a corrupt heart. **(Rom 1:20-21)**
  - 1. A thankless heart will always become alienated from God. **(Eph 4:17)**
  - 2. On the other hand remember the song: “Count your many blessings .... and it will surprise you what the Lord has done”.
  
- D. Praise will cause you to know God better. **(Rom 8:29)**
  - 1. Praise is on a higher level than thanksgiving in that we are out of the picture. Only God is in view!
  - 2. This will bring you to God’s presence like never before. What can you praise God for?
  - 3. In prayer it is important to focus and not to drift!
  - 4. Do you “know your God?” **(Jer 8:7, 19; 17:5-8)**

## ***II. Bible Examples of Praise and Thanksgiving in Prayer***

- A. I ask you to consider using these prayers as a model.
  - 1. Take notes of these prayers and learn to pray like these godly men.
  - 2. As with any prayer, make it a true expression of your heart based upon what God has done for you.
- B. The prayer of David after deliverance from his enemies. **(2 Sam 22:2-4)**
  - 1. It is good to begin your prayers with this focus upon God alone.
  - 2. Again, this will do you much good.
- C. The great prayer of confession led by the Levites in the days of Nehemiah. **(Neh 9:5-6)**
- D. A great Psalm of David. **(Psa 103:1-2, 19-22)**
  - 1. Knowledge of the character of God encourages us to pray!
  - 2. What do you need to know about God that will cause you to confess your sin?
- E. Those in the presence of God. **(Rev 4:11; 5:9-10, 12-24)**
  - 1. Remember, God does not need our praise. It is good for us!
  - 2. Do you want to go to heaven? What will you be doing there?

## ***III. Challenges to a Thankful Heart***

- A. Selfishness. **(Jas 4:1-3)**
- B. Bitterness. **(1 Peter 3:7; Job 2:9-10)**
- C. Ignorance. **(Gal 4:8-9; 1 Peter 2:1-3)**
- D. Indifference. **(Heb 11:6)**

**Conclusion:** How do you pray? Are you thankful? Do you express that to God?  
**(Phil 4:6-7)**