

WHY Pray

Part 2 of 2

Light on the Rock

by Philip Shields

Here's the concluding message with more points which may help motivate us to pray more fervently. This concluding message is packed with tips and ideas to help you make a heart-to-heart connection with God. Your praying can come to life, become more interesting, and have more meaning as we answer "Why Pray?" – when God already knows what we need before we even ask.

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Hello once again everyone. This is Philip Shields. I'm a father. The other day the phone rang as I wondered who it was. As I picked up I was delighted to hear the voice – instantly – of one of my daughters, who was hundreds and hundreds of miles away. It felt like she was in the same room. As she spoke, her words were *instantly* being communicated to me, and my response was instantly heard by her. I felt blessed to hear from my Offspring, and I was grateful she was taking advantage of the opportunity to talk to her father anytime she wants to. Of course I call her as well.

God is the ultimate Father. When we pray, do we realize what an opportunity it is to speak to the Creator God Himself, who happens to also be our Father and we are His offspring (Acts 17:29) – and how our words travel instantly all the way to the 3rd heaven, instantly, whether our words are mere thoughts, whispers or shouts. *Let that opportunity sink in!* Think on it. Do you "call" God? David said He hoped God hears when he "calls" (Ps. 4:1). The communication is so effective that even *before* we speak God knows what is on our hearts and knows us and our needs more than we even know ourselves. But still, He likes hearing from us, His children, perhaps even way more than I do hearing from my children. That is why we start our prayers with "Father..." – I like to even say "Dear Abba..." This is what Jesus taught. We begin with "Our Father in heaven..."

Of course there are also examples of praying to Jesus, and that is fine too since He is also God. It would be a sin to pray to Jesus if He wasn't fully part of the One True God. **Stephen prayed to Jesus – Acts 7:59** – "Lord JESUS, receive my spirit." When Abraham, Moses, Adam and Eve talked to God, was that God the Father or Jesus? **John** ends **Revelation 22:20** with a type of prayer to Jesus: "Come, Lord Jesus." There are other instances as well. **But mostly, we pray directly to the Father as Jesus taught**, and the prayers are communicated and interpreted by the Holy Spirit (**Romans 8:26**) – and then passed through Jesus as Mediator – to God the Father.

If you've never had a great father, now's your chance to have One: God Himself as your Abba. Even as a father myself, I have often prayed admitting how I have missed the mark at times to be a great father and I ask Him to take over the upbringing of my children, 2 of which are now in their 20's. I pray that with the son we have still at home that I can help him better comprehend God as a father by being a better father myself – and I'm growing in that area. We fathers are all called after (**Eph. 3:14-15**) the One who is Father of all fathers! So when you pray, and you picture the grandeur and majesty and holiness of God, don't forget He is also your Holy Daddy, your dear Abba, a personal Being who loves you and me dearly. *We should want to pray more than many of us do.*

Beyond that, **prayer is also such a powerful *weapon*** we have against Satan and sin too when we use it effectively. Like all tools or weapons, we can also use something ineffectively. We're in a real war. Satan wants to defeat us, discourage us or distract us.

Think about this: **In any war, some of the first things you do to get the upper hand, is to destroy the enemy's ability for their Command and Control centers to communicate with their forces in the field.** This is done by completely knocking out communications systems, jamming signals, or distracting the troops.

This is exactly what Satan is trying to do to God's children: knock out communication between us and *God*. If God's people aren't praying enough, or with enough fervency – then we can't be keeping in touch with God very well. I ask each of us to soberly assess: *how effective has Satan been in knocking out your communications with your Commander-in-Chief, with your Father, with your Source of all good things – the Great One True God?*

We need to be PRAYER WARRIORS for God and His kingdom. Satan shakes in his boots when He sees God's people on their knees in prayer petitioning God the Father. It's like an enemy sniper becoming aware that the one he's shooting at has called in for massive air strikes against his position! Any minute now a 500-lb laser guided bomb is going to blow him away! **Are you calling in for your spiritual air strikes** against our spiritual enemies of lethargy, vanity, pride, lust and sin? If we're not praying, no wonder we're in trouble. No wonder we're not receiving so *many* more healings we need, the miracles that could surely give us the power we need. ***Having said that, we also need to understand our life is not about the here and now – but the kingdom of heaven.***

If we're not communicating and praying, not only are *we* in trouble, but the whole world may be in trouble if we're not praying as we should. Why? Because Jesus said “*for the elect's sake*” God intervenes in world affairs and saves mankind *alive* from what would have been inevitable annihilation (**Matt. 24:22**).

So is it important for us to pray, to be close to God, to have that interaction, to be growing in our bond with Him? Absolutely. It's not just important for you or me - but for our neighbors, our friends, our relatives, and for all mankind. If you think that's an overstatement, then take it up with Christ, because *He's* the One who says **He intervenes to save humanity alive because of the elect: you and me. So an effective relationship with God – and prayer therefore - is vital!**

We can sometimes even get so busy doing “**Kingdom acts**” of service and devotion – that we can **neglect to pray**. My father – a missionary long ago to the Philippines, visited me once when I was pastoring a church and said: “Philip, I see you're very busy serving everyone and busy with church. As you *work for* the Lord, don't forget to *talk* to the Lord, and to intimately *know* the Lord.” That's how he put it, and I've not forgotten what he said. Commit yourself first to God – then to His work.

So today, I want to continue with part 2 of the topic “WHY Pray” by hitting the ground running with that very point – kind of an “extra point” if you will-- that our delight in praying, our active participation in prayer – could be the very reason that humankind someday will be saved alive.

Several of you have emailed and communicated with me some of your joys, triumphs and frustrations about prayer, and I sure appreciate it. I'll use – anonymously—some comments, as they will be immensely helpful.

