



## Will God Hear My Prayer?

Will God \_\_\_\_\_ my prayer? Does God really \_\_\_\_\_ about my problems? Today, we're exploring \_\_\_\_\_ God hears our prayers. We're here to \_\_\_\_\_ the Scriptures for God's will. The Bible opens a marvelous treasure chest of \_\_\_\_\_ that prospers our lives and our souls. God's Word enriches us in a thousand ways and touches \_\_\_\_\_ aspect of our lives. Solomon told his son, "How blessed is the man who \_\_\_\_\_ wisdom, And the man who gains understanding. For her profit is better than the profit of silver, And her \_\_\_\_\_ better than fine gold. She is more precious than \_\_\_\_\_; And nothing you \_\_\_\_\_ compares with her. Long life is in her right hand; In her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways, And all her paths are \_\_\_\_\_. She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who hold her fast." (Proverbs 3:13-18).

A recent report said that 84 percent of Americans prayed within the last \_\_\_\_\_. Even six percent of \_\_\_\_\_ say they pray every single day. We sometimes \_\_\_\_\_, "Will God hear my prayer? Will praying make a \_\_\_\_\_?" Prayer is an amazing \_\_\_\_\_ of God; we should rejoice over it and be thankful. But like any gift, it only works if we practice it; and only works if we practice it according to the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. God answers prayer, but God doesn't grant \_\_\_\_\_ request. Some prayers \_\_\_\_\_ the will of God; and some prayers come from selfish or disobedient \_\_\_\_\_. Prayer's not like rubbing a \_\_\_\_\_ and having a genie grant you wishes. We pray to a holy and righteous God, who wants us to be holy and righteous.

### **Our reading today comes from the book of James 1:5-8.**

Each of us faces times when we \_\_\_\_\_ to pray. We need God's \_\_\_\_\_. We want to know God will hear us and \_\_\_\_\_ our requests. Certainly God hears the prayers of those who \_\_\_\_\_ and follow Him. Jesus said, "Do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For all the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father \_\_\_\_\_ that you need them all. But seek \_\_\_\_\_ the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matthew 6:31-33). First, when you pray, you're praying \_\_\_\_\_ your Heavenly Father. Second, your Father knows what you need and has heard your \_\_\_\_\_ prayer. Third, He promises to supply your needs \_\_\_\_\_ you put Him first in your life.

The Father loves us and deals with us as His \_\_\_\_\_. Jesus said, "Suppose one of you has a \_\_\_\_\_, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and from inside he answers and says, 'Do not bother me; the \_\_\_\_\_ has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he'll get up and give him as \_\_\_\_\_ as he needs" (11:5-8). God is \_\_\_\_\_ than that. He gives to us out of love, not because we are a bother.

Paul, with lots of experience, said, "my God will \_\_\_\_\_ every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). God the Father wants to \_\_\_\_\_ His children and supply their needs, just as any father might. God \_\_\_\_\_ us to pray. We don't have to apologize to God for taking up His \_\_\_\_\_. Jesus said, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find;

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**Longer quotations may not appear in the Study Sheet, but can be read in the accompanying transcript.**

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knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are 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 \_\_\_\_\_ him!” (Matthew 7:7-11).

Jesus wants us to \_\_\_\_\_ confident in prayer. Some think that when they \_\_\_\_\_ God doesn't want to be around them, so they withdraw from God and they \_\_\_\_\_ praying. That's exactly what God doesn't want. He wants us to cease from sin, yes; but He also wants us to come \_\_\_\_\_ to Him for help. Hebrews 4:14-16 says: “Since then we have a great high priest who's passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold \_\_\_\_\_ our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been \_\_\_\_\_ as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of \_\_\_\_\_, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of \_\_\_\_\_.” Rather than avoiding God, let's draw near to get the \_\_\_\_\_ we need for temptation.

