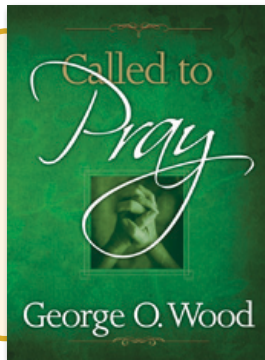


Additional Prayer Resources



Week of Prayer Poster & Bulletin



Called to Pray



Week of Prayer Bookmark

Week of Prayer

Adult Sermon Outline

God Wants to Hear from You

Developed in part from "Prayer Basics: Who Should Pray?," a downloadable teaching resource on prayer, available free of charge from the National Prayer Center Web site, www.prayer.ag.org.

We read the challenges in Scripture, to "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17) and "in everything . . . present [our] requests to God" (Philippians 4:6, NIV). We've heard the life-changing testimonies of people committed to the power of prayer. And we're moved by the heartbreaking needs in our church, neighborhood, and world that call us to prayer.

Still, while many sincere Christians see the importance of prayer, the thought of spending long periods of time praying makes them feel intimidated, inadequate, or even afraid. Perhaps you've even found yourself in this position—struggling to put prayer into practice. If so, you're not alone. While most Christians recognize the value of prayer, consistently devoting time to it can be a challenge. This battle is reflected in statements like these:

*"I just don't have time to pray."
"I really struggle to stay focused during prayer times."
"I get bored and tired when I pray for very long."*

As these struggles mount, some might be tempted to conclude that a consistent personal prayer life just isn't for them. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. Every child of God is called to a lifestyle of prayer. So how do we bridge the gap between knowing the good that we ought to do and actually putting it into practice? Here are a few principles to keep in mind.

1. Prayer is a responsibility and a privilege. (Matthew 6:5-13)

Jesus didn't say "If you pray," but "When you pray." While spending time in prayer requires a sustained commitment and produces some real challenges, it's also important to avoid viewing prayer as merely a responsibility to be met. Jesus invited us to hold conversation with God. There can be no higher privilege than entering into His presence.

2. God hears us. (Psalm 34:15-18)

Our prayers don't just bounce off the ceiling. God listens because He cares. And this compassion leads to powerful acts on our behalf when we seek Him in prayer.

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3. Consistent prayer requires commitment. (Col. 4:2; 1 Peter 5:8)

The commitment to prayer is a spiritual battle that requires devotion. The enemy of our soul would like nothing more than to see us forego prayer and attempt to live in our own strength and wisdom. Time pressures, misguided priorities, and even a sense of personal unworthiness all seek to derail our prayer lives.

4. We need prayer now, more than ever. (1 Peter 4:7)

- Recognize the urgency of personal prayer. It's easy to get so caught up in the urgency of our daily activities that we lose our perspective when it comes to eternal things. Yet in this verse we observe an important exhortation that moves us toward prayer.
- Refocus your attention on God's kingdom. One of the biggest challenges we face in prioritizing prayer is that it deals largely with the unseen, spiritual realm. Prayer directs our focus outside the five physical senses and into God's kingdom. It's no wonder Peter exhorted us to be clear minded and self-controlled. Daily issues and problems continually seek to divert our attention. We need prayer to keep our minds fixed on Christ.

Prepared by the Assemblies of God National Prayer Center • www.prayer.ag.org

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