

December 1

Prayerlessness

1. Lack of prayer is a sin and reproach against God.

- **God wants us to come to Him in prayer.**

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Philippians 4:6).

- **God offers us what we need if we will only ask.**

“...Ye have not, because ye ask not.” (James 4:2).

- **God desires that we have the full joy of His fellowship.**

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.” (I John 1:3,4).

- **God provided the way of prayer at the cost of the blood of Jesus.**

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus ...” (Hebrews 10:19).

**When friends drop in unexpectedly, we make time for them!
Could it be that we make no time for God, His gifts and His fellowship?**

December 2

Prayerlessness

2. Lack of prayer is a sinful cause of weakness in our spiritual lives.

- **Prayer is the source of power for the battle and makes it possible to speak the Gospel with boldness.**

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel...” (Ephesians 6:18, 19).

- **Boldness and filling of the Holy Ghost were the results of praying**

“And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak the word... And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.” (Acts 4:29, 31).

We have not because we ask not (James 4:2). We have zeal in study and work but not in prayer. This is proof that we are still operating in the flesh.

December 3

Prayerlessness

3. Lack of prayer is a cause of weakness for God's program--the Church.

- **Open doors and proper speaking are made possible by prayer.**

“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.” (Col. 4:2-4).

- **Souls are headed for Hell without proper preaching (a result of proper praying).**

“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Romans10:14)

- **Workers in the Harvest come only as a result of prayer (not recruiting, programs, etc.)**

“Therefore said He unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth laborers into His harvest.” (Luke 10:2).

December 4

Prayerlessness

Prayerlessness shows unbelief of the heart and rebellion against God. It is sin.

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?” (Matt. 7:7-11)

Good gifts received, things found and doors opened are precious promises. Believe these promises, and you will pray. We *do* what we believe in. Lack of prayer shows unbelief.

December 5

Prayerlessness

Matt. 17:14-21

Lack of prayer was the cause of unbelief. Unbelief was the result of lack of prayer and fasting. Therefore, unbelief is both cause and result of prayerlessness.

Matthew 26:36-45

Spirit and flesh are in opposition. The spirit is willing. The flesh is weak towards prayer. A lack of faith in God is the result of walking after the flesh.

***“And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”* Matt. 21:22 is a clear promise. In whom do we most trust? Many times we go to the doctor *before* we go to God!**

December 6

Prayerlessness

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.” (Rom. 8:1-5)

For the saved person, only two walks exist. We identify our walk by what is important to us. *“Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”* (Gal. 3:3) We begin with the Spirit. If we continue in the Spirit, prayer is a result. If we walk in the flesh, prayerlessness is a result. Believers make this choice often. Our choice is evidenced by our prayer life (or lack thereof). Prayer may be one of the most obvious ways of measuring our spiritual temperature.

December 7

Prayerlessness

Prayerlessness is a sin against God, my own self and the Church. It is a result of unbelief which is a result of a walk after the flesh.

1. We must first deal with the sin--the root.

“Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.” (II Cor. 7:9-11)

“But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (I John 1:7-9)

Have we confessed, repented and cleared ourselves?

December 8

Prayerlessness

2. We must also correct the basic problem (fleshly walk).

“...I die daily” (I Cor. 15:31).

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Gal. 2:20).”

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Gal. 6:14).

December 9

Prayerlessness

Dealing with the flesh walk requires positive action. Being neutral accomplishes nothing. Fighting is not adequate. *Dying* requires these actions.