Last time we covered we should not be judgmental in deciding whom God listens to and whom He doesn't listen to; how some of the most effective prayers actually were from repenting *sinner*s; that Jesus was known as a "*friend of sinners*" – which is good news to you and me.

Then we covered the first 2 points on Why Pray and I'm going to include some new concepts: **WHY PRAY?**

1. **To establish and build a close relationship with God. Strong relationships require regular interaction** and communication back and forth between both parties. Even though God knows our needs, we still need to pray to establish that emotional connection with the Almighty.

I mentioned Prayer should be something we do every day – as we do in all loving relationships – contact, words, and closeness. Just as I hug my wife every morning as we wake up, and as I talk *with* her a lot during the day, prayer should be like that. **Our prayers should not be us talking to God, but talking with God. Let God speak to you as well, as you pray. And take notes.** We discussed last time the importance of some quiet time as you pray – as you listen to God speak in you by His spirit. The Bible says Jesus dwells in our hearts by God's spirit (**Romans 8:11; Eph. 3:17**). I really do have a notebook and pen with me when I pray and I jot down things I feel God is leading me to think about, to do, to say, to learn, and so forth. *I want to remember what the King says.*

Communing with God Almighty as we build our personal relationship with Him, must be the highest privilege we could possibly have. God in heaven, and we still mortal on the earth. Prayer ties us in to Powerful Love, Almighty God. "Prayer is the most powerful force we have as humans", as my brother wrote me. *But prayer is also acknowledging the Supreme God as ruler of your life.*

Question I heard: "If Jesus is really King over your life, would it be obvious you're a loyal subject of His Kingdom?" As we pray "Your kingdom come" – God's *Kingdom way of life* should already be happening in our own lives. That's all part of the relationship we have with God.

Some teach the notion that every prayer must follow the "model prayer" Jesus gave in Matthew 6. It's a model, and teaches us a tremendous amount, but it's not the only way to pray every time, in every circumstance. I myself often follow the Model and have taught from it, but it's not that limiting. And there are many more things we can pray about that aren't even mentioned in the model prayer. For that matter, when you read the **prayer of Jesus Himself in John 17**, does He follow the "model prayer" outline? Other than praising God in the beginning, mostly no. Did Elijah's prayer on Mt. Carmel follow the model prayer? So it's a *guide*, especially in formal private prayer, but it shouldn't *limit* us to a set format. There's so much to talk to Father about. At the end of this sermon transcript, I added a partial list of topics the Bible says we should pray about – and you may be surprised. If you ever lack things to talk to God about, check out that list for starters.

We get these notions about prayer by just using a verse by itself and forgetting the many others that clarify. **Some believe all personal prayer should always be done privately, unseen – for that is what Jesus said in one place (Matthew 6:5-6).** *Most* personal prayer *should* be private and personal. **But does that preclude praying in front of, or with, others in a more visible sense?** Absolutely not. I'm sure you'd all understand public prayer before and after a church service, or asking the blessing over a meal, but **what about prayer meetings or prayers that others can see?**

The **Early Church** gathered together in prayer for Peter, at Mark's house in **Acts 12:12** and God heard mightily. Was that always just one person leading and the others quietly listening – or was it more likely all of them praying fervently, perhaps in different rooms of the house? **Hannah's very**

effective prayer was out in public, in the sight of the priest (1 Sam 1:9-17). Paul and Silas were **praying loudly enough – in their chains in prison** – that the prisoners heard them praying (Acts 16:25). How about that one? Paul was praying publicly in the temple, when in a trance, God spoke to Him (Acts 22:17-19). I could go on and on and on - - but brethren, I feel strongly we are not getting *together* to pray especially in times of crisis *nearly* as much as we should, though of course, we should *primarily* pray as Jesus emphasized – in private, in secret, between us and God. But don't belittle those who want to pray together at times too – though those in prayer groups must surely watch their *heart* that they're not doing it for vanity, to *appear before others* to be holy and righteous and to be highly esteemed as “a man or woman of prayer”. Another good example of group prayer is found in **2 Chronicles 20 – when all Judah gathered together** to fast and pray for deliverance – and what a mighty deliverance they received indeed! So I say “yes” – let's sometimes fast and pray together as a *group*, as a team, as a family – beseeching our Holy God to be merciful to us all. Some of you will take time getting used to that idea. **Something is neither liberal nor conservative. Instead, a concept is either Biblical or not** – considering all the scriptures, and then do it if the Bible blesses the concept, whether or not people of a different faith than ours also do it.

Is building our **relationship dependent on the volume of our prayer**? Some teach that “effective, fervent prayer” has to be loud – often citing **Hebrews 7:6-7**, Jesus' vehement cries and tears. But it says He was heard for His godly fear, not the volume of the prayer. Not so. God isn't hard of hearing or deaf! Fervency does not have to mean loud. If that's the definition of fervency, then the priests of Baal were far more “fervent” on Mt. Carmel (**1 Kings 18:25-26**) than Elijah was. His prayer was quite calm compared to the frenzy the priests of Baal worked themselves into. So volume is not key. In fact, David tells us that God “knows my *thoughts* afar off (Ps 139:1-4) and not a word on my mouth that you don't know already.” God knows the counsels of our hearts, our moods, our feelings even – which sometimes builds a relationship with God better than words do. David spoke of *meditating* with his God on his bed in the night (Ps. 63:6-7). In fact David says there are times he is so upset he cannot speak (Ps. 77:4-6). Some of my most effective prayers are like my hero David's prayers – moans and groans and even cries without words. At those times we “**pray in the spirit**” (Jude 1:20) and the Spirit intercedes for us with groanings that cannot be understood (Rom 8:26-27) by man. The **Song of songs 3:1** says “By night on my bed I sought the One I love...” Do you? Is He there for you? *Sometimes we find it hard to pray because we have moved away.*

WHY pray?

