

Requirements For Prayer

Introduction. Christians should be greatly encouraged to pray by faithful prayers in the Bible. Perhaps there is a no more faithful example among mortal men than Daniel. Not only did Daniel pray to God regularly (6:10), but he even confessed and prayed for the forgiveness of national sin (9:1-6).

But God's immediate answer reveals something about Daniel. Daniel was on praying terms with God (9:20-23). Daniel was such an individual that God listened to him and answered his prayers. If we want our prayers answered by God, we must be sure to be on praying terms with Him. To that end, there are four key requirements for prayer that pleases God.

I. ***We Must Have A Proper Relationship With God***

A. One must be a child of God.

1. We cannot claim God as our "Father" if we are not His child (Matthew 6:9).
2. No promise of answered prayers for the rebellious (John 9:31).
3. However, one can see providential arrangement for the sincere seeker for truth (Acts 8:26-28; 10:3-5).

B. One must be righteous.

1. In prayer, this "availeth much" (James 5:16).
2. God's eyes and ears are on or open to the "righteous" (1 Peter 3:12).
3. Some necessary, specific considerations.
 - a) Sin in my life separates me from God (Isaiah 59:1-2).
 - b) The Lord cannot regard iniquity in my heart (Psalm 66:18).
 - c) A refusal to obey God's law turns my prayer into an abomination (Proverbs 28:9).
 - d) I receive freely from God based on obedience to His law (1 John 3:22).

II. ***We Must Have A Proper Perspective Of Self***

A. We must be humble (Luke 18:9-14).

B. We must be unselfish (James 4:2-3).

C. We must be sincere, fervent, and earnest.

1. We do not pray to impress men (Matthew 6:5-7).
2. We do pray to please and persuade God (Colossians 4:2).

D. We must ask according to God's will (1 John 5:14-15).

E. We must ask in faith.

1. The apostles were taught to have faith (Matthew 17:20; Mark 11:24).
2. It is no different with Christians (James 1:5-8).

III. ***We Must Have A Proper View Of Circumstances***

- A. We need to always pray and not lose heart (Luke 11:1-8; 18:1, 5, 7).
- B. We need to continually ask, seek, and knock (Matthew 7:7-11; Luke 11:9-13).
- C. We need to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
- D. We need to pray steadfastly (Romans 12:12). Several problems may occur in our lives, and prayer can offer refreshing rest and comforting peace.
 - 1. Tribulation from without.
 - 2. Turmoil from within.
 - 3. Disappointment in others.
 - 4. Discouragement from efforts without apparent success.

IV. ***We Must Have A Proper Relationship With Our Fellowman***

- A. Forgiving others.
 - 1. We cannot go to God with a grudge in our hearts toward someone else.
 - 2. Jesus taught this principle many times (Matthew 6:12-15; 18:21-22, 34-35; Mark 11:25-26; Luke 17:3-4).
- B. Family relationships.
 - 1. Husbands and wives (1 Corinthians 7:3-5; Colossians 3:19; 1 Peter 3:7).
 - 2. Parents to children (Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21; 2 Timothy 3:14-15).
 - 3. Children to parents (Ephesians 6:1-3).

Conclusion. Daniel was definitely on praying terms with God; he exemplified James 5:16. Be on praying terms with God, and you will be blessed with the peace "which passeth all understanding" (Philippians 4:7).