

WHY PRAY WHEN GOD KNOWS



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| SELF ASSESSMENT | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|--|-------|-----------|-------|
| I find praying to be more of a duty than a delight | | | |
| I often don't know what to pray for | | | |
| I don't see many answers to my prayers | | | |
| I feel uncomfortable asking God to bless me | | | |
| I pray mostly about other people's physical needs | | | |

I. MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT PRAYER

A. Prayer is a _____.

- You wave the magic wand and God is seen like a genie.
- He immediately gives you whatever you want.

B. Prayer is a _____.

- It is an act of desperation. "Use only in case of emergency."
- We've tried everything else; I guess all we can do now is pray.

C. Prayer is a _____.

- A religious con game that you play with God where you try to convince God to do something nice for you.
- You keep pestering God until finally God gets so irritated that He finally says, "Ok, I'll give it to you," and He gives in.

D. Prayer is a _____.

- The basic motivation behind it is guilt.
- I know I should pray more, I ought to pray, it's something I ought to do.
- It becomes a duty.
- You have a sense of obligation that if you don't pray you'll be on God's "Bad List."
- As a result, you go through a meaningless ritual that becomes a rut.
- You learn memorized phrases and you get caught in religious clichés and say the same thing over and over. It's totally meaningless to you but you know you ought to do it.
- When you think of prayer you think of one word -- boring!
- You think, "Why do I have to pray?" It becomes something you endure rather than something you enjoy.

II. WHY PRAY WHEN GOD KNOWS EVERYTHING?

A. Purpose No. 1: Prayer expresses my _____ God.

"If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit, but apart from Me, you can do nothing. If anyone doesn't remain in Me, he's like a branch that's thrown away and withers. Such branches are picked up and thrown into the fire and burned. But if you remain in Me [if you be dependent upon Me, express your trust in Me] and My words remain in you, you can ask whatever you wish and it will be given to you." John 15:5-7

B. Purpose No. 2: Prayer builds my _____ with Jesus.

"I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit-- fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name." John 15:15-16

C. Purpose No. 3: Prayer brings God's _____.

"Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." John 16:24

"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." Phil. 4:6-7

D. Purpose No. 4: Prayer _____ to God's.

"Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father." John 14:11-13

"This, then, is how you should pray: "'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Matt. 6:9-10

III. APPLICATION

1. Describe one thing you would like to do to make your prayer life more enriching.
2. Why is it unnecessary to inform God of your circumstances when you go through difficult times? What does Psalm 139:1-4 tell you about this?
3. In what areas of your life can you express your complete dependence on God? How does Matthew 6:10-13 relate to this?