2. We pray as a way to *give* something back to God, who otherwise has everything. *In prayer, we give God a blessing: to bless God, to give God pleasure, as a way we can give God our praise, adoration, worship, affection, our hearts! Praying also gives God great pleasure when He hears from His “kids”, as I said already. We pray to give God this pleasure.*

Things I find help inspire me to praise and worship God in prayer: reading scriptures about God's love and power; learning about His creation; *enjoying* His creation and sunsets and His wonders; Listening to *praise music* and inspiring *music*. When these things are in the mix, I find saying “wow!” to God very easy. *Music?* Yes, buy some top quality cd's of inspirational hymns, praises, instrumentals to listen to on the Sabbath or as you do your Bible study –and you will find it comes more natural to exude in praises to our Great God – the “**Hallowed be thy name**” part of praying. I can also enjoy quiet uplifting classical music while I study.

And just making the contact with God becomes a blessing for Him and to Him to hear from you. You may wonder how you can be a blessing to God. Of course you are as His beloved child. *None* of us measures up perfectly. God *still* wants to hear from you and is blessed when you say,

“Father...”. I know, because **I have 3 children – and especially if they’re down, especially if they’re hurt, especially if they’re in trouble, I want to hear from them** and find it a blessing when they call or want to talk. God, from whom all Fathers are named, *placed that* feeling into us, so we understand *He* wants to hear from you and me too. When we say “Hello father...” – and tell Him how much we appreciate *Him* being our God, it’s a blessing!

Make your prayers interesting conversations with God and not just the same old list of things you go over and over with God the same way. Nothing wrong with “prayer lists”, but just be careful that the way we present the points of discussion to God don’t become old hat, dull, and repetitive. Sometimes I think we should just take *some* of the points on the prayer list and converse with God about *them*, in different ways each time, so it is a real conversation and not “a vain repetition”. Of course prayer lists help us to remember to pray about certain things, certain people, and so on so there *is* a place for prayer lists, especially for analytical types, or those who like lists.

This 2nd point is a favorite reason to pray: to think about giving *back* something to God, to give Him joy and pleasure by our praying, before we even start thinking about what *He* can give us.

Overcoming ROUTINE Prayer: I think part of what some of us are struggling with is this: we pray regularly, perhaps most of you even daily. **Several of you have confided that your prayers—though regular – has become routine. We don’t feel we’re connecting, we don’t feel in touch emotionally with God.** Well, I hope 1-2 ideas of the many I’m presenting today and last time will click for you and help that emotional connection happen.

I think if many of us would really open up, we’d admit this, as one person told me – and I share the comments as I feel they reflect what many more are thinking:

“Yes, I pray, but my prayers don’t feel *real*. I don’t feel like I’m really *connecting* with Someone who is actually listening, who is really there. I don’t see my prayers answered conclusively, so I sometimes wonder why I bother praying at all. I still pray – but my heart’s not always in it. It’s like I’m talking to an imaginary Person.”

Part of the key to keep your praying from becoming routine is to vary what you do and what you say and how you do and say things as you pray. Try praying in a different place and a different position. Try standing, kneeling, being flat-out on the floor. Try praying some times with uplifted arms and hands. Start thinking of praying as having a *real* conversation with God; to a real Personality sitting right next to you, with you. If you met with a human that often, you’d surely vary what you do, what you say, where you meet, and so on. And please learn to pray without having to use the same prayer formulas - the same “Our Father”, and certainly not the “Hail Mary”, etc.

You know what I think? God is Father! He has created billions of children – each different from all the others. I don’t think we can tell you that every prayer has to be this way or that, this length or that. **Be YOU, be real. God wants you, your heart, the real you. Not some phony trying to pray the way someone said was the right way to pray.** I don’t see any verses that say we *must* pray with a certain hand position or posture. But there are lots of scriptures about kneeling in prayer, prostrating ones self in prayer, standing in prayer, lying in bed while praying as Hezekiah did, praying while walking, praying while being digested in the bowels of a big fish (Jonah). If you were hanging upside down by a rope, in a well because of an accident, you’d better pray the prayingest prayer you’ve ever prayed – and don’t worry about *position*.

The position of our *heart* is far more important to God than the position of our body. A humble mind set, your attitude, in other words. God gives grace to the humble, and as we humble ourselves, He lifts us up (**James 4:6, 10**).

Having said that, in *formal* prayer, which should be daily, I usually kneel – *both* knees. Sometimes I lay flat out. In “*informal*” prayer – I could be praying while I’m going for a walk, while sitting in the woods behind our home, gardening, while enjoying the wonders of a nearby lake or river, or even while driving (I *often* pray for protection while driving! Ha!) Or even as I lie in bed pondering the day’s events. I used to enjoy praying while sitting on a swing set we once had beside our home – I’d be talking with God in the cool of the day. After all, the first example of “praying” I can see was God *walking with* and talking with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day. (**Gen. 2; Gen. 3:8**)

If you’re an analytical and super organized person, perhaps you have to pray at the same time, same place, same list, same words—all laid out neatly and uniformly, wonderful. That’s you. If you’re a very outgoing, Mr-Miss Personable, you may like a more free flowing atmosphere. That’s fine with God too – because that’s the real you and that’s how He made *you*.

I don’t think God is stuck in the 1600’s and **we don’t have to pray old King James English** – unless that’s the real you! It’s not *wrong* to use Old English, as I’ve heard some ministers say. God still remembers old King James English too! But how is someone who speaks Chinese or Swahili going to do *that*? God enjoys Swahili as much as He enjoys hearing Hebrew or English. God *invented* all the languages when He caused the rebels at ancient Babylon to not be able to understand each other (**Genesis 11:1-9**). We don’t need to pray in “thee” and “thou” in other words.