- ***Yield* to Christ and His righteousness and the separation from the flesh.**
- ***Put* your confidence and faith and hope in Christ and His deliverance.**
- ***Surrender* to Christ fully.**
- ***Abide* in this walk. Die today as often as needed and again tomorrow.**

December 10

Praying Scripturally

Follow Scriptural Examples

- **Rachel declared “...Give me children, or else I die!” (Genesis 30:1)--desperation for souls.**
- **Jacob wrestled through the night for a blessing--a specific goal.**
- **Hannah prayed for a child. Do we pray for a given soul specifically?**
- **Abraham prayed for wicked people in Sodom--intercession on the behalf of others.**
- **Moses asked God to spare the people or take him—desperation.**
- **Jesus spent long nights in agony--God’s will, not His will.**
- **Paul prayed specifically for churches and individuals.**
- **Apostles prayed for the power of God to come that they might be able to speak the Word with boldness.**

“And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.” (Acts 4:31)

December 11

Praying Scripturally

Follow Scriptural Patterns

- **Jesus' pattern--come to our Father, exalt Him and seek the furtherance of His kingdom, seek forgiveness as we forgive others, and seek provision for daily needs.**

Prayer engages the highest interest and secures the highest glory of God. God's name, God's kingdom, and God's will are all in it. Without prayer His name is profaned, His kingdom fails, and His will is decried and opposed. God's will can be done on earth as it is done in heaven. God's will done on earth makes earth like heaven. Importunate praying is the mighty energy which establishes God's will on earth as it is established in heaven. (Bounds, Complete Works, 268)

- **Paul's pattern--thanking God for what He had done and then praying for an individual's specific need. He also pleaded for others to intercede for him.**

His call to the apostleship did not lift him above this need. He realized and acknowledged his dependence on prayer. He craved and prized the prayers of all good people. He was not ashamed to solicit prayers for himself nor to urge the brethren everywhere to pray for him. (Bounds, Complete Works, 560)

December 12

Praying Scripturally

Claim Scriptural Promises

“And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.” (John 14:13, 14)

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” (James 1:5)

“Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.” (Isaiah 55:6, 7)

December 13

Praying Scripturally

Use Scriptural Motives

- **Who is glorified? The Lord's Prayer teaches us that we ought to be seeking His glory and the furtherance of His kingdom with our requests. James also warns us that wrong motives will cause our prayers to be unanswered.**
- **Whose power is used? Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts (Zechariah 4:6).**
- **Who benefits? James warns us that wrong motives will cause our prayers to be unanswered.**

“Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts (James 4:2, 3).

December 14

Praying Scripturally

Have Scriptural Requests

- **Souls saved--** *“Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thy inheritance...”* (Psalm 2:8).
- **Saints strengthened**
- **Weather changed**
- **Revival sent**
- **Healing received**
- **Men called into the ministry**
- **Daily needs met**
- **Holy Spirit’s filling**
- **Power and boldness**
- **Blessings received**
- **Judgment sent or stayed**

December 15

Praying Scripturally

Follow Scriptural teaching

- **Pray without ceasing**
- **Intercede regularly and daily**
- **Pray in private**
- **Pray without fancy formalities**
- **Pray through**
- **Ask in faith**
- **Ask with thanksgiving**
- **Ask according to God's will**
- **Ask in Jesus' name**
- **Ask for God to get the glory**
- **Ask and receive**
- **Ask with insistence**
- **Ask with importunity**
- **Ask, ask, ask, ask!**

“...Ye have not because ye ask not” (James 4:2).

December 16

Praying Scripturally

God is a Prayer-Answering God

**“O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come.”
(Psalm 65:2)**

“For I am the Lord, I change not...” (Malachi 3:6)

Consider these examples of people that received answers to prayer!

- **Enoch**
- **Abraham**
- **Jacob**
- **Moses**
- **Hannah**
- **Elijah**
- **Daniel**
- **Thief on the cross**
- **Peter**
- **Apostles**
- **Cornelius**

December 17

Praying Scripturally

The Necessity of Faith

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

Two things are required of men who come to God.

