



Study I

THE PRAYING JESUS COMMANDED

Christianity is a religion of prayer. It begins with prayer. It is maintained by prayer. It is advanced by prayer. To be a Christian is to be a pray-er. The New Testament commands prayer. It commands that we pray persistently, continually, with fasting, in the Spirit, individually and together.

Jesus did something to praying that had never been done before! He introduced the concept of actually *talking* to God as if God was our Father. He turned praying from being a religious duty to being a natural activity. He transformed the object of our prayers from vague, world-affecting issues to the mundane issues like: daily bread. For the followers of Jesus, prayer is a privilege, a blessing, a thermometer, and a command.



1. What didn't Jesus like about the way the Pharisees prayed? (Matthew 6:5, 7)



Jesus prayed. In fact, perhaps the most surprising and outstanding characteristic of Jesus Christ was His praying. He seemed to pray continually. He went out of His way to pray. He gave up sleep to pray. He went without food and company so that He could spend more time praying.



THE LORD’S PRAYER AS A MODEL

2. Match the aspect of daily praying with the relevant aspect of “The Lord’s Prayer”-

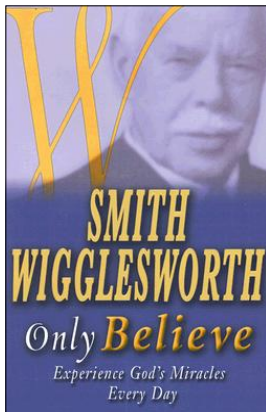
LORD’S PRAYER COMPONENT	PRAYER PRINCIPLE:
<i>Our Father in Heaven</i>	Please forgive me for the sins that I have wilfully committed against Your glory - those around me – and even myself. Help me to forgive those who have similarly injured me by the sins they have committed against me.
<i>Hallowed be Your Name</i>	God knows and cares about us.
<i>Your Kingdom come</i>	Give me an abhorrence for sin and for anything that robs You of due glory.
<i>Your will be done, in earth as it in Heaven</i>	God’s character is revealed in His various names, I want to know Who You really are.
<i>Give us this day our daily bread</i>	May You be King over my life – please give me a submissive heart.
<i>Forgive us our debts, as we forgive others</i>	Have Your will not only in my life but in every aspect of my world including those around me.
<i>Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil</i>	Please meet my every need especially those things that I need for today.

Do you notice that this model prayer is almost entirely about *us* surrendering to God *and* shunning not just sin but even the *temptation* to sin - and being totally dependent upon Him for even our daily “trivial” needs?



3. How do we know that Christ did not intend for this prayer to be repeated mindlessly? (consider Matthew 6:7)
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PERSISTENT PRAYING



There is a teaching that promotes the idea that once a prayer has been prayed it should never be prayed again. Prominent Faith Teachers, such as Smith Wigglesworth, taught that praying more than once for something was a lack of faith. Several modern Faith teachers also teach this. While there are times when we should *stop* praying for something – but it generally proceeds a time of *persistent* praying.

4. What promise of Jesus to believers is contained in Matthew 21:22 and what is the condition to this promise?
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5. Based partly on Colossians 1:9, was the New Testament practise to pray the way modern “Faith” Teachers propose? Explain.
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6. How did Jesus want His Disciples pray based on Luke 18:1?
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Praying and waiting for the answer used to be called “*tarrying*” (note Matthew 26:38, especially in the KJV). The early Pentecostals of the twentieth century considered that earnest praying was matter of *persistence* which they often referred to as *tarrying*.



They regarded that this is what the original “Pentecostals” of Acts 1 did: *they prayed continually and waited for the answer.*

Jesus commanded His followers to pray. He has taught us *how* to pray, *what* to pray for and *why* we should pray. Prayer requires persistence. Jesus demonstrated persistent praying and *continual* praying.

7. How could a follower of Christ apply 1Thessalonians 5:17?

WHY WE PRAY

Believers pray to: (i) **Know** God (so that we can reflect Him), (ii) **Seek** God (to know His heart so that we can please Him), and (iii) **Appeal** to God (to see Him glorified in sometimes difficult circumstances).

Father, help us to be prayerful. Help us to pray and to keep on praying even when it's difficult. Please cause me to know Your heart so that I can reflect You. Help me to experience Your presence continually so that I can ever please You. And Father, I now commit to You all of my needs, responsibilities, wants, desires and dreams. I appeal to You on behalf of the following requests... Amen.

May God make us a prayerful church of Biblical proportions.

Amen.