How about “**time of day**” we should pray? That reminds me of the question someone once asked me: “When is the best time to go fishing?” Answer: whenever you can. Anytime! But fishing is a luxury, prayer is a necessity and something we must surely do every day. Prayer, God says, is something we should do *always* (**Luke 21:36; Luke 18:1; Acts 10:2; Eph 6:18-19; 1 Thess. 5:17** says “Pray without ceasing”). How are we going to “pray without ceasing”, unless a lot of it is “informal” prayer throughout the day as we call in to our Father?

Having said that, I still personally recommend you pray at least early in the day after some Bible study (God talking to you), and last thing in the day before you roll into bed. *But whatever works!* Just pray! Daniel prayed formally 3x a day (**Daniel 6:10,13**). So did David (**Ps. 55:17**). And then pray – make contact with God for a minute here and there – throughout the day – so you’re “praying always”. David said “I cry to you all day long” (**Ps. 86:3**). The Bible speaks of “the hour of prayer” (**Acts 3:1**) – which coincided with the offerings at the altar of incense – generally 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. – but today God is not limited to being worshiped in or from a building or just at certain times.

I dunno. Perhaps my praying may sound very different to you than many of your prayers. I really converse with God. It’s on a higher level than “chat” – but it’s real. My prayer today is not like my prayer yesterday. I ask God how He’s doing and feeling about things. Don’t you do that? I talk to Father as I would my own real Dad, if he were still alive. I’m open about my feelings, my despairs, my worries – as well as my thrills, my joys. I recount to God “remember when You ...?” – type of prayer. I recall things He’s done in the past for me and others. I remind Him of His own promises. **I laugh with God while I pray. Not uncommon, I may cry with God while praying, especially if I’m feeling really down or hurt by someone – or feel real bad about something I’ve done, or should have done. Sometimes I just say nothing at all as I pray** – and just listen, even with pad and pen in hand ready to write down what He puts into my head.

My praying is a real conversation, animated and all, and someone could think I'd gone wacko if they were to watch and listen in! I *guess* you all do the same, but just in case that could help *some* of you pray, I thought I'd throw it in. But I don't say the same old tired thing over and over and over again. God is an intelligent Being and no intelligent Being wants the same 'ol, same 'ol. Jesus said don't think you'll be heard for your many words. So some days I can pray for an hour on my knees or prostrated. Other days I pray for just 10 minutes on my knees and "call Him" several times during the day. Like real life, with a real Dad – except this is the Holy God Almighty. Where did the "rule" come down that we must pray the same prayer, same sequence, same words, same time? Perhaps that's why some of you don't pray *at all* some days because you know you don't have ½ hour today?

Does that help? I hope so. I'm opening up and feeling a bit exposed – but I hope it helps.

So praying is a blessing we can give God. Part of the blessing we give God is to tell Him often, words from our own hearts and voiced by our own lips, *that we absolutely love Him*, and sure appreciate the love He has shown us -- especially in giving up His beloved Son for us on Calvary. But *tell* God you love Him -- *often*. What a blessing that is, which we can *give* to God. It really is. Do you do that? If you're not telling God how much you love Him, start doing it. **It's a great gift you can give God** when you do. Any of you parents know how it feels the first time you hear your child say "I love you, Mom" or "I love you, Daddy". It's usually pretty moving.

And of course part of this blessing we can give God is blessing Him with praise and worship as David did, in the passage I read last time in 1 Chron 29. Jesus taught us in the Model Prayer of Matthew 6 to begin praying with a profound sense of *worship* for God, as Isaiah felt in Isa.6. **"Hallowed be thy name"** -- a profound sense of *reverence* for the Almighty as we show respect, reverence, godly fear and honor – and love – as we begin our prayer.

We also talked **about Praying the Scriptures and praying the prayers** in the Bible – and giving back to God His very own words – and then claiming His promises, with the scriptures open right before you, on your bed, as you kneel in prayer.

WHEN YOU "DON'T HAVE TIME" TO PRAY

Do you find it hard to make TIME to pray? Here's what a good friend in the Midwest wrote me when I asked the question, "what do you do when you don't have time to pray or are in the mood to pray?":

"We all have the same dilemma when we get up in the morning. What are we going to accomplish in our day? It all boils down to one's preferences for the time he has, and how he goes about accomplishing it. **When we think about it, it seems a bit stupid that we would not want to keep our appointment with the very Creator of the Universe**, yet our priorities are coffee, breakfast, shower, dress, job, or dress, breakfast, coffee, etc. *What is important to us, we will do.*"

I thought she nails it. We have time for what is important to make time for. *Except I'd say most of us don't always do what's "important" – but what is most pressing, most urgent, at the moment.* If only we would do the important and not wait until it becomes urgent. We also do what is most appealing and tempting -- a TV show we don't like to miss, a phone call from someone we were hoping would call – than what we *should* do, until what we should do becomes dangerously urgent. I hope we're

not like that with prayer. And if we're not praying every day, we just don't yet recognize how important prayer is, and how not praying IS spiritually life threatening! *Prayer should be considered important as well as urgent.*

Not praying means there are other things we are putting ahead of God – and that is idolatry.

Putting God first may mean going to bed earlier, getting up earlier, less TV – whatever it takes to get up in time to pray. *We don't shoe-horn God into our jam-packed schedule – instead, we start with God and build our schedule around Him.* We are people who have come to want a lot more of God in our lives. **Our lives become God-centered, living for the kingdom.** IS your life more about living for God – or living for your own wants? The amount of time you pray, and how often every week you pray, demonstrates how much of God you really want. Words – or actions?

