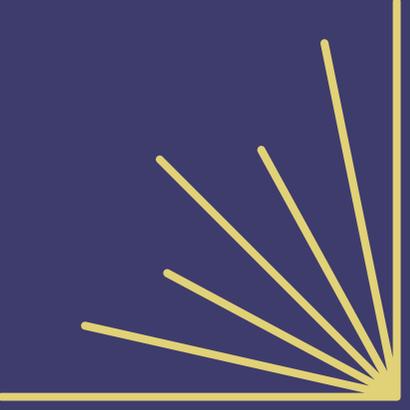
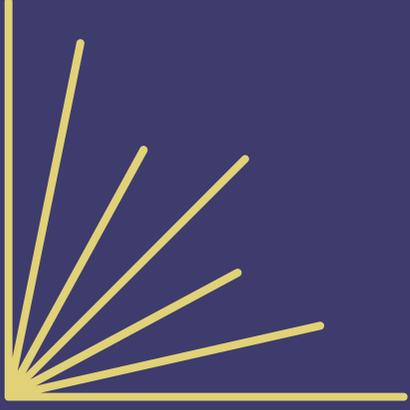


New Creation (7)

A Prayer To Know God

Ephesians 1:17-20



#1 Two Pillars to Holiness: God's Word and Prayer

The Bible tells us that both God's word and prayer make God's people holy.

“For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer” (1Tm 4:4-5)

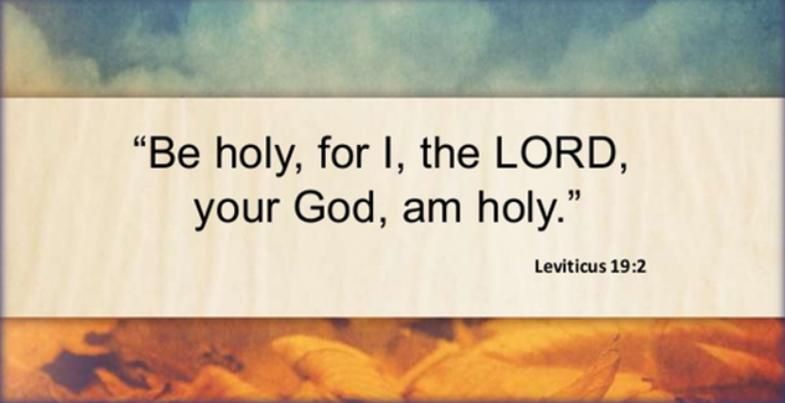
Paul originally wrote this regarding certain foods. However, even though the passage talks about how to treat certain foods, the same spiritual rule can be applied to Christian life because we're also included in “everything God created.”

This passage tells us the two ways through which we can be ‘consecrated,’ which basically means made ‘holy.’ They are **God's word and prayer.**

#2 Two Pillars to Holiness: God's Word and Prayer

The Scriptures say that God's will for us is that we become holy as He is holy.

Right after delivering the Israelites from Egypt, God led them to Mount Sinai and there He told them through Moses,



"Be holy, for I, the LORD,
your God, am holy."

Leviticus 19:2

But God didn't just tell them to be holy. He taught them how to be holy through His word. By following God's law, not the cultures and ways of surrounding nations, Israel could reflect who God is and how holy He is.

Likewise, prayer is also an important element that makes God's people holy because through prayer we experience God's powerful presence and have fellowship with Him.



By praying, we experience what we know as truth from the Bible becoming real and having personal meaning in our lives.

#3 The Essence of Prayer: Knowing God

What's always important in prayer is to acknowledge to whom we're praying.

We pray to the God we call our heavenly Father, who reveals Himself through the holy Scriptures and allows us to personally experience His existence through the Holy Spirit.

So, Christian prayer can be defined as **the process of getting to know God**. That's the foremost purpose of prayer, which must be also **the foundation** of it. We come to know who God is through prayer and the more we come to know Him through prayer, the more deeply and accurately we can pray to Him.

#4 The Essence of Prayer: Knowing God

We can see how important prayer is in knowing God through Paul's prayer for other believers.

"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe." (Eph 1:17-19)

Here, Paul uses many spiritual words in his prayer, but the main focus of his prayer was for the believers in the church to know God better.

His prayer didn't include requests to change the recipients' circumstances. Paul didn't pray for things that today's Christians may put in their prayer requests such as health, success, good grades, or money. Paul's prayer always focuses on the people's relationship with God.

#5 The Essence of Prayer: Knowing God

Paul continuously prayed about the one most important and precious thing that he thought God could give his fellow Christians. That was to know God more.

That must be the top priority of our prayers. If our prayers are not based on the desire to know God, they are no different from what non-believers seek. **But if our prayers are deeply grounded in the knowledge of who God is,** we can then truly experience the power of prayer.

Paul specifically prayed for the believers' hearts. In the Bible, **the heart is like a storehouse** for all our emotions, ways of thinking, and perspectives that influence our behaviors.

Proverbs 4:23 describes the human heart as the root of one's life. It says, "Above all else, **guard your heart**, for everything you do flows from it." (Pr 4:23)



#6 The Essence of Prayer: Knowing God

For God to enlighten our hearts means that His truth burrows deeply into them and firmly captures them so that it changes who we are and how we act.

Paul prayed that the knowledge of God would be deeply rooted in the believers' hearts through the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they could know God and the ultimate hope they have in Him.

If we don't know Him well, even good situations can cause us to have wrong self-confidence but **if we know Him well, we won't be shaken in any circumstances.**

"I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken." (Ps 16:8)

So, prayer is not just a way to receive some gifts from God. **Prayer itself is God's gift and blessing** through which we can know Him more.

A lot of people nowadays try to find inner peace from outside influences, but Paul teaches us that we must think backwards. We should never let our external circumstances or conditions affect who we are internally.

#7 The Essence of Prayer: Knowing God

The essence of Christian prayer is knowing God more. The way we view God determines what we pray for. That's how Christian prayer is different from other types of prayer in other religions.

We call the God who created the whole universe 'Abba, Father.'

“The Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And **by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”** The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.”

(Rm 8:15-16)

We know that God is our heavenly Father and we're His children. This knowledge is revealed in God's word.



And it is experienced in our lives on a personal level through the Holy Spirit.

The greatest privilege and blessing we have as Christians is that we can have a loving relationship with God and experience His love and presence deeply beyond our limits and understanding. **Prayer is what enables this.**

Memory Verses

“For everything God created is good... because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer” (1Tm 4:4-5) (1)

“I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better” (Eph 1:17) (1)

“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you...” (Eph 1:18) (1)

“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” (Pr 4:23) (1)

“The Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.” (Rm 8:15-16) (2)

Questions

1) Why do you think prayer is vital in Christian faith and life? If you had to define prayer in one word or sentence, what would it be? When do you pray and what do you pray for the most? How do you think your prayer life and requests are similar to those in the Bible?

2) Have you experienced the joy and power of prayer in your life? When and how? How do you want to develop your personal prayer life?