

# Some Tips on Prayer

Dr. Bob Griffin

This is about growing, not perfection, performance, or duty. Rather, it is, *I get to have coffee, to hang out with my very best friend, God. In group prayer, it is enjoying conversation with God together.*

1. Prayer is 98% discipline and hard work. **Strategic weapons** take lots of learning and skill to use effectively.
2. There are at least **three beastly barriers**: time, sleep, and location. We need to block out a time when we can be awake, a quiet place, without distraction, and a STRATEGIC PLAN for prayer, including how we will pray, what we'll pray and when. (See **Group Prayer** guidelines below.)
3. There are at least **five beastly barriers** to answered prayer:
  - Motives**—James 4:6
  - Patience/God's timing**—Isa 55:8-9; 5:18-19
  - Sin**—Psa. 66:18-20
  - Faith**—Heb 10:23; 35-39; 11:1-2,6; Rom 4:16-22
  - Abiding/intimacy with God**—Jn. 15:5-8.
  - Not according to God's will**—I Jn. 5:14
4. Everyone's plan will be different and the plan will change over time. When the plan no longer works, change it. "Don't make a principle out of your experience; let God be as original with others as He has been with you."
5. Fundamental approach: Begin with **ADORATION** or worship—praise (what you appreciate about God) for who He is. Think and pray the Scripture: Isa 40; I Chon 16; Psalms; 7000 promises in the Bible, etc. "You have created the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched hand. Nothing is too difficult for you." And, "I can do all things through [You] who strengthens me. I have resurrection power (Eph 1:15ff). Names of God are wonderful to use in worship. Add to Biblical promises or to the names of God, what He can do or is: You are all powerful, you can bring revival, healing, help, save, restore, solve my xyz issue/need, etc. Then go to **CONFESSION**. Think about the specifics of your recent past, then, confess the areas where you believe you fell short or sinned. Some folks find it helpful to confess through the fruit of the Holy Spirit in Gal 5. Others confess through the beatitudes in Matt 5. Think through the terrible triangles of the Bible: A) The world, the flesh, and the devil. Confess or renounce them in Jesus' name; B) Confess or renounce the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. How am I doing? I find it helpful to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to me thoughts that need to be confessed, attitudes that were out of line with His Truth and things that I said that were out of line. I ask the Lord to reveal to me things I did that were wrong and things that I didn't do. I confess when I was relying on myself rather than Him. **THANKSGIVING** ... all you can think about (You won't have enough time). **SUPPLICATION**...Ask God for what is on your heart. He invites you to come to him boldly.
6. Pray through the armor of Eph 6. For example, "Lord I take the **sword of the Spirit**, the Word of God. Give me great skill today in using the Word as Jesus did in the wilderness: "It is written...." (Holy Spirit, remind me of truth. Speak your *rhema* Word to me through the day, a brief phrase of Scripture.) I hold high **the shield of faith** today, my shield, against every dart Satan sends my way such as half truths, etc. Continue praying through the rest of the armor, **the belt of truth** (the idea here is integrity, no cover-up, in contrast to the Word of God which is our sword), **the breastplate of righteousness**—the wonderful gift of His righteousness, **the helmet of salvation**—heads covered, thoughts shaped by Biblical perspective, who we are, to whom we belong, the reason we are left here after salvation, and finally our feet shod/covered with **the Gospel of peace**—walking it into our world each day, etc. With each piece of armor I add Scripture that comes to mind. For example, "Without faith it is impossible to please God...." "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."
7. List praying can be very boring, but it is critically important: Churches, friends and family, missionaries, government officials, etc. **Try to find a time when you are active doing something else like working out on a treadmill—paste lists to the wall/mirror when getting ready for the day; walking, commuting to work, etc.**

