

# PRAYER - INTRODUCTION

( Jerry Fite)

While the word of God is the medium through which God speaks to us, prayer is the avenue that connects our expressed wishes with God's ear. Prayer is a great privilege for the Christian, for he or she knows that God hears, and will comfort His petitioner in times of distress and loneliness. In order to strengthen our faith regarding prayer, we shall study the Bible regarding various aspects of prayer. In this introductory lesson, we will examine the "words" translated "prayer" in our New Testament and notice the prominent place prayer had in the lives of New Testament Christians.

## I. THE "WORDS" OF PRAYER:

A. Expressing one's **DESIRES, (EUCHOMAI)**.

1. Acts 26:29 - "I would to God..." (3 Jn. 2, Jms.5:16, Acts 27:29)

B. Expressing one's desires **TO GOD (PROSEUCHOMAI)**.

1. Luke 6:12 - Jesus "continued all night in prayer to God" (Eph. 6:18, Heb.13:18)

C. Making **REQUESTS, ASKING (EROTAO)**.

1. I John 5:16 - "he shall ask, and God will give him life..." (Lk.16:27, Jn.14:16, 17:9,15, 20).

D. Expressing **SPECIFIC NEEDS (DEESIS, noun)**.

1. James 5:16 - "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working." (Lk.1:13, Rom.10:1, 2Cor.1:11, I Pet.3:12)

## II. WHAT IS PRAYER?

A. God's authorized way of man making requests, and offering up thanksgiving unto God.

1. Jesus' model prayer emphasizes the "needs" only God can supply (Food, Forgiveness, Deliverance in temptation - Matt.6:9-13).

a) Should never become empty words of repetition (Matt.6:5-8).

b) Rather, our expressions should always be sincere thoughts from the heart (Rom.10:1).

2. Paul "thanked" his God in his requests (Phil.1:3).

B. Prayer is the way the Christian can come "to the throne of grace" (Heb.4:16).

C. Prayer is proper for "every need"

1. Phil.4:6 - "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made unto God."

## III. CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE STEDFAST IN PRAYER.

A. Pray "without ceasing" - "regularly" (I Thess. 5:17, Col.4:2).

B. Prayer was common to New Testament Christians.

1. Acts 1:14, 24 - "Continued with one accord in prayer and supplication..."

2. Acts 2:42 - "Continued steadfastly in ...the prayers"

3. Acts 6:4,6 - Apostles were to "continue stedfastly in prayer..."

4. Acts 10:9 - Peter was praying when messengers came from Cornelius.

5. Acts 12:5 - "Prayer was made earnestly of the church unto God for him."
6. On many occasions: (Acts 14:23; 16:25; 20:36, 21:25).