



Twenty Things Every Christian Should Know



Objectives:

Identify the most commonly accepted beliefs about the Christian Faith and how they interact to ground our faith



Why study in this order?

Knowing the Bible

↳ Allows us to know God

Who is Triune

And was responsible for Creation

↳ Therefore, we need to pray to Him

↳ Understanding that there are Angels & Demons
That God created Man

However, Man Sinned

So God sent Christ

To offer an Atonement



What Is Prayer and How Does it Work?

Definition: Prayer is Personal Communication with God

REASONS FOR PRAYER: *Why Does God Want Us to Pray?*

1. Prayer expresses our trust in God

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives Generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. **James 1:5-6**

2. Prayer expresses our acknowledgment of dependence upon God as a loving and wise father **Matthew 6:9-15**

3. Prayer brings us into deeper fellowship with God



What is Prayer and How Does it Work?

Breaking down the Lord's prayer: Pray then like this:

- “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
- Your kingdom come,
- your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
- Give us this day our daily bread, and
- forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
- And lead us not into temptation,
- but deliver us from evil.
- For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,
- but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.



What is Prayer and How Does it Work?

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PRAYER *How exactly does prayer work?*

1. Prayer that interacts personally with God

“Why should the Egyptians say, ‘With evil intent did he bring them out, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth’? Turn from your burning anger and relent from this disaster against your people.”

Exodus 32:11-12

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**

Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Your prayer to me about Sennacherib king of Assyria...**Isaiah 37:21**



What is Prayer and How Does it Work?

2. Prayer that asks for what is pleasing to God

And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.¹⁵ And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him. **1 John 5:14-15**

3. What is praying "in Jesus' name"?

Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. It does not simply mean adding the phrase "in Jesus' name" after every prayer (no prayer in Scripture has this phrase at the end) **John 14:13-14**

4. Praying in Jesus' name is prayer made on his authorization

But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" **Acts 3:6**

Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. It is also praying in a way that is consistent with his character and reflects his manner of life and his own holy will. **Acts 4:10**



What is Prayer and How Does it Work?

C. OUR ATTITUDE IN PRAYER *Praying according to God's will requires humility*

1. Praying according to God's will

And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.

1 John 5:14

And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." **Matthew 26:39**

2. Praying with faith

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. **Hebrews 11:1**

But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. **James 1:6**

Therefore, I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. **Mark 11:24**

3. Obedience

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is acceptable to him. **Proverbs 15:8**

If one turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination. **Proverbs 28:9**

For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil. **1 Peter 3:12**

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. **1 John 3:21-23**

What is Prayer and How Does it Work?

4. Confession of sins

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**

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.

The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. **James 5:16**

5. Forgiving others

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 6:14-15

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. **Ephesians 4:32**

Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.” **Matthew 18:21-22**

6. Humility

Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” **1 Peter 5:5**

What is Prayer and How Does it Work?

7. Praying in private

But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray. **Luke 5:16**

But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. **Matthew 6:6**

8. Praying with others

“I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.” And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them” **Matthew 18:19-20**



What is Prayer and How Does it Work?

Does Prayer change God's Mind?

While many traditions teach that prayer doesn't alter God's unchanging, sovereign will, it powerfully changes circumstances and individuals by bringing people into alignment with God's purpose, acting as a means He uses to work in the world, and transforming the hearts of those who pray, often through a process God already ordained to involve human petition.



What is Prayer and How Does it Work?

Theological Perspectives

God's Unchanging Nature: Scripture often emphasizes God's immutability (Numbers 23:19, Malachi 3:6), meaning His fundamental character and eternal plans don't change like human minds do.

Prayer as Participation: Prayer isn't about informing God or outmaneuvering Him but about participating in His plans, a way for humans to align their will with His.

Figurative Language: Biblical passages that sound like God changes His mind (e.g., Exodus 32) are often seen as anthropomorphic language (describing God in human terms) or as God responding to a change in human condition (like repentance) within His preordained framework.



What is Prayer and How Does it Work?

How Prayer Changes Things (Without Changing God)

Transforms the Petitioner: Prayer changes the person praying by fostering faith, hope, and reliance on God, aligning their heart with His will.

A Means of God's Action: God uses prayer as a "secondary cause" or instrument to bring about His will, making our prayers essential for certain outcomes.