But there's more to this: We also mentioned last time that **God already knows what we need before we ask (Matt. 6:8, 32; Luke 12:29-31).** *So, as one of you contributed in an email to me, obviously praying is not for the reason of letting God become aware of some need we have in our lives or the lives of those close to us! He's already aware of everything we need and in His example of providing for flowers and birds, He intends to provide for us too – since we're worth far more to Him than a couple sparrows. In fact God assures us that if we seek Him FIRST, all our concerns and needs will be more than met (Matt. 6:33). But we should still ask – because asking humbles us. In asking, we're humbly acknowledging God is the source of all good things in the universe. He is God of plenty, owns everything – and actually wants us to have more than we can imagine (Eph 3:20). He wants us to prosper. He likes bestowing good things on us. I sometimes wonder how much more we could have experienced if we would have just asked. “You have not for you ask not.” (James 4:2; Matt. 7:7-8; John 16:24 – “up til now you haven't asked..”)*

Matt 6:31-33 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. *For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.* [verse 8 says “before” we even ask] 33 **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.**”

That's one of those verses you can read back to God with your Bible on your bed, as you pray and claim the promise of what He just said there: that all your anxious concerns will be taken care of. I know I've sure seen that at work in my life.

So *make* time to pray -- and other things will take care of themselves.

Let's move on to more reasons to PRAY:

3. WE PRAY TO SET THINGS RIGHT with GOD BY CONFESSION and REPENTANCE

A friend from Kenya wrote: “If I find it hard to pray, I search my heart for sins I've allowed into my life knowingly or unknowingly... and then confess my sins. Unrepented sin hinders Christians from praying effectively.” Amen. Even a marital relationship which doesn't honor each other — can result in hindered prayer (1 Pet. 3:7). I'd prefer not having “hindered prayers”!

My African connection goes on to say that besides the obvious sins, he also looks for sinful attitudes he's allowed to creep into his life - such as meanness, lack of forgiveness, insults, gossip (which is really digging into the blood of our Lord – if God has forgiven that person you're gossiping about).

He looks for lukewarmness – Hmmm. That's why a lot of you have been fasting: to repent of Laodecian lukewarm attitudes and settling back into a routine that is not red hot for God.

If we're not feeling close to God, it may be we're harboring a sin we don't want to give up. In all relationships, the one causing offense must "apologize" – though in prayer we repent, and then go God's way, walking *with* Him. Maybe you think what you're harboring is just a "little sin" or a "minor sin". No such thing. Everything not in accord with the Kingdom way has to be given up. When our whole body was immersed in baptism, it was a symbol of the death and burial – completely – of the old way and the resurrection of the New Creation. **So early on in our prayers, make sure that first, we're right with God** and have given Him all our sins to destroy and forgive.

Part of Jesus' model prayer was "forgive us this day...AS WE forgive those who have sinned against us." *And Jesus made clear that we are forgiven to the amount, or measurement of how much we forgive others.* You want a lot of forgiveness? Then you better be the most forgiving person on earth. Prove that forgiveness by being reconciled. Prove that forgiveness by inviting the offender over to your home for dinner and give him or her a gift. That's what God does. He forgives us - - and then in the peace offering of the ancient temple sacrifices, all parties involved shared in the meal of the sacrificial animal. God got some, the priest got some, and the one offering the animal also ate some. Then God leaves a gift. *For full details on the how to forgive as God does, or the importance of it, please hear my sermon on "Forgiving As Christ Forgives" – on the web.*

It's vital because we are forgiven to the degree we forgive others. If we don't forgive others, we remain in our sins unforgiven (Matt. 6:14-15; Matt. 18:35; James 2:13; Luke 17:3-4; Eph 4:32)

Forgiving others has everything to do with us being forgiven by God. **By the way, as we forgive others, we will see a wonderful change in ourselves before we see a change in the other.** That's the miracle God brings about. It's so wonderful and peaceful.

If others don't forgive you forgive them for not forgiving you. You and I can't unring bells we have rung. We can walk with God now, we can walk HIS way, we can look forward to the joys of the kingdom, we can refuse to look back now – or we don't be fit for the kingdom (**Luke 9:62**).

Prayer is largely for confessing sins and asking forgiveness – even daily. God is not hard of hearing, but *a sinful way of life* keeps us from God (**Isaiah 59:2**). I say "way of life", for we all sin regularly. **"Stumbles" are the exception, not our way of life.** Sometimes even a big stumble is still a stumble. But we must repent and go the other way when we miss the mark of God's way.

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Proverbs 28:13 "He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses *and forsakes* them will have mercy." – at least from God. People are tougher, and more cruel.

We can't read Daniel's prayer of Daniel 9, or Nehemiah's prayer of Neh 1, or Asaph's song of Psalm 80 – without realizing that God's face does *not* shine on us when we're in a *life* of sin.

Any dad or mom knows this: if your kids are on the right track and close to you, your face is beaming with joy and pride. It's when they're hurting themselves, going the wrong way, that even though you love them dearly – you hurt inside. Your face stops shining. You no longer beam with joy. We need to give God some JOY in us by repenting – and going the other direction.

When *was* the last time you fasted in deep, contrite repentance for your lukewarmness? If it's been a while, there's a clue about being lukewarm, isn't it? I have messages about godly repentance available on tape which I can send you and I'll try to record a new one this year too. But ask me for the tapes I have on it in the meantime. So prayer is largely about confession and repentance.

4. We PRAY TO ASK GOD TO SHOW US HIS WILL AND TO HELP US GET IN SYNCH WITH HIS WILL – rather than asking Him to fulfill OUR will. Our FIRST priority is KINGDOM BUSINESS – not our own business – and then everything falls into place. Prayer is also asking for GUIDANCE and DIRECTION.

I'm going to give a whole sermon soon on "Discovering and Doing God's will in your life" – and so will keep my comments on this point limited for now. This point *is* worth a whole sermon by itself.

