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Teaching Notes

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God Commands Us to Pray

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A. General Commands to Pray

Matthew 7:7-8 *"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.*

John 15:7-8 *If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.*

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

B. Prayer Commanded in a Certain Manner

Matthew 6:5-15 *"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹ "This, then, is how you should pray: "'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us today our daily bread. ¹² Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.' ¹⁴ For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.*

1 Timothy 2:8 *I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing.*

Colossians 4:2 *Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.*

Jude 1:20 *But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.*

C. Character Traits Needed for Prayer

Romans 12:12 *Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.*

James 1:6-8 *But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That man should not*

think he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

1 Peter 4:7 The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.

D. Prayer for the Advance of the Gospel

Matthew 9:36-38 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸ Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Romans 15:30-32 I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. ³¹ Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there, ³² so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and together with you be refreshed.

Ephesians 6:18-20 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Colossians 4:3-4 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. ⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

1 Thessalonians 5:25 Brothers, pray for us.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-2 Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. ² And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith.

E. Prayer in Trying Circumstances

Matthew 5:43-45 *"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.*

Matthew 24:20 *Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.*

Matthew 26:41 *"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."*

Luke 21:36 *Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."*

James 5:13-16 *Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. ¹⁴ Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.*

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

F. Prayer for Specific Spiritual Blessings

James 1:5 *If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.*

G. Persistence in Prayer

Luke 18:1 *Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.*

1 Thessalonians 5:17 *pray continually*

H. Prayer for Certain Kinds of People

Hebrews 13:18-19 Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way. ¹⁹ I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon.

1 Timothy 2:1-4 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-- ² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³ This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.