

## FOR WHAT AND FOR WHOM SHALL WE PRAY?

Philippians 4:4 -6

### Introduction:

1. Paul admonished Christians to “rejoice always.”
2. We can rejoice because “the Lord is at hand (very near).”
3. Paul also admonished us to “be anxious for nothing.”
4. We won’t be anxious if we “let our requests be made known to God.”
5. The result will be that “the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”
6. “Oh, what peace we often forfeit; Oh, what needless pain we bear; All because we do not carry, everything to God in prayer.”

### Discussion:

#### I. FOR WHAT SHOULD WE PRAY?

##### A. We should pray for our daily needs:

1. “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt. 6:11)
2. “Therefore, do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things, but seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matt. 6:31-33).

##### B. We should pray for forgiveness of sins.

1. “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (Matt. 6:12).
2. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

##### C. We should pray for strength to overcome temptation.

1. “And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one” (Matt. 6:13).
2. “Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matt. 26:41).

##### D. We should pray for wisdom.

1. “Knowledge is the possession of facts; wisdom is the ability of judging soundly and correctly regarding them.

**Knowledge is obtained only through study; wisdom is a gift of God” (Guy N. Woods; Com. on James, 41).**

- 2. “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally, and without reproach, and it will be given him” (James 1:5).**

**E. We should pray for any genuine need or desire.**

- 1. “Let your requests be made known to God” (Phil. 4:6).**
- 2. Hannah prayed for a son (1 Sam. 1:10-20).**

## **II. FOR WHOM SHOULD WE PRAY?**

**A. We should pray for the sick.**

- 1. “Is anyone among you sick, let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord” (James 5:16).**
- 2. This pertains to the age of miracles when elders had the gift of healing (1 Cor. 12:9).**
- 3. We certainly can petition God on behalf of the ill and infirm.**

**B. We should pray for our rulers.**

- 1. “Therefore, I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence” (1 Tim. 2:1,2).**
- 2. We don’t have to agree with rulers to pray for them; Paul wrote this when Nero was on the throne of Rome.**

**C. We should pray for elders of the church.**

- 1. “Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the Word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct” (Heb. 13:7).**
- 2. “Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account” (Heb. 13:17).**

**D. We should pray for preachers of the Gospel (missionaries).**

- 1. “Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me” (Rom. 15:30).**
- 2. The church prayed for Peter when he was in prison (Acts 12:5).**
- 3. Paul requested, “Brethren, pray for us” (1 Thess. 5:25).**

**E. We should pray for workers to reach the lost.**

- 1. “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers**

2. into His harvest” (Matt. 9:37,38).
2. Should we pray for laborers if we refuse to help?

**F. We should pray for lost souls.**

1. “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved” (Rom. 10:1).
2. Prayer alone will not save; they must have the Gospel preached to them (Rom. 10:17).
3. Can we pray for the lost if we are unwilling to teach them?

**G. We should pray for our enemies.**

1. “You have heard it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy,’ but I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you” (Matt. 5:43, 44).
2. Jesus prayed for those who nailed Him to the cross (Luke 23:34).

**H. We should pray for our fellow Christians.**

1. “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy” (Phil. 1:3,4).
2. “Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers” (3 John 2).

**Conclusion:**

1. H. Leo Boles’ last sermon was entitled “Unanswered Prayers.”
2. Just as faith without works is dead (James 2:26) so prayer without obedience is unavailing.
3. Prayer is powerful because our Father can do all things:  
“Now to Him Who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen” (Eph. 3:20, 21).
4. “The world has lost the right of prayer, and saints have failed to pray; What loss sustained beyond repair; how blind of heart are they!”
5. Let us “pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17).
6. Salvation is not by “the sinner’s prayer” but by obedience to the Gospel (Acts 2:36-38).