- 1. Believe in God’s existence**
- 2. Believe that God answers prayer**

“Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” (Mark 11:24)

Faith gives birth to prayer, and grows stronger, strikes deeper, rises higher in the struggles and wrestlings of mighty petitioning. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the assurance and realization of the inheritance of the saints. Faith, too, is humble and persevering. It can wait and pray; it can stay on its knees, or lie in the dust. It is the one great condition of prayer; the lack of it lies at the root of all poor praying, feeble praying, little praying, unanswered praying. (Bounds, Complete Works, 19)

December 18

Praying Scripturally

God's Nature Is Revealed Through Answered Prayer

God is a living God. When the prophets of Baal had received no answer from their god, God answered Elijah's prayer with fire from heaven. "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, He is the God; the Lord, He is the God" (I Kings 18:39).

"So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God...Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the living God of Daniel: for He is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end." (Daniel 6:23b, 25-26)

God uses the faith and prayers of his people to show that He, indeed, is a living God who answers prayer!

December 19

Praying Scripturally

1. God is All-Knowing

- **God can hear many requests at the same time.**
- **God knows all relevant facts and needs.**
- **God knows the heart condition of all.**

2. God is All-Powerful

Josh 10:12-24

3. God works miracles

- **God can still work miracles in answer to prayer.**
- **Every prayer answered is a miracle!**

4. God is full of love, mercy and grace.

5. Christ's atonement opens the way.

“Pray without ceasing.” (I Thessalonians 5:17) God never commanded us to preach, sing, teach, give or work without ceasing!

December 20

Praying Scripturally

Jesus--Our Example in Prayer

Jesus is found praying in all four gospels.

To Christ Jesus prayer occupied no secondary place, but was exacting and paramount, a necessity, a life, the satisfying of a restless yearning and a preparation for heavy responsibilities. Closeting with his Father in counsel and fellowship, with vigor and in deep joy, all this was his praying. Present trials, future glory, the history of his church, and the struggles and perils of his disciples in all times and to the very end of time all these things were born and shaped by his praying. (Bounds, Complete Works, 257)

He filled the day with working for God; He employed the night with praying to God. The day-working made the night-praying a necessity. The night-praying sanctified and made successful the day-working. Too busy to pray gives religion Christian burial, it is true, but it kills it nevertheless. (Bounds, Complete Works, 259)

If Jesus prayed, then how much more we need to pray!

December 21

Praying Scripturally

Reasons to Pray

Prayer is God's definite command!

- **Mark 14:37, 38** "...Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation...."
- **Luke 18:1** "...men ought always to pray and not to faint."
- **Eph 6:18, 19** "Praying always with all prayer and supplication..."
- **Phil. 4:6** "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."
- **I Thess. 5:17** "Pray without ceasing."
- **I Tim 2:1-4** "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men..."
- **Col. 4:2-4** "...Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving..."
- **I Thess. 5:25** "Brethren, pray for us."
- **II Thess. 3:1** "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you."

December 22

Praying Scripturally

Reasons to Pray

Prayer is how we receive what we need.

- **James 4:1-3**
- **Matt. 6:11**
- **Rom. 1:17**
- **John 16:24**
- **James 1:5** “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”

Prayer is the means to peace and freedom from worry.

- **Phil. 4:6,7**
- **I Peter 5:6,7**
- **Psalm 34:6** “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.”
- **Psalm 55:22a**
- **Matt. 6:25-34**

December 23

Praying Scripturally

Reasons to Pray

Answered prayer is evidence of God's existence, presence and nature!

- **Judges 6:11-40**
- **I Kings 18**
- **Ex. 18:19**
- **Dan. 2:18, 47**

Prayer is needed for salvation (even though it may only be of the heart and not audible).

- **Rom. 10:13**
- **Luke 18:9-14**
- **Luke 23:42, 43**
- **John 6:37** “All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

December 24

Praying Scripturally

Importunity in Prayer

- **Luke 11:1**
- **Luke 11:5-10**
- **Luke 18:1-8**
- **Luke 22:41-44**
- **Matt. 15:22-28**
- **James 5:16-18**
- **Gen. 18:23-33**
- **Gen. 32:26** “And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except Thou bless me.”
- **Deut. 9:18, 19**
- **I Kings 18:41-45**
- **II Kings 13:14-19**
- **Acts 12:5**