It matters how we \_\_\_\_\_, whether we believe, and whether we seek first the kingdom, if we wish the Father to hear our prayers. First Peter 3:12 says, “For the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord are on the righteous, and his \_\_\_\_\_ are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do \_\_\_\_\_.” Ephesians 3:20 says that God “is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the \_\_\_\_\_ that works within us.” Many \_\_\_\_\_ God out and wonder why He doesn't hear their prayers. You can't live a wicked life and expect God to \_\_\_\_\_ you. If that's the case, whose prayer will God not hear?

James 4:1-3 says, “What's the \_\_\_\_\_ of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your \_\_\_\_\_ that wage war in your members? You lust and you don't have; so you commit murder. You're envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You don't have because you don't \_\_\_\_\_. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with \_\_\_\_\_ motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.” If I'm praying to God, and what I'm praying is selfish and wasteful, I shouldn't \_\_\_\_\_ God to help me do what's wrong. Think about \_\_\_\_\_ you're praying and how the Father thinks. Some people's prayers are so self-centered and hurtful to others that God wants no part of it.

When you pray, remember that God treats you the way that you treat \_\_\_\_\_. Jesus taught us to pray “forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Matthew 6:12). Jesus explains, “That if you forgive others their trespasses, then your heavenly Father will \_\_\_\_\_ forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Matthew 6:14-15). How can you expect God to forgive you, if you aren't \_\_\_\_\_ to forgive others? If we're children of God, we ought to have the \_\_\_\_\_ tenderness and compassion for others that God has shown to us.

Proverbs 15:29 says, “The LORD is \_\_\_\_\_ from the wicked, But He \_\_\_\_\_ the prayer of the righteous.” God allows us to \_\_\_\_\_ our ways, so we can have a loving relationship with Him. Nobody is perfect, though we strive to \_\_\_\_\_ God. God distinguishes the person who sets his heart to do right but sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ and the person who lives his life to serve his \_\_\_\_\_ desires but sometimes does good. We can't be perfectly sinless, but there's a difference between endeavoring to do \_\_\_\_\_ and having no intention of following God. One is one way, the other is the other. The Father will not hear the person who has \_\_\_\_\_ his heart away.

Peter speaks to husbands, “husbands, live with your \_\_\_\_\_ in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your

prayers may not be hindered” (1 Peter 3:7). A man who mistreats his wife or children cannot expect to draw close to God and be \_\_\_\_\_. God will treat him in the \_\_\_\_\_ way that he has treated his family. Don’t let a lack of kindness toward those whom you love put a barrier between you and God.

Faith is necessary. The Hebrew writer said, “without faith it is impossible to \_\_\_\_\_ him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). If we seek God’s help and blessing, we need to believe that He will keep His \_\_\_\_\_ and will bless us. James said, “But let him ask in faith, without doubting, for the one who doubts is like the wave of the \_\_\_\_\_ that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he’ll \_\_\_\_\_ anything from the Lord; because he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways” (James 1:6-8).

Repentance also comes into this discussion. Some folks think God is supposed to be at their beck and call, but they continue their sinful behaviors. They think God will \_\_\_\_\_ all their sins. Some folks think they can \_\_\_\_\_ with God. “I’ll change Lord, if you just grant me this \_\_\_\_\_.” God’s no fool. You can’t bargain with repentance. Some people repent just \_\_\_\_\_ enough to get what they want and what they’re after, but their change is temporary and not \_\_\_\_\_. You can fool yourself, but you can’t fool God with a negotiation. If you want God to hear you, then first change your \_\_\_\_\_.

Isaiah 59:1-2 says, “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have \_\_\_\_\_ his face from you so that he does not hear.” You can’t hang on to sin and expect to have the \_\_\_\_\_ of God listening to you. The Psalmist wrote, “If I had cherished iniquity in my \_\_\_\_\_, the Lord would not have listened” (Psalm 66:18). Here the Psalmist is clarifying for us the point. You can’t let sin be cherished in your heart and find \_\_\_\_\_ for God too. He won’t hear your heart’s request, if your heart’s real desire is sin.