Reveals God's Mercy: In stories like Nineveh, God appears to relent, but this demonstrates His mercy, which was always available through repentance, rather than a change in His inherent nature.



The Point of Praying?

- ✓ To develop a deeper relationship with God, not to educate Him.
- ✓ To ask for what God desires to give through our requests, as He incorporates prayer into His perfect plan.
- ✓ To seek His will and grow in virtue, even when prayers aren't answered as expected.



What are Angels, Satan, and Demons?

Definition:

Angels are created, spiritual beings with moral judgment and high intelligence, but without physical bodies.



What are Angels, Satan, and Demons?

A. What are Angels?

1. Created Spiritual Beings

“You are the LORD, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you”. **Nehemiah 9:6** (Also Colossian 1:16)



What are Angels, Satan, and Demons?

2. Exercise Moral Judgment

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; **2 Peter 2:4**

3. High Intelligence

But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified”. **Matthew 28:5**

After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” **Revelation 4:1**

4. Have great power

Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word! **Psalms 103:20**

Whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord. **2 Peter 2:11**



What are Angels, Satan, and Demons?

B. When Were Angels Created?

1. Before the seventh day of Creation (Genesis 2:1; Exodus 20:11)

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. **Genesis 2:1**

For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. **Exodus 20:11**

2. Angels rebelled before the Fall (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6)

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; **2 Peter 2:4**

And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day— **Jude 1:6**

3. We will have authority over angels (1 Corinthians 6:3)

Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life! **1 Corinthians 6:3**

4. God's love for mankind: no angels were saved (2 Peter 2:4; Hebrews 2:16)

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; **2 Peter 2:4**

For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. **Hebrews 2:16**

C. What is their purpose?

1. They directly glorify God (Psalm 103:20; 1 Peter 1:12 Revelation 4:8)

- Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word! **Psalm 103:20**
- It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look. **1 Peter 1:12**
- And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!” **Revelation 4:8**

2. They carry out some of God’s plans:

Messages (Acts 8:26)

- Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is a desert place. **Acts 8:26**

Judgment (2 Chronicles 32:21; Matthew 16:27)

- And the LORD sent an angel, who cut off all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he came into the house of his god, some of his own sons struck him down there with the sword. **2 Chronicles 32:21**
- For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. **Matthew 16:27**

Satan and Demons:

Demons are evil angels who sinned against God and who now continually work evil in the world

A. The Origin of Demons: Between the events of Genesis 1:31 and 3:1, a rebellion in the angelic world must have taken place. Language of ascending to heaven and setting his throne on high rebellion. (Isaiah 14:12-15, Luke 10:18)

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit. **Isaiah 14:12-15**



B. Satan as Head of the Demons

“Satan”: head of the demons, God’s enemy. (1 Chronicles 21:1; Zechariah 3:1)

Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel. **1Chronicles 21:1**

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. **Zechariah 3:1**



2. Other names

“The devil” (Matthew 4:1, 13:39, 25:41)

“The Serpent” (Genesis 3:1, 2 Corinthians 11:3; Revelation 12:9)

“Be-elzebul” (Matthew 10:25, 12:24, Luke 11:15)

“The ruler of this world” (John 12:31, 14:30)

“The prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2)



C. The activity of Satan and demons

Satan was the originator of Sin. (Genesis 3:1-5; 2 Corinthians 11:3; John 8:44; 1 John 3:8)

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?” **Genesis 3:1-...5**

You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. **John 8:44**

Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. **1 John 3:8**



Demons oppose and try to destroy every work of God. (Matthew 4:1-2;
Revelation 12:9; 2 Corinthians 4:4)

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. **Matthew 4:1-2**

but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. **Revelation 12:8**

In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. **2 Corinthians 4:4**



Demons are limited by God's control (Job 1:12, 2:6; James 4:7).

And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. **Job 1:12**

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. **James 4:7**



New Covenant Age: Authority over demonic powers given to the Twelve
(Matthew 10:8; Luke 10:17; 1 John 3:8)

Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay. **Matthew 10:8**

The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” **Luke 10:17**

Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. **1 John 3:8**



At the Millennium: Activity of Satan/demons further restricted.

(Revelation 20:1-2, 7-8)

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,

Revelation 20:1-2

And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea.

Revelation 20:7-8



Next Week:

❖ **What is Man?**

❖ **What is Sin?**

