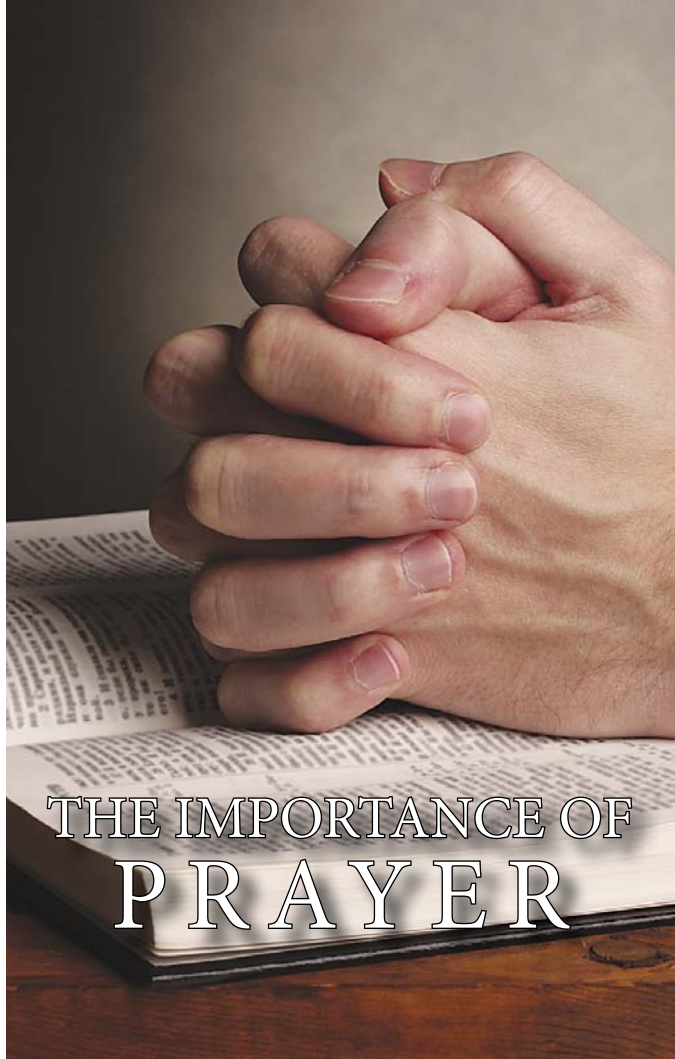


prayed.¹⁴ He prayed at other times as well.¹⁵ King David said in Psalm 5:1-3: «Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my groaning. Heed the sound of my cry for help, my King and my God, for to You I pray. In the morning, O LORD, You will hear my voice; in the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.» David prayed in the morning and eagerly watched for God's answer throughout the day. This is a good example for every believer as well.

*Excerpt from the book,
"Building a Dynamic Church"
By Randall Hillebrand*

¹1 Thessalonians 5:17; ²Romans. 12:12; ³Psalms 33:2;
1 Thessalonians 5:18; 2 Thessalonians 1:3; 2:13;
⁴Psalms 9:2; 34:1; Hebrews 13:15; ⁵Psalms 51; ⁶cf. Matthew 5:44;
2 Corinthians 13:9; Ephesians 6:18-19; Colossians 1:3,9;
James 5:16; ⁷Psalms 62:8; Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Peter 5:7;
cf. Romans 8:26-27; ⁸cf. Psalms 5:2; 32:6; Philippians 4:6;
1 Thessalonians 5:17; James 5:13; ⁹Psalms 139:1-5;
¹⁰Romans 8:26-27; ¹¹cf. Psalms 139:1-5; ¹²Psalm 62:8;
¹³1 Peter 5:7; ¹⁴Mark 1:35; Luke 4:42; ¹⁵Luke 5:16; 6:12



THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER

Prayer is an important part of a Christian's life, as well as a special privilege. This is because when a believer prays, he has the opportunity to have special, concentrated time to communicate with his God.

The believer is always to have an attitude of prayer,¹ being devoted to it.² It is during this time he has the opportunity to give thanks,³ praise,⁴ confess,⁵ intercede,⁶ cast his burdens,⁷ and make requests⁸ to his God. This is also when God has the opportunity to speak to His child, who theoretically is at a heightened state of sensitivity to Him and His will, as he is seeking and communicating with His Heavenly Father on various issues.

Prayer however is a discipline which over time can become meaningless*. When a believer is earnestly seeking God and His will, then this can be a time of spiritual refreshment as God answers and guides him in praying within His perfect will. It is also when he can make a contribution through his prayers, literally affecting events in his own home, community, nation and throughout the world. This is possible because the God of the universe, his Heavenly Father, considers his every prayer and determines the best way to answer each of them. This is the case even in those times when the one praying is unsure of how to pray about a situation, for God understands and knows the person's heart on the issue.⁹ A believer can be assured of this for Paul told the Romans: «In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know

how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.»¹⁰ God so desires to know each believer¹¹ and what is burdening his heart¹² that His Holy Spirit searches him and intercedes to God on his behalf.

King David stated in Psalm 62:8: «Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.» Therefore during prayer and throughout the day, God desires that His child run to Him as his refuge, trusting in Him. When he is before God, he is able to pour out his heart to Him (everything that is in it, every last drop). This is the blessing of prayer – being able to cast all of one's burdens upon his Heavenly Father, the One who cares.¹³

When should a believer pray? There is no specific time the Scriptures designate when a person must pray, read the Bible, etc. The key to a good devotional life is consistency. If for this to happen you need to do it at 5:00 a.m. or 5:00 p.m., this is unimportant. You simply need to create a schedule that will work for you. But having one's devotions at the beginning of their day is a wonderful way to start a day.* But whenever your day starts, if at all possible, start it with time spent alone with the Lord. The Scriptures record that Jesus arose at the start of each day and