Many times we're asking God to do this and do that for us – rather than asking Him to reveal how we can get into the flow of His will that is already operating around us. Praying for God's will is not to try to persuade God to do our will! It is asking God to show us how to get in synch with HIM. As one man wrote:

*"Our prayers to try and get God to change His mind and plans to be in harmony with our plans are not as important to God as His vision for our lives...We need to trust God's will for our lives, at all times, no questions asked, and we must not require that He performs our expectations just because we asked Him in prayer to do so. What God is looking for is a *surrender* of our will...to where we believe and trust, as the best way – "not my will, but your will be done."*

As we pray, we are to remember: "YOUR will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." God is not unaware of what's going on in your life and He may even be the One who set those circumstances in motion. Remember **Job**? Though we normally think of Satan as being the one who caused Job so many problems, the Bible itself says God sent those trials. Read it in **Job 42:11** – "...for the adversity *the LORD* had brought upon him". **Joseph** said the same thing to his brothers in Egypt. He said GOD had caused them to sell him into captivity so that he would be in position to save his family and the whole world alive (**Genesis 50:19-21**).

So the very thing you may be praying God to deliver you out of, may be the very thing that God *SENT* into your life as adversity, trial by fire *to purify you and strengthen you*. Therefore, what should we do with the trials we have? See it through God's eyes. He's not surprised by something He either *allowed* or may have even *sent*! Including the trials of disease (remember Job's boils), death, and so on. We must suffer for the kingdom. **Since God allows or sends these trials, we grow to the point where – in prayer – we praise and thank God for them and in them**. It's not easy, but when we see God in every aspect of our lives, this is what we grow into.

I find it interesting what God says about Paul, when He calls him. God tells Ananias in **Acts 9:15-16** that Paul was a chosen vessel, and God was to show him "how many things he must *suffer* for my name's sake". We don't like to think that God is calling us for suffering, but that is so often the case. Suffering makes us look to God and in time we learn to trust God and our faith and hope grows – as we experience God in all facets of our life, both the good and the hard things which happen. Adversity reveals our character. It also shapes it.

Whenever someone in the Bible wanted to know the will of God, they *asked* Him. There are so many examples of David asking God what to do next. I'll go in depth into all that in the sermon I'll give on "God's will". In the Old Covenant they had the Urim and the Thummin breastplate that the High Priest wore. When we pray, it's like making an appointment to meet with – and even *hear* – God Almighty, not just *speak* to God Almighty. **AS we pray, we are to VOICE out loud God's will** – "YOUR will be done, on earth *just as it is already done* in heaven." **As we speak those words, God's will, into the air, listen for God's answer.** God is *in* you, His spirit is in you, and His Word will light your path. In time we will learn to discern God's answers, God's voice.

Jesus said His sheep will know His voice (**John 10:4**). If we are indeed one of His sheep, of course we now have the capacity and privilege to hear our Master. Much of that training happens when we learn how to pray – by talking *with* God. **Talking – then silent listening – then talking again.** In fact I pray with a notebook and pen beside me, so I can jot down the thoughts I feel God is inspiring *as* I pray. Especially when I prepare a sermon, I often take my Bible and notes to the bedside and ask God, "OK, what do you want me to say next?". Then I shut up and listen – and start writing. No kidding – that's exactly what I do.

5. Related to the point about God's will, we also PRAY TO ASK GOD TO GUIDE AND DIRECT OUR STEPS , AND TO BLESS THE DAY'S ACTIVITIES, ACCORDING TO HIS WILL.

This is good for us, to humble us to recognize the Source of all help. God knows we need His help – but it's good for us to ask.

Why not ask God, who sees ALL – to guide and bless your efforts and direct you in the way you should go, and to let everything you do be for His honor and glory:

Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; **6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.**" Wow! God – directing things in the affairs of my life? Of course.

The poem I have framed and have hanging in our bedroom, says a lot to me. Here it is.

"The Difference" by Darlene Estlow

I got up early one morning And rushed right into the day
I had so much to accomplish, That I didn't take time to pray
Problems just tumbled about me And heavier came each task
"Why doesn't God help me", I wondered. He answered, "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, "But you didn't seek."
I tried to come into God's presence, I tried all the keys at the lock;
God gently and lovingly chided, "My child, you didn't knock."

I woke early *this* morning, and paused before entering the day
I have so much to accomplish that I *had* to take time to pray.

Psalm 37:4-5 “*Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.* 5 **Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.**”

WHY PRAY?

6. Building right on that, PRAYER UNLEASHES GOD’S POWER IN OUR LIVES to accomplish much for God. God’s will being done is a power beyond understanding. Prayer unleashes much of that power in our lives. James 5 tells us that the effective and fervent prayer *avails much*. **In plain English, effective prayer *accomplishes much*.**

I asked last time – how much has *not* been accomplished because too many of God’s people are asleep on their watch and *not* praying enough? How much more could we be seeing and experiencing if we would just pray more? Are we not guilty as the ancient Israelites were, of *limiting* the Holy One of Israel? **See Psalm 78:41.** Much of my sermon material on the web has been on this theme or sub-theme. **Who hasn’t been healed, because we’re weak in prayer?** Who is hurting, because we can’t forgive or help them forgive themselves. Believe me, I understand that one. Or maybe we’re not praying for them. What irresistible force the Work of God could be on the earth right now – if ...*If God’s people would just pray more effectively.* Or is **2 Chronicles 7:14** no longer in the Word – that if “My people, called by my name, would humble themselves and pray – then I will hear from heaven...”

