

📖 Jude 1:20 But ye, beloved, \_\_\_\_\_  
on your most holy faith, praying \_\_\_\_\_,

Jude has made a clear connection between encouraging ourselves spiritually (building up yourselves in the faith) and praying in the Holy Ghost (Spirit). The way to have confidence in our prayers is to live daily for God and to continually encourage ourselves in spiritual things.

📖 Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also \_\_\_\_\_ our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit actually helps us to pray. There will be many times in your prayer life when you do not feel that you know how to pray or what to pray for. The Holy Spirit of God helps the obedient Christian by giving him the words to speak or by making intercession on his behalf before God.

The disobedient or half-hearted Christian should not have confidence that his prayers will be answered. The Holy Spirit is an integral part of the Christian's prayer life and can only be effective to the extent that we obey Him!

Thirdly, **We must Pray with a Clear Conscience.** If we are to pray and to expect answers to our prayers, then we must ensure that our relationships with others are in good standing.

*We Must have a Clear Conscience Toward our Spouse*

📖 1 Peter 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Did you know that there is a direct connection between an effective prayer life and a healthy marriage? When a marriage relationship is allowed to deteriorate, it is unlikely that a husband and wife will pray together. The offering of their prayers and answers to their prayers are both hindered.

According to 1 Pet 3:7, a husband and wife who pray together are ones who recognize and fulfill their biblical roles. When a husband fails to dwell with his wife *according to knowledge, to honour her as the weaker vessel*, and to recognize her as a *fellow-heir* of salvation, his marriage will suffer and his spiritual life will be hindered. It is also safe to say then, that a wife who re-

## Learning to Pray

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*Learning to Live the New Life – www.rickcowan.com*

In this series of Bible studies we have been learning what it means to *live the new life*. According to Romans 6:4 all Christians are to be *walking in newness of life*. What does this mean? And How is it practically applied?

When Jesus died for us on the cross and overcame sin by the resurrection from the dead, he made it possible for all people to be freed from the bondage of their own nature to sin. When someone comes to a place where they understand the gospel message and accept Christ as he is – as the Son of God and the Saviour of the World, they are then liberated from their sin nature and given the ability to please God. To please God is to live in obedience to His word, and to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's influence in their lives. When a Christian submits himself to the word of God and surrenders himself to the Spirit of God, he is beginning to *walk in newness of life*.

Although walking in newness of life is *made possible* by a spiritual transaction, it is *made practical* by real life decisions that we make, and character qualities that we develop. We have learned so far that in order to *walk in newness of life* we must have a Daily Quiet Time, and this quiet time must feature both a time of Bible reading and a time of Prayer. We have already looked at *How to Approach the Word of God (Lesson #3)* and *How to Understand the Word of God (#4,5)*, but today we are going to look at the other aspect of this quiet time – Prayer.

Every Christian has been given the privilege of prayer. We are able to approach God the Father in prayer through Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, many Christians do not believe that God answers prayer – this is evident by their *lack of prayer*!

📖 Philippians 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in \_\_\_\_\_ thing by \_\_\_\_\_ and supplication with thanksgiving let your \_\_\_\_\_ be made known unto \_\_\_\_\_.


We are told as Christians to take *everything* to God in prayer. The words *be careful for nothing*, literally mean “don't be worried” by anything.

📖 Matt 6:11. **Q.** What did Jesus tell us to pray for? \_\_\_\_\_.


📖 1 Thess 5:17. **Q.** How often should we pray? \_\_\_\_\_.

These verses and many others show us that it ought to be part of our *daily lifestyle* to pray. Not simply a time of prayer before we go about our day, but continually *making our requests known unto God*. The Christian's prayer life should be characterized by a definite time of prayer in the morning and a deliberate spirit of prayer throughout the day.

Our prayer life should not simply be a quick chat with God in the morning, that begins and ends in our daily quiet time. No. To have a successful prayer life means to begin a conversation with God in our daily quiet time and to end the conversation when we pillow our heads at night. We can whisper prayers to God throughout our entire day.

This is the thought that Paul was teaching the Romans when he wrote  Romans 12:12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing \_\_\_\_\_;

Now let's look at *how* we're to pray. First **We Must Pray in the name of Jesus**.

 John 14:13-14 And whatsoever ye shall ask \_\_\_\_\_, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing \_\_\_\_\_, I will do it.

