

The Privilege of Prayer

Introduction:

- A. One of the fondest memories of my childhood is of “Daddy” Spratt and his prayers.
- B. I often have heard it said, “Christians don’t pray as they used to.”
- C. What does the New Testament teach about Christians and prayer?

I. What is prayer? - 1 Timothy 2:1

- A. supplications: “the expression of personal need” (Thayer. 126)
- B. prayers: “any offering of our desires and wishes to God” (J.A. Bengel, **New Testament Word Studies**. 2:512).
- C. intercession: “seeking the presence and hearing of God on behalf of others” (Vine.2:267).
- D. giving of thanks: e.g., child who forgets to say, “Thank you.”

II. Should Christians pray? - Yes, because:

- A. God hears our prayers. - 1 John 5:14-15
- B. we are so commanded. - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
- C. of the example of others. - Luke 6:12; Acts 12:5
- D. in prayer our burdens are lifted. - Philippians 4:6-7

III. Whose prayer will God hear? - 1 Peter 3:12

- A. one whose heart is righteous:
 - 1. believing - James 1:6-7
 - 2. sincere - Matthew 6:5-6
 - 3. humble - 1 Peter 5:6-7
 - 4. reverent - Psalm 111:9
 - 5. unselfish - James 4:3
 - 6. penitent - Acts 8:22
 - 7. forgiving - Matthew 6:14-15
- B. one whose life is righteous - 1 John 3:22

IV. How are we to pray? - Luke 11:1

- A. Object: God - Matthew 6:9; cf. Acts 7:59
- B. Avenue: Christ - John 16:24
- C. Nature: According to God’s Will - 1 John 5:14-15
- D. Time: Always - Ephesians 6:18
- E. Place: Everywhere - 1 Timothy 2:8

V. For what should we pray?

- A. praise - Matthew 6:9
- B. supplications
 - 1. the forgiveness of sins - Acts 8:22
 - 2. deliverance from temptation - Matthew 6:13
 - 3. wisdom - James 1:5
 - 4. comfort in affliction - James 5:13
 - 5. health - James 5:14-15
 - 6. material needs - Matthew 6:11
- C. intercessions

1. God's will to be done - Matthew 6:10
 2. furtherance of the gospel - Colossians 4:2-4
 3. needs of others - 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 5:16
 4. welfare of the church - Colossians 1:19
- D. thanksgivings - 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- Conclusion:
- A. Prayer avails. - 1 John 5:14-15
 - B. Therefore, "Pray without ceasing." - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18