

Why Do We Struggle to Pray?

At any time we can pray to God and trust that He will listen to everything we have to say (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). Unfortunately, even though God has given us this amazing privilege, so often we struggle with taking advantage of it. Why? Why is it that instead of feeling good and strengthened spiritually when it comes to prayer, for so many it has become a source of guilt and regret?

I. “I am just too _____!”

- A. This excuse is usually at the top of the list.
 - 1. But it should come as no surprise. The average American has a full list of things to do each day.
 - 2. If we are not careful, our busy schedules can take a huge toll on our prayer lives.
 - 3. Jesus had a very busy schedule, but He always made time for prayer (Luke 5:15-16; 6:12).
- B. But even after saying this, I am not sure we are getting to the core of our problem.

II. “I don’t know what to _____.”

- A. Both new and seasoned disciples can struggle with this.
 - 1. New disciples (from non-religious backgrounds) at first can view prayer as sort of strange.
 - 2. Seasoned disciples can fall into the trap of redundancy and failing to put careful thought and passion in their prayers.
 - 3. Many disciples need to be taught how to pray (Luke 11:1-4).
- B. But still I don’t think we have discovered the real problem.

III. “I don’t feel _____.”

- A. Not everyone who calls upon God through prayer can expect God to hear and respond (Psalm 34:16; 66:16-19; Isaiah 59:1-2; 1 Peter 3:12).
- B. Even those who have obeyed the gospel feel unworthy to pray to God. While there are some right elements in this line of thinking (Psalm 8:3-4), prayer is still a privilege extended to us by God, whether we feel worthy or not, (Psalm 8:5-6; Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Peter 5:6-7).
- C. But still this is not the source of our problem!

IV. “I really don’t feel _____.”

- A. For many, when they are stuck in the middle of a crisis, their prayer lives become almost non-existent. An effective prayer life starts with daily dependence on God!
- B. We need God because every day...
 - 1. We have to battle the _____ (1 Peter 5:8).
 - 2. We send our _____ out into the world.
 - 3. We battle for lost _____ (Matthew 28:19).
 - 4. We have to strive to grow (2 Peter 3:18).
 - 5. We have to make important _____.
- C. We need God to help us with all these things (Psalm 73:25-28).

Conclusion: People who know they need God will _____!

People who think they are self-sufficient, _____!