

Purpose of Prayer

Prayer is multi-purposed. And God does many things only in response to the prayers of his people. Generally speaking, numbers make a difference (Leviticus 26:8); results are better when more people pray about something.

- **Confess sin**

"...I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making request to the Lord my God..." (Daniel 9:20). (See also 1 John 1:9.)

- **Resist temptation**

"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak" (Matthew 26:41). (See also Mark 14:38; Luke 21:36; 22:40-46; 2 Corinthians 13:7.)

- **Uphold believers**

"I have prayed for you...that your faith may not fail" (Luke 22:32). (See also John 17:15.)

- **Receive spiritual power**

"After they prayed...they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly" (Acts 4:31).

- **Be healed**

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed" (James 5:16).

- **Welfare of persecutors**

"...pray for those who persecute you..." (Matthew 5:44). (See also Luke 6:27-28.)

- **More workers**

"Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matthew 9:38).

- **Open doors for God's word**

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains" (Colossians 4:2-3).

"...pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored..." (2 Thessalonians 3:1).

"Pray also for me (Apostle Paul), that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should" (Ephesians 6:19-20).

- **Protection**

"And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith. But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one" (2 Thessalonians 3:2-3). (See also Romans 15:31.)

- **Mutual support**

"I urge you...to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me" (Romans 15:30).

- **Get God's grace to help us**

"Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

- **Avoid anxiety**

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).

"Cast all your anxiety on him (God) because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

- **Intercede** (intervene on someone's behalf)

- The Holy Spirit intercedes for us (Romans 8:26-27).
- Christ intercedes for us (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25).
- We intercede for others (1 Timothy 2:1).

Intercession is hard work; it takes commitment and persistence.

- **Serve God**

"She (Anna, the prophetess) never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying" (Luke 2:37).

Pray and praise is music to God's ears, whether it's loud and center stage or quiet and in the background. To do both unceasingly means to be in an *attitude*, in the *spirit* of prayer and praise. Whether or not our minds are occupied, they are always automatically promoting prayer and praise. It's our spiritual breathing. We may not always be aware or conscious of it, but we are breathing. The same is true of spiritual breathing. It's something a child of God does supernaturally, with the Holy Spirit's help. The *more* we do it, the *better* we do it, the more we enjoy it, the more God is pleased! ◇◇◇