

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Daily read over this material and read or sing the song.
2. Place the scripture where you will see it each day.
3. Think of how you can make your prayers more meaningful.
4. Write down some things that you have not prayed for and add them into your prayers.
5. Plan to tell the class about a time when you saw prayers answered and how it affected you, or tell about a time you felt like your prayers were not being answered the way you wanted them to be.

DAILY BIBLE VERSES AND PRAYER THOUGHTS

MONDAY - VERSES: There are around 500 references to prayer in the Bible. Exodus 32:31-32; Numbers 11:1-2; Deuteronomy 9:20,26
PRAYER THOUGHT: Father, help me to show concern for your other children and lift their needs above my own.

TUESDAY - VERSES: James 5:13, 16-18; 2 Chronicles 1:8-12
PRAYER THOUGHT: Giver of All Good Gifts, help me have wisdom to ask for the right things.

WEDNESDAY - VERSES: Psalm 35:18, 28; 66:19-20; 148:1-13
PRAYER THOUGHT: God, help me praise You for all of the marvelous characteristics You have.

THURSDAY - VERSES: 2 Timothy 1:3; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2-3
PRAYER THOUGHT: Master, help me to always be thankful for all of the blessings You have given.

FRIDAY - VERSES: Luke 18:10-14; 1 Peter 3:12; Hebrews 4:16
PRAYER THOUGHT: Almighty King, may I never forget to come before you humbly, yet boldly.

SATURDAY - VERSES: Genesis 20:7,17; 1 Samuel 12:23; 1 Timothy 2:1, 8
PRAYER THOUGHT: Great Creator, help me always remember to pray for others created in Your image.

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Prayer is the key to the day and the lock for the night.

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One man said when praying for our 'unsaved loved ones': "Father, we just want to pray for our 'unloved saved ones.'"

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"The one who kneels to the Lord can stand up to anything."

SPIRITUAL HEALTH REGIMEN - WEEK 90

PRAYER - 4-27-14 TO 5-3-14

SCRIPTURE - 1 Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing.

COMMENT - Though prayer is not the only spiritual activity, it is an essential one. We should never forget that it was not our idea to try to get a message to a God who did not want to hear us, but that it was God's idea because He wants us to talk to Him.

SONG - PRAY ALL THE TIME

1) The world has lost the right of prayer, And saints have failed to pray; What loss sustained beyond repair! How blind of heart are they!

Chorus: Pray in the Morning, Pray at the Noontime, Pray in the Evening, Pray anytime; Pray when you're happy, Pray when in sorrow, Pray when you're tempted, Pray all the time.

2) The Father speaketh in His word - He talks no other way! And to converse with Him, our Lord, We must take time to pray!

3) There is no trial, grief, or pain, No moment of the day, But that we may in Jesus' name Incline our souls and pray!

THOUGHTS

RATTLESNAKE RELIGION AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Leroy Brownlow told of a family of wayward church members-a father and three sons. Everything within reason had been done to restore them, yet all in vain.

One day a rattlesnake bit one of the sons. The doctor was summoned and he observed that about the only thing left was prayer. Immediately the preacher and the elders were called. The preacher was asked to pray for John. He did-sort of. He prayed, "O wise and righteous Father, we thank thee that thou hast, in thy wisdom, sent this rattlesnake to bite John, in order to bring him to his senses. He has not been inside the church house for years, and it is very doubtful that he has in all this time, until now, felt any need for prayer. Now we trust that this will prove a valuable lesson to him, and that it may lead to genuine repentance. And now, O Father, wilt thou send another to bite Sam and another to bite Jim and another BIG ONE to bite their old man? We have been doing everything we know for years to restore them but to no avail. It seems, therefore, that what all our combined efforts could not do, this rattlesnake has done. We thus conclude that the only thing left that will do this family any good is rattlesnakes; so, Lord, send us bigger and better rattlesnakes. In Jesus name, Amen."

A teacher saw a group of children kneeling in the corner of the playground. She immediately reported the activity to the principal. The principal called the children into his office and asked them what they had been doing. "Playing poker," they replied.

"Oh, thank goodness," sighed the teacher. "We thought you were praying."

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A 6-year-old was overheard reciting the Lord's sample prayer: "And forgive us our trash passes, as we forgive those who passed trash against us."

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A little boy was saying his bedtime prayers. His mother whispered, "I can't hear you, dear."

And the small one said firmly, "Wasn't talkin' to you."

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It is not the arithmetic of our prayers, how many they are: nor the rhetoric of our prayers, how eloquent they are; nor the geometry of our prayers, how long they be; nor the music of our prayers, how sweet our voice may be; nor the logic of our prayers, how argumentative they may be; nor the method of our prayers, how orderly they may be -- which God cares for. Fervency of spirit is that which availeth much. - William Lee

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WHERE ARE YOU?

BARBARA STEDMAN

All my life, I've critiqued prayers.

In third grade Sunday school class, I giggled when the Schroeder boy asked God for a new bicycle. We all giggled, knowing we weren't supposed to pray for things like that. We were supposed to pray for the missionaries and our soldiers in Vietnam.

In my teens, I rolled my eyes at every 'thee' and 'thou.' Too flowery and old-fashioned for me. And our preacher's voice in prayer at the beginning of a sermon? Too dramatic, too rehearsed, with the appropriate octavelong drop beseeching his 'Gawd.'