December 25

Praying Scripturally

Arguments in Prayer

Arguments are not to force God. They show reasons why we desire an answer. *Why should God answer our request?*

Arguments to Which God Listens

- **God's Nature (attributes)**
 - **Gen 18:23**
 - **Gen. 18:24,25**
 - **Gen. 18:32**
- **God's Promises**
 - **Gen. 32:9-12**
 - **I Kings 8:22-26**
- **God's Reputation (His great Name and the past)**
 - **Ex. 32:11-14**
 - **Ex. 32:31-33**

Prayer is not getting God to side with us. Rather, it is us siding with God and seeing His power loosed into action.

December 26

Praying Scripturally

Hindrances to Successful Praying—Why God May Not Answer

- **Sin –**
 - **Is. 1:2-18**
 - **Is. 59:1-2**
 - **Psalm 66:18**
 - **I Peter 3:12**

- **Selfish Motives**
 - **James 4:3**

- **Idols**
 - **Ezek. 14:3-8**

- **Stinginess in giving**
 - **Proverbs 21:13**

- **Unforgiving spirit**
 - **Mark 11:25, 26 “And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.”**

December 27

Praying Scripturally

Hindrances to Successful Praying—Why God May Not Answer

- **Wrong husband-wife relationship**
 - **I Peter 3:1-7**

- **Unbelief**
 - **James 1:5-7**

- **Problems between Christians**
 - **Matt. 5:23-24**
 - **Matt. 18:15-19**
 - **I John 4:19-21**
 - **I John 5:12**

- **Not hearing God’s Word**
 - **Proverbs 28:9 “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.”**

- **Not following God’s Word**
 - **Proverbs 1:24-28**
 - **Zech. 7:11-13**

December 28

Praying Scripturally

Hindrances to Successful Praying—Why God May Not Answer

- **Pride and vanity**
 - **Job 35:12, 13**

- **Not asking according to His will**
 - **I John 5:14**

- **Blood guiltiness**
 - **Is. 1:15**
 - **Ezekiel 3:18**
 - **Acts 20:26**

- **Stubbornness and rebellion**
 - **I Sam. 15:22, 23 “...Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry....”**

December 29

Praying Scripturally

Fasting--Is It for You?

Fasting was practiced by Moses, Joshua, David, Elijah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezra, Nineveh, Jews in the time of Esther, Israel at several times, Pharisees, and the disciples of John the Baptist.

Fasting may be a gauge to measure our desire for God to answer prayer.

Jesus began His earthly ministry with fasting. His fast lasted forty days (Matt. 4:2).

His disciples were to fast after Jesus went back to Heaven (Matt. 9:14, 15, Mark 2:19-20, Luke 5:34-35).

Removal of one kind of demon requires prayer and fasting. A special kind of faith results from prayer and fasting (Matt 17:14-21).

December 30

Praying Scripturally

Fasting--Is It for You?

Anna served God with prayer and fasting (Luke 2:36, 37).

Cornelius received an answer while fasting and praying (Acts 10:30).

Missionaries are sent with prayer and fasting (Acts 13:2).

Prayer and fasting was a part of the ordination of elders (Acts 14:23).

Time was set aside every year for a fast (Acts 27:9, Lev. 23:27, 28-- Day of Atonement for affliction of the soul).

Deliverance followed fasting (Acts 27:33-35).

December 31

Praying and Fasting Scripturally

Matthew 6:16-18

- **Do not be hypocritical.**
- **Do it unto God, and not for man (Zech 7:5).**
- **Do it in secret to receive an open reward.**

Prayer should be included with fasting.

Nehemiah 9:1-3

- **With humility (Deut. 9:18)**
- **With confession of sin (Is. 6:7)**
- **With separation**
- **With Bible reading**
- **With worship**

Is. 58:1-12 Four Purposes

- **Loose the bands of wickedness**
- **Undo heavy burdens**
- **Let the oppressed go free**
- **Break every yoke**