Even Jesus, the very Son of God humbly proclaimed, “I can do NOTHING of myself” (John 5:19). If Jesus says that, what about you and me? He tells us, apart from HIM we can do nothing, but apart from Him we will be rejected (**John 15:5-6**). So what do we find Jesus doing? Jesus was a man of Prayer. Early in the morning, while it was yet dark, He would be up praying. Before He formalized the decision of who would be the 12 disciples, He spent *all night long* in prayer (**Luke 6:12-13**). When He walked on water, He had been conversing with Father for *hours* up on a mountain by Himself (**Mark 6:46; Matt 14:23-25**).

So why pray? Because that’s the example set by He who is King of all and it unleashes the power of Almighty God behind us, if we’re praying according to His will. Because we can do *nothing* without it, and avail much – accomplish much – with it! Why *wouldn’t* we –except for lethargy and laziness and spiritual sleep!?

Let’s make it plain: prayer has changed the course of history over and over. Why not let it change the course – for the better – of your LIFE and all the lives your life is affecting?

7. We PRAY TO INTERCEDE, STAND IN THE GAP, SUPPLICATE FOR OTHERS.

Once again, God knows we need to pray for someone else. But when we do, it touches His heart. He is moved when someone prays for another. Or, when someone *doesn’t* intercede it bothers God, as you’ll see.

This is such an awesome point that I’m going to reserve it for my next sermon. Perhaps the next one. This is a *huge* point. You’ll see how God is so disappointed, upset and can’t understand – why on earth He can’t find even one, just one person, to “stand in the gap” and pray for others. Is that how bad our love will grow cold someday?

Jesus intercedes for us, and when Jesus is in us, we will spend a lot of our time interceding for others. Moses and Aaron were excellent examples of that a couple of times. Moses even successfully interceded for Aaron and Miriam when God was really ticked off at them.

We are healed more as we pray for others (**James 5:14-16**). It just makes sense that praying for others is so unselfish, that God is much more likely to answer it positively. Here are a few verses:

Ezekiel 22:30-31 “So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one. 31 Therefore I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; and I have recompensed their deeds on their own heads,” says the Lord GOD.”

Isaiah 59:15-16 “Then the LORD saw it, and it displeased Him That there was no justice. **16 He saw that there was no man, And wondered that there was no intercessor;** Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.”

Isaiah 63:5 “*I looked, but there was no one to help, And I wondered That there was no one to uphold;* Therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me; And My own fury, it sustained Me.”

Psalms 106:23 “Therefore He said that He would destroy them, Had not Moses His chosen one stood before Him in the breach, To turn away His wrath, lest He destroy them.”

Anyway, we'll go into this topic in detail in the near future. Intercede for me too – that God will guide that sermon! I pray God will inspire us all to become “Kingdom-class” Intercessors.

8. WE PRAY TO THANK GOD FOR EVERYTHING FROM HIS HAND – what looks good and what looks bad, it doesn't matter – **and the EXPERIENCE THE PEACE THAT COMES FROM THAT.** We thank God in and for all things when we're living in His providence.

Do you remember the amazement of our Savior when only 1 of the 10 healed lepers bothered coming back to say “thanks”? That's not there just to fill up space in the Bible. We are so guilty of the same thing so many times in our lives.

God already knows what He does for us, but it's good for us to say thank you to God.

Perhaps make it a goal to have your whole prayer next time be composed entirely of *thanksgiving*. Try it out. It's fun to do once in a while. Just spend a half hour doing nothing but thinking up things to thank God for. You'll be amazed by what you *haven't* recently thanked God for. **And how often do you thank God - - for just being the kind of loving God He is?** I even thank God that He beat the tar out of Satan when he rebelled and tried to overthrow God. There was no doubt God would win, I'm sure, but God help us if Satan had overthrown God from His throne. The consequences would be beyond our comprehension. Have you thanked God for that victory? Now ask Him to beat the tar out of Satan in your life! God is a “man of war” in these kinds of things (**Exodus 15:3**).

Philippians 4:6-7 “Be anxious for nothing, but *IN everything* by prayer and supplication, with **thanksgiving**, let your requests be made known to God; **7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**”

Ephesians 5:18-21 “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, 20 **giving thanks always FOR all things to God** the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.”

So the message is simple: **IN your ordeal good or bad, and FOR your ordeal good or bad** – God wants your thanksgiving. Sometimes, something that looks horrible may actually be just the suspense before the climactic ending – if we just believe!

9. WE PRAY because it CONFIRMS the EXISTENCE OF A GREAT GOD WHO ACTUALLY HEARS YOUR PRAYERS AS WE SEE AND EXPERIENCE ANSWERS.

There are books galore which try to prove the existence of God. When I pray and miracles happen that have no human explanation, there is a God who cares, a Father who hears, a Savior who forgives, and the Almighty who is the only Almighty!

God knows He exists! But are we always sure? Sometimes it's not a matter of knowing God exists, but wondering if Anyone is listening. When a dramatic answer to prayer happens, it confirms God – Supreme Intelligence in the universe – is there for me and for you!

I remember the case of a man who had done something really stupid after he had gotten drunk. He got arrested, then was released on bail – and he was so depressed he turned suicidal. He got down on his knees, and started to pray. This was approximately 1978. I was just an associate pastor then. He told me later that he was praying and weeping bitterly, “If there’s a God in heaven who still can love a wretched man like me, who can forgive me, who can help me – please somehow show me you still care. Please, O God, have Philip call me.” The fact he had gotten into some trouble, or was praying, was totally unknown to me. I was having some cereal with my wife. Just as I began to lift the spoon to my lips, I suddenly stopped, put my full spoon of cereal down, and walked to phone as my wife asked, “What’s up?”. I answered, “I dunno. I’ve gotta call Jim.” When I rang him, I said, “Jim, I don’t know why I’m calling you, but ... are you alright?”

All I could hear on the other side for a minute was sobbing.