Continuing in sin and failing to repent builds up a \_\_\_\_\_. Tear down the wall. God said, “When you spread out your hands [that is, when you pray], I will \_\_\_\_\_ my eyes from you; even though you make \_\_\_\_\_ prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; \_\_\_\_\_ the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s case. ‘Come now, let us reason together,’ says the Lord: ‘though your \_\_\_\_\_ are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken’” (Isaiah 1:15-20).

God has always wanted His people to pray and to love Him, but people don’t show love to Him when they live in sin and ignore His \_\_\_\_\_. You can’t love the world and love God at the same time. First John 2:15-17 says, “Do not love the \_\_\_\_\_ or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is \_\_\_\_\_ in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the \_\_\_\_\_ and the desires of the \_\_\_\_\_ and the pride in possessions or life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is \_\_\_\_\_ away along with all its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.” We must keep Him close and live righteously if we wish to have God’s blessing.

I’m thankful for the opportunity and the privilege of prayer. God not only \_\_\_\_\_ us to pray, He asks us to pray. He wants to hear our hearts and to \_\_\_\_\_ our requests. In John 14:13-14 Jesus said, “Whatever you ask in My \_\_\_\_\_, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you

ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.” We can approach God because we have a \_\_\_\_\_ relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, His Son. God hears us when we speak in His name.

I don’t know how \_\_\_\_\_ you are to God, but I know prayer is a precious privilege. To be able to speak our hearts to God and to know that He will hear us is a great \_\_\_\_\_. I don’t want to build some kind of a barrier between God and me by neglecting God or ignoring God, or by sin. I want my \_\_\_\_\_ to say to God, “God I love You and I serve only You.” I don’t want to disappoint my Heavenly Father by participating in \_\_\_\_\_ compromise or error. I want to stay close to Him in this life, so that I can \_\_\_\_\_ with Him forever in the next life. My friend, are you close to God? Are you living in such a way that you draw near to Him, or have you \_\_\_\_\_ Him away? If you want God close to you, then you move close to Him.

Let us pray. “Heavenly Father, we are so grateful to You that You hear our prayers, and that our prayers matter to You. Father, help us to live in such a way that we glorify Your name and that we do Your will. Father, we pray that You will grant our requests and help us through the difficult times. Be with us, give us wisdom, give us strength, and give us courage so that we may live in such a way to glorify You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

God speaks to us through His \_\_\_\_\_, the Bible; and we speak to God through \_\_\_\_\_. Prayer is powerful, because God is powerful. Our Father wants to hear our prayers and \_\_\_\_\_ us. We should tell God “I love you,” “thank you,” and “forgive me” every day. When our hearts are burdened, the Lord can help us \_\_\_\_\_ our burdens. When we’re weak, He can strengthen us. When we’re fearful, He can reassure us. Prayer is a blessing. Let’s maintain a close, peaceful, loving relationship with God. Jesus said, “Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation” (Matthew 26:41). Prayer keeps us from sin and keeps us close to God.

First Thessalonians 5:17 says, “Pray without ceasing.” This passage isn’t speaking about praying \_\_\_\_\_ minute. It’s saying, “Keep on praying. Keep loving Him, thanking Him, praising Him, and asking Him for help.” Live with love and \_\_\_\_\_ the teaching of Christ. Keep worshiping at \_\_\_\_\_. Keep serving others. Don’t start even a single day without prayer, and you’ll find life is richer and fuller. Time with God is time very well spent.

To become God’s child, believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Galatians 3:26-27 says, “for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” When we’re baptized into Christ by being immersed in water, God unites us with Christ (Romans 6:3-7) and washes away our sins (Acts 22:16). In baptism, He adds us to His church (Acts 2:41-47) and causes us to be born again (John 3:5). In baptism you begin your walk as a follower of Christ and a child of God. Can you think of anything better than having Christ as Lord and Savior?