8. One of the most effective ways of praying is **to write a letter to God** reflecting on your life. Then, **STOP to listen** to what God wants to say. Ask Him to speak. Write down what comes to mind, your thoughts or impressions. Don't doubt. Test what you hear with Biblical truth. If it is unusual, check it with a mature Christian who you can trust.
9. If there are special things or needs, you can pray at special times, at every stop light or at a certain common intersection, the 9<sup>th</sup> hole on the golf course, long trips in the car, exercising, etc. Praying in groups that focus on a targeted area of need is strategic—your city, at-risk children and youth, your school district, church, etc.
10. Learn about fasting, different kinds and ways. Fasting enriches your prayer life. It helps you focus. Be sensitive to health needs and understand that long water only fasts take a lot of preparation. They are more rare than other kinds of fasting, like a Daniel Fast, fruits and vegetables only.
11. If you are married, block out time to pray with your spouse, one of the secrets of intimacy. Many Christians find that a small prayer group, or prayer partner, really enriches their prayer life. Praying with others is exciting and powerful. Accountability partnerships in prayer can help you stay focused, and sometimes it is essential for breaking old patterns or strongholds.

**Group prayer:** It can become routine and boring. Here are guidelines intended to keep group prayer alive and dynamic:

### GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

- \*Listen for the Holy Spirit's direction.**
  - \*Pray shorter prayers so many can pray.**
  - \*Allow for silence...listen.**
  - \*Be long and strong on praise and worship.**
  - \*Stay with a subject until the Holy Spirit is finished with it.**
  - \*Pray brief passages of Scripture.**
  - \*Spontaneously lead in song as the Holy Spirit leads you (if you can sing)**
  - \*Be sensitive to diversity: gifts, volume, worship style.**
  - \*Pray along with others as they pray—"yes, uh-huh, for sure, yes, Lord, please Father. . ."**
  - \*Give "announcements" about events or concerns, etc., at other times—not in prayer.**
- In other words, rather than taking a long time to list requests,  
 worship and pray; let the requests come as  
 people pray. Others can pray for  
 the same concern—staying with the subject until the  
 group is ready to move on.

# Texts from “The Ask”

Bob Griffin

~Jn. 10 *My sheep hear my voice; I call them by name! BE STILL! LISTEN*

~Isa. 30:15ff – *a favorite text!!! God SAYS, in rest and repentance is your salvation, in Quiet & Trust is your strength . . . in hard times . . . lonely times . . . fearful times “You will hear a still small voice behind you saying, This is the way . . .*

~Psa. 145:18 The Lord is near to all who call on him.”

~James 4:8 tells us: Draw near to God and He will draw near [Be CLOSE] to you.”

~Deu. 4:7 What other nation (Israel) is so great as to have their God so near them the way the Lord our God is near us . . . WHENEVER We pray to Him.”

~1 Thes. 5:17 “Pray without ceasing.” ON THE GO...a conversational relationship with God step by step, daily

~Psalm 63:1 David says, “You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.”

~ Pro 15:18 The prayer of the upright [Quality talk and time] is God’s delight... like lovers

~Jesus CLEANSING THE TEMPLE (Matt. 21:13) “My house Shall be a house of prayer. . .”

~Eph. 3 THE Paul the Apostle’s benediction says: “Now to Him who is able to do exceeding, abundantly beyond all we can ASK or think . . .

~Jer. 33:3 Call on me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things...

~Phil 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and ASKING, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God...will guard...as you rest in Him

~James 5:16 Pray for one another, that you might be healed; the fervent effectual prayer of a righteous person has great power in its effects.

~Matt 7:7 Ask...and it will be given, seek...find, knock...a door will be opened; “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him.”

~Jn. 15:17 If you remain or abide (linger with, dwell with, hang out with in me, =INTIMACY WITH HIM. . . . and if my words—GOD’S WORD—abides (saturates) you, ask what you wish. It will be given . . .

~1 Pet 3:12 God’s heart-ears are attentive to the prayers of the righteous.

~2 Chron. 7:14 If my people . . . not just OT – “my people” in NT, too.

~1 Pet. 4:7 The end of all things is near! Therefore, be clear-minded and self-controlled. WHY?? SO you can pray. . .