Have you ever wondered why many folks end their prayers by speaking the words "in Jesus name, Amen" ? For many it is simply a habit or tradition that they have picked by hearing others pray. For others it is heartfelt acknowledgement that their prayer has the *authority* and *approval* of Jesus himself!

Praying in the name of Jesus means that we are bringing our requests to God, not because we are worthy or deserve answers to prayer, but because Jesus is worthy. We do not have the authority to approach God in prayer, but Jesus Christ does.


 Matt 28:18. **Q.** What has been given to Jesus?\_\_\_\_\_.

The word *power* here means *authority*. Jesus has been given all authority, and through the privilege of prayer, he has given us the authority to approach God *in his name*.

Now the question might arise "If I am bringing *my* requests to God, how can this approaching God on *Jesus'* behalf and not on my own behalf?" The answer to this question is found in the second aspect of *praying in Jesus' name* – His approval.

When we pray in Jesus' name, we are praying for those things that Jesus also desires and approves of. A good question to ask before we bring a request to God is "*Is this something that Jesus would approve of?*". If the answer is *yes* than we can approach God with the authority of Christ and boldly expect an answer to our prayers. Many folks make a mockery of prayer by praying for things which would not honour God, and which Jesus would not approve of, and ending their prayer by saying "in Jesus name"!


His authority gives us the boldness to *approach God in prayer*, while his approval gives us the boldness to *expect answers to our prayer*.

 1 John 5:14,15 And this is the \_\_\_\_\_ that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing \_\_\_\_\_, he heareth us: 15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

Praying *in Jesus' name* is the same as praying *according to his will*. Both indicate that God approves of those things for which we are praying. God has given us his word so that we can discover his will. The student of scripture will learn what God desires *of him* and *for him*, and will know how to pray according to the will of God.

### What are some things we can be assured Jesus would approve of?

Secondly, **We must Pray in the Spirit**

 Eph 6:18 \_\_\_\_\_ with all prayer and supplication \_\_\_\_\_, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Many times in the New Testament, the Christian is told to *walk in the Spirit* (Rom 8:1,4; Gal 5:16,25). To walk in the Spirit means to be continually submitted to the will of God as the Holy Spirit makes it known to us. Whether it be our actions, thoughts, words, or emotions, all are to be subject to God's leading and for his pleasure.

We cannot *pray in the Spirit* as Eph 6:18 instructs us to do if we are not already *walking in the Spirit*. A consistent obedience in our daily lives is needed if we are to expect answers from God when we pray. The Holy Spirit has an important role to play in our prayer lives, therefore we must ensure that He is neither grieved nor quenched (Eph 4:30, 1 Th 5:19) by ungodly attitudes or actions in our daily life.

jects her husband's spiritual leadership and her natural role as the weaker vessel will effectively hinder her and her husband's spiritual lives as well.

A healthy, Biblical marriage will create an environment for spiritual intimacy and ultimately, answered prayer!

### *We Must have a Clear Conscience Toward Fellow Christians*

📖 Mark 11:25,26 And when ye stand \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. 26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

Another key to answered prayer, is a right relationship with fellow believers. According to Mark 11:25,26, we should not expect to receive answers to prayer, or even forgiveness from God if we are harboring any bitterness toward others (*have ought against any*). Why should God forgive us if we are unwilling to forgive others?

Mark 11:25,26 says we should forgive if we *have ought against any*, Matt 5:23, 24 gives us instruction for when our *brother hath ought against us*. Both of these verses speak of damaged relationships between Christians. Our prayers are hindered when we allow ourselves to be bitter toward others, and when we fail to repair relationships that we may have damaged through offences.

### Lastly, **We must Pray in Faith**

📖 Matthew 21:22 And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, \_\_\_\_\_, ye shall receive.

📖 James 1:6.7 But let him ask in \_\_\_\_\_, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. 7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

📖 James 5:15. **Q.** What type of prayer *saves the sick*? \_\_\_\_\_.

Faith is simply believing God. His word is filled with prayer promises. When we read his word and come across these promises we can claim them in prayer and seek answers from God with confidence. The more we pray, the more answers we receive and the easier it becomes to believe by faith that he will answer again! The Christian who consistently obeys God in his daily life, reads God's word to discover his will, maintains right relationships with his brethren and spouse and who prays in faith can be confident that God will hear and answer his prayers.