

PRAYING FOR YOURSELF



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‘Praying for Yourself’
by
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PRAYING FOR YOURSELF

Do you ask God for things, but feel He doesn't hear or doesn't answer? Or do you feel you don't deserve anything from God or that He doesn't care?

Does God Hear Your Prayers?

1 Peter 3:12 says – *‘the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears open to their prayer.’* God hears the prayers of righteous people. If you're thinking, “Well that eliminates me!” don't worry. No-one can make themselves righteous by their own efforts. But anyone can be righteous, not because of what they do, but because of what Jesus has done for them!

Sin is what the Bible calls the things everyone thinks, says and does which are wrong. God can't ignore sin – He is just and it has to be punished. But He loves people so much. So instead of punishing them, He punished His Son Jesus. Jesus took the punishment for all sin when He died on the Cross. Your sins are forgiven; and when you accept Jesus as your Lord and Saviour and are born-again, that forgiveness becomes real. And God gives you a brand-new, perfect, righteous spirit. This doesn't mean it's ok to sin – it will lead to lots of problems in your life and the lives of others, but it will not affect your new spirit. When you do sin, confess it to God, turn away from it and receive His forgiveness. So God does hear your prayers if you're born-again – you are righteous because Jesus died for you and you responded. It doesn't mean that if

you're not born-again God will never hear you, but it's not until you are born-again that you have the promise that He hears your prayers.

(To read about being born-again go to the end of this booklet.)

Praying for Yourself

Praying is about so much more than asking God for things. As you grow in your relationship with Him and realise more and more just how much He loves you, you'll find you spend less time asking Him for things and more time simply loving Him and praising and thanking Him. But sometimes you do need something or you need guidance or wisdom and God wants you to ask Him for it. How do you go about it?

God's Will

This booklet is about praying for something that is God's will – something that He wants for you. If you don't know what His will is in a particular situation, ask Him to show you and when He does, pray for that. Don't pray a woolly prayer and tag 'if it's your will' on the end. When Jesus was praying before His death He said in Luke 22:42 – *'Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.'* He was struggling with knowing that He was going to be tortured and killed, carrying the weight of all sin and sickness. But what He said wasn't a woolly prayer. He knew exactly what God's will was, and having expressed His struggle, He said He'd do it God's way.

The Desires of Your Heart

Psalm 37:4 says – *‘delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.’* This doesn’t mean that God will give you anything you want whether it’s good for you or not. James 4:3 says – *‘You ask, and don’t receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.’* Your motives are important. God isn’t going to fund a wrong or self-centred life style. He won’t give you something which you want only to prove yourself better than someone else or to fritter away doing wrong things or on things of no value. But as you delight in God - look to Him for your needs and enjoy your love relationship with Him, He will give you new desires that match His desires for you.

God the Giver

Philippians 4:19 says – *‘My God will supply every need of yours.’* When you ask God for something, ask confidently, knowing that He wants to give. But even more than that - God is generous. He wants to give and give and give. Jesus said in John 10:10 – *‘I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.’* That’s what Jesus wants for you – abundant life! As you ask for things that are in God’s will you can be sure He will give and delight to do so.

Jesus said to ask and it will be given to you. He explained that if human parents will want to give good things to their children, how much more will your heavenly Father. He illustrated it with a story in Luke 11:5-8 – *‘if you go to a friend at midnight, and tell*

him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him,' and he from within will answer and say, 'Don't bother me. The door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give it to you'? I tell you, although he will not rise and give it to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence, he will get up and give him as many as he needs.' Jesus wasn't saying God was like this friend who was annoyed at being disturbed and reluctant to help. He was saying that if even a person like that eventually gave what was needed, how much more would God give willingly and freely.

Put God First

Matthew 6:31-33 says – ‘don’t be anxious, saying, ‘What will we eat?’, ‘What will we drink?’ or, ‘With what will we be clothed?’ ... for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first God’s Kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things will be given to you as well.’ God has promised to give you all you need for daily living. It doesn’t mean that you can’t have the enjoyment of deciding what to wear and planning meals. It means you don’t need to worry about these things. If you put God first and seek to live the way He wants you to, He will make sure you have enough of all the necessities. He looks at the heart, and if you are loving Him, He will respond.

Ask in Faith

It is important to have faith when you pray. In Mark 11:24 Jesus said – *‘all things whatever you pray and ask for, believe that you have received them, and you shall have them.’* When you’ve asked God for something, you don’t need to keep asking Him. Jesus said to believe you’ve already received it. If this doesn’t seem to work for you, it isn’t Jesus’s promise that is faulty; it’s your lack of faith. That sounds harsh I know, but I say it to help you. It takes effort - you have to decide to believe and refuse to doubt. It’s not easy, but try it - choose to have faith, refuse to think any other way and see the results. Thank Him that He’s heard, believe it’s already yours and wait in faith.