Soon, my giggles and peeves turned to cynicism. No one was immune, not the struggling dieter who wanted God to keep her from

overeating, nor the group in a prayer meeting that ticked off a review of sick relatives.

I began sitting through prayer meetings, biting my lip to keep from making sarcastic remarks about prayer lists, numbered requests to check off when things turned out the way we wanted so everyone could agree, 'Isn't God good?' I'd draw my mouth into a thin line to keep from sneering at all the other devices I wrote off as gimmicks designed to make us feel God would somehow hear us better.

Then in prayer group one morning, everything stopped, like the drop of the curtain on a theater stage, bringing the drama to its muffled halt. Only not in the room, not in the eight women in our prayer circle. In me.

Discreetly tucked away in a corner, where I had disentangled myself from what I labeled formula and shallow language, I heard, 'Barbara, would you lead us in prayer?'

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"We spend more time in our churches today praying to keep sick saints out of heaven than we do to keep the lost sinners out of hell." - Leon Vorpahl

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From the Devil's Beatitudes: Blessed are those Christians who have NO TIME TO PRAY - they are the easiest prey for me - in fact, no effort at all.

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A.S.K. IN PRAYER

INTRODUCTION - LUKE 11:5-13

I. _____ WITH _____ - NO MAGIC FORMULA - LUKE 11:11; JAMES 4:2-3; 1:6; EPHESIANS 3:20

II. _____ WITH _____ - PRAY LIKE YOU MEAN IT - LUKE 11:5-6; HEBREWS 11:6; JOHN 5:30; COLOSSIANS 3:1

III. _____ WITH _____ - DON'T GIVE UP - LUKE 11:8; 1 THESSALONIANS 5:17; LUKE 18:1-8; JAMES 5:16

A.S.K. IN PRAYER

INTRODUCTION

A. LUKE 11:5-13 And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; {6} 'for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; {7} "and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? {8} "I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. {9} "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. {10} "For everyone who ASKS receives, and he who SEEKS finds, and to him who KNOCKS it will be opened. {11} "If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? {12} "Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? {13} "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

B. THE AX MAN - Some years ago a young man approached the foreman of a logging crew and asked for a job. "That depends," replied the foreman. "Let's see you cut down this tree." The young man stepped forward and skillfully felled a great tree. Impressed, the foreman exclaimed, "Start Monday!"

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday rolled by, and Thursday afternoon the foreman approached the young man and said, "You can pick up your paycheck on the way out today."

Startled, he replied, "I thought you paid on Friday." "Normally we do," answered the foreman, "but we're letting you go today because you've fallen behind. Our daily cutting charts show that you've dropped from first place on Monday to last on Wednesday."

"But I'm a hard worker," the young man objected. "I arrive first, leave last, and even have worked through my coffee breaks!" The foreman, sensing the boy's integrity thought for a minute and then asked, "Have you been sharpening your ax?"

The young man replied, "I've been working too hard to take the time."

How about you? Have you been too busy, too hard at work to

sharpen your ax? Prayer is what gives you that sharp edge. Without it, the more work you do, the duller you'll get.

B. ONLY WHEN IN NEED - A man fell off cliff and grabbed a bush and yells out, "Is there anyone there?" A voice said, "This is God, let go and I will save you." There is silence and then the man calls out, "Is there anyone else there?"

I. ASK WITH SIMPLICITY – NO MAGIC FORMULA

A. ASK SIMPLY - LUKE 11:11 If a son asks for bread from any father among you,

B. ASK - JAMES 4:2-3 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. {3} You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

C. ASK IN FAITH - JAMES 1:6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

D. ASK BELIEVING IN GOD'S POWER - EPHESIANS 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

II. SEEK WITH INTENSITY - PRAY LIKE YOU MEAN IT

A. SEEK INTENSELY - LUKE 11:5-6 And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; {6} 'for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'

B. SEEK GOD - HEBREWS 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

C. SEEK GOD'S WILL - JOHN 5:30 "I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

D. SEEK THINGS ABOVE - COLOSSIANS 3:1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

III. KNOCK WITH PERSISTENCY – DON'T GIVE UP

A. KNOCK PERSISTENTLY - LUKE 11:8 because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.

B. KNOCK WITHOUT CEASING - 1 THESSALONIANS

5:17 pray without ceasing,

C. KNOCK WITHOUT GIVING UP - LUKE 18:1-8 Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, {2} saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. {3} "Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' {4} "And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, Though I do not fear God nor regard man, {5} 'yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' {6} Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. {7} "And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? {8} "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

D. KNOCK FERVENTLY - JAMES 5:16 The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

CONCLUSION

A. NO TIME TO PRAY

I got up early one morning and rushed right into the day;
I had so much to accomplish that I didn't have time to pray.
Problems just tumbled about me, and heavier came each task.
Why doesn't God help me? I wondered, He said, you didn't ASK.
I wanted to see joy and beauty, but the day toiled on, gray and bleak.
I wondered why God didn't show me. He said, you didn't SEEK.
I tried to come into God's presence; I used all my keys at the lock.
God gently and lovingly chided, my child you didn't KNOCK.
I work up early this morning, and paused before entering the day;
I had so much to accomplish that I had to take time to pray.

B. REMEMBER TO...

ASK WITH SIMPLICITY

SEEK WITH INTENSITY

KNOCK WITH PERSISTENCY

1 Thessalonians 5:17
Pray without
ceasing.

1 T hessalonians 5:17

P ray without
ceasing.