

CHOOSING THE DISCIPLINE OF PRAYER

"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words."

Matthew 6:5-7 (NIV)

❖ Taking TIME to PRAY:

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

Mark 1:35 (NIV)

1. Set a PATTERN of PRAYER.

After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone.

Matthew 14:23 (NIV)

2. Establish a PLAN of PRAYER.

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." He said to them, "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation."

Luke 11:1-4 (NIV)

3. Recognize the PRIORITY of PRAYER.

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

Luke 18:1 (NIV)

❖ TELLING God what's on your HEART:

You have not because you ask not...

James 4:2b (KJV)

1. Get HONEST with GOD... Don't HOLD anything BACK.

Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about what happens to you.

1 Peter 5:7 (NLT)

2. God WANTS you to COME to HIM when life gets HARD to handle.

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28 (NLT)

3. The FIRST STEP we should always take is to PRAY.

Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.

Philippians 4:6-7 (MSG)

❖ TRUSTING God with your PRAYERS:

Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; He rises to show you compassion. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!

Isaiah 30:18 (NIV)

1. God's SPIRIT is in YOU.

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

Romans 8:15-16 (NIV)

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

Romans 8:26 (NIV)

2. God promises His WISDOM if you will only ASK.

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

James 1:5 (NIV)

3. God LOVES you with all His HEART.

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

1 John 4:9-10 (NIV)

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

Romans 8:35;37 (NIV)