Then he sobbed, “There *is* a God!” Here was the case of a man who desperately needed to know God had not forsaken Him. He had repented, He needed help – and God sent His love by answering his prayer in a way that was beyond human understanding. We both had our belief in God at that moment deeply confirmed.

You have your own stories. **Any children listening? If you will just pray – and believe – you too will begin to see examples of answered prayer,** and the existence of God.

One such prayer I remember as a child, was when I was 7 years old in 2nd grade. I had done poorly in first grade and was not doing well in 2nd grade. My Mom sat beside my bed one night, as I felt like such a failure. She said in simple terms for the 7 year old I was, “Philip, *God* is smart, and you know what? If you pray and ask Him to help you do better in school, and believe – He will”. I took her at her word and the next day, as I was bathing, claimed the promise and told God I was tired of being so dumb. I begged God to help me. I always finished 2nd in the class thereafter, until my senior year when I gave the Valedictory address at my high school. I’ve never forgotten that prayer and now I ask God to give me the smarts to compete in the business world – and He does.

There's so much more we can say about why pray. You probably have 5-6 more ideas of your own and wondering why I haven't mentioned this or that reason. The point of the sermon was to help God's people understand what an opportunity prayer is – and we must get back to fervent praying, we must repent of our Laodecianism, we must become God's House of Prayer once again.

If we do, God will indeed hear our prayers and cause His face to shine upon us again (**Psalm 80**).

If you like clean even numbers – you can make #10 be the point we talked about in the beginning:

10. We pray to maintain communication and to get spiritual instructions and supplies from our Commander in Chief during our Spiritual Warfare. We've talked about that already.

I'm out of time – but why not do your *own* study and come up with more points and reasons to pray. I certainly have *not* exhausted them all and in fact I know I've left out some major points. You figure them out. **On the TRANSCRIPT I'll also include a bonus section of 20 or so scriptures of more instructions on what to pray about, especially for those of you who wonder what to pray about.**

If you are blessed by these messages, give God the glory and share this website with others. I don't need to know. It's not about me. It's about God and what He's doing. Plus, by telling others, perhaps God's people will benefit from some messages that may help them too. Also, the audio version has some material not in the transcript and vice-versa. You may glean more by doing both: listening to the audio as well as studying the transcript and looking up the scriptural references.

But the main thing: Go pray. Before you do anything else, go pray. Our heavenly Daddy, our Almighty Dear Abba is longing to hear from you. He enjoys it “when you call”. Let's keep the communications alive with our great God. Until next time, this is Philip Shields.

God bless! Now go pray.

*** **bonus section:** Here are more verses I didn't get to, that tell us some more things we can be praying about and also has the bonus material about verses that show us how to have prayer that is answered. It's just for starters though! There are many more. I'll give a full sermon this year on Keys to Answered Prayer – but that's really a different topic from “Why Pray”.

If you still wonder what to pray about, here are a few more ideas of what we can PRAY about:

Ask God to hear your prayer.

Psalm 39:12 "Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry;"

Psalm 4:1 “Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; Have mercy on me, and **hear my prayer.**”

John 14:13-14 “And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 **If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.**”

John 16:23-24 "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, **whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.** 24 Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full." (**End prayers with "In Jesus' Name, Amen."**)

Luke 22:41-42 "And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, 42 saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; **nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.**"

1 John 5:14-15 "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, **that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.** 15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him."

John 15:7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you."

Matthew 21:22 "And whatever things you **ask in prayer, believing,** you will receive."

James 1:4-8 "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. 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. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

1 John 3:22-23 "And **whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.** 23 And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment."

James 5:14-16 "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15 **And the prayer of faith shall save the sick,** and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. 16 Confess your faults one to another, and **pray one for another, that ye may be healed.** The **effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.**"

Psalms 141:2 "Let my prayer be set before You as incense, The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."

Ps 141:5 "For still my **prayer is against the deeds of the wicked.**"

Matthew 7:7-12 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your **Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!** 12 Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Hebrews 5:6-7 “As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek"; who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear...”

For more Holy Spirit: Luke 11:13 “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!”

Luke 11:1 Pray for God to show you how to pray more effectively. “Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

Matt 6:9-13

9 In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. (Praise, worship, adoration, blessing)

10 Your kingdom come.

Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread. (requesting your spiritual and physical needs)

12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. (confession and repentance)

13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. (John 17:15)

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Matthew 24:20 “And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.”

Luke 22:40 “When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

2 Corinthians 13:9 “For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. And this also we pray, that you may be made complete.”

Phil 1:9-11 “And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 10 that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.” (do we pray all this for one another?)

3 John 2 “Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.” (pray for one another’s prosperity and health)

Ezra 6:10 “ that they may offer sacrifices of sweet aroma to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his sons.” (pray for governmental leaders; even for their salvation. See next)

1 Timothy 2:1-4 “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Matthew 5:44-45 “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and **pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,** 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven”

One of Paul's prayers. Look what he prayed about and ask if you pray for your brethren like this:

Colossians 1:9-12 “For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to **pray for you,** and **to ask that** you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; 12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

1 Thess 5:25 “Brethren, **pray for us.**” Pray for the ministers.

2 Thess 3:1-2 “Finally, brethren, **pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly** and be glorified, just as it is with you, 2 and **that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men;** for not all have faith”.

Colossians 4:3-4 “meanwhile **praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word,** to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, 4 that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.” Pray for an effective means of God's word to get out.

Ps 122:6-7 “**Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:** May they prosper who love you. 7 Peace be within your walls, Prosperity within your palaces.” (When did you last pray for the peace of Jerusalem?)

1 Samuel 12:23 “Moreover, as for me, far be it from me **that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you;** but I will teach you the good and the right way.” (pray for one another)

Besides all the Psalms and the many verses generally about our duties as a child of God, do you know other verses which say what to specifically pray for? Send them to me. Thanks.