Believe You Will Receive God's Wisdom

James 1:5-8 says – *‘if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, without any doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed. For let that man shouldn’t think that he will receive anything from the Lord. He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.’* If you don’t know what to do in any situation ask God for wisdom and guidance. God gives it ‘without reproach’. That means without judging you to see if you deserve it. He gives it freely to those who ask as long as they ask believing that He will give the answer. When you don’t know what to do in

a particular situation, you can so easily be anxious, imagining lots of different scenarios and outcomes – it really is like being tossed around in the sea in a storm. When you've asked God, decide to believe He will show you what to do and wait for the answer in peace. Make an effort to stop your thoughts running away with you. If they start to do so, stop and thank God that He is going to give you His wisdom. The wisdom may come from reading the Bible or through another person, or a particular way forward may settle in your mind. If you feel at peace about this you can know that it is God's answer and put it into action confidently.

Be Specific

In Matthew 6:8 Jesus says – *‘your Father knows what things you need, before you ask him.’* There is a wonderful comfort in the fact that God knows exactly what you need and longs to give it to you. But He does want you to ask. He wants you to understand that it is only through Him that your needs can be fully met. James 4:2 says – *‘You don’t have, because you don’t ask.’* God wants you to ask specifically for what you need. He longs to give you good things. Don’t limit Him by only wanting the cheapest or the minimum. Give Him the opportunity to bless you. But remember to check your motives.

In Matthew 6:7 Jesus says – *‘In praying, don’t use vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their*

much speaking.' God wants you to ask simply, directly and specifically. There are many religions where you are expected to perform rituals or repeat chants. God simply wants you to ask Him with an open child-like heart that believes He will provide for you, and thank Him even before the answer comes.

A Delayed Answer

In Daniel 9:21-23 a man called Daniel explains – *'While I was speaking in prayer, ... Gabriel ... being caused to fly swiftly ... talked with me, and said, "Daniel ... At the beginning of your petitions the commandment went out, and I have come to tell you."*' God answered Daniel's prayer by sending the angel Gabriel to him while he was still praying.

But in Daniel 10:12-13 he says that the angel came in answer to one of his prayers three weeks after he had prayed it. When he did come the angel said – *‘from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard. I have come for your words’ sake. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; but, behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me.’* To Daniel it must have seemed as if God hadn’t answered this later prayer. But the angel explained that the reason for the delay wasn’t that God hadn’t answered Daniel’s prayer, but that the devil had tried to stop the answer getting to him. The devil didn’t succeed, but he managed to delay it.

If God doesn't seem to be answering your prayer, don't give up or blame Him. He has answered and it will come.

Your Healing

Jesus said to speak to sickness. Don't talk to God about it, asking Him to heal you – He's already won your healing through Jesus's suffering and death. Instead, talk to the sickness about God and command it to go in Jesus's name. There is a lot more about this in the booklet 'God Wants You to Be Well'.

The Prayer of Agreement

In Matthew 18:19 Jesus says – *'if two of you will agree on earth concerning anything that they will ask, it will be done for them by my Father who is in heaven.'* This is a wonderful

promise. If you pray with someone else for something for yourself, and you agree together that it is God's will, you have Jesus's promise that it will come. If you start to doubt, turn your thoughts around –thank God for His promise and thank Him for the answer to your prayer even before it comes.

In the Name of Jesus

In John 16:23-24 Jesus told His followers – *'whatever you may ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now, you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be made full.'* This is why Christians often end their prayers with 'in Jesus name'. While He was on the earth, His followers asked Him for what they needed, and Jesus asked God for them. Now Jesus was saying that they

should ask God directly in His name. That's how to pray today. Take Jesus at His word - pray in His name and believe for the answer.

Pray for Yourself

Put God first in your life, choosing His way of looking at things and doing things, and He will give you all you need. When you do ask, believe that He will answer your prayer, thank Him and wait in faith. It's such freedom to realise that you don't need to nag God or try to persuade Him. He is infinitely generous and is longing to give you all you need and more besides. Follow Him and believe Him and start to experience abundant life.

Being Born-Again

When you acknowledge Jesus as God and decide to follow Him, you make Him your Lord. When you accept His sacrifice on the Cross for yourself personally, you make Him your Saviour. You are then born-again and have a new perfect spirit. God becomes your Father and you His child.

Romans 10:9 says – *‘If you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.’* Tell God you are sorry for the wrong things you do, say and think. Choose to believe that Jesus is Lord, that He died for you and is now alive. Say it with your voice and believe it in your heart.

If you’ve done that sincerely, you are now born-again and Jesus has come to live in

you. Everything you've ever done wrong or ever will do wrong is forgiven, and after this life is over, you'll live in peace and joy with your loving Father God for ever.

As a child of God, you now have a whole new family of brothers and sisters. Tell a trusted Christian that you are now born-again so they can help you in your new life in Jesus. And you have the Bible to help you understand and experience more of God's love for you and all Jesus has done and won for you. It will help you to live your life in the best possible way – His way.

Life in Jesus

To read more about Jesus
and all He has done and won for us
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Sometimes praying for yourself
can just feel like a shopping list,
especially if your prayers
don't seem to get answered.

The truth is God wants to give you good things
even more than you want them yourself.
Find out how to start praying confidently,
so you can expect to see results
when you pray for yourself.



Katherine Hilditch has been teaching in local churches for many years. In 2013 she wrote her first booklet and since then has written many more. She created her website to make all the

booklets freely available to everyone. They can be read online or printed out. Katherine's threefold purpose is to help people understand more about Jesus and all He has done and won for them, to encourage them to go deeper in their relationship with God and to provide material to help them share their faith with others. To read her story and find all the booklets go to –

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