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PART 1

Jesus knew people would pray, but he also knew people would not know how to pray or why, or to whom to pray.

⁵ "When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can

see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get.

⁶ But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. ⁷ When you pray, don't babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸ Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!" **Matthew 6:5-8 NLT**

- **This passage assumes that true disciples pray.**
- **Prayer is to the soul what oxygen is to the body.**

PRAYER CAN BE MISUSED.

- Some may pray prideful prayers.
- Some may pray selfish prayers.
- Some may be hypocritical prayers.

WE HAVE BEEN INVITED AND EXPECTED TO PRAY.

¹¹ "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. ¹² In those days when you pray, I will listen. ¹³ If you look for me

wholeheartedly, you will find me. ¹⁴ I will be found by you," says the Lord... **Jeremiah 29:11-14a NLT**

WE HAVE REASONS TO PRAY.

- To bring healing to our nation. (2 Chronicles 7:14-15)
- To bring healing to relationships. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
- To bring physical healing. (James 5:13-16)
- So that the Father will be glorified in the Son. (John 14:13)
- So that our joy will be made full/complete. (John 16:24)

WE MUST BELIEVE PRAYER WORKS.

- **God heard the prayers of His people.**

²³ Years passed, and the king of Egypt died. But the Israelites continued to groan under their burden of slavery. They cried out for help, and their cry rose up to God. ²⁴ God heard their groaning, and he remembered his covenant promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ²⁵ He looked down on the people of Israel and knew it was time to act. **Exodus 2:23-25 NLT**

- **God heard the prayers of the apostles.**

²⁵ Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening. ²⁶ Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off! **Acts 16:25-26 NLT**

GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS WHEN WE LINE UP WITH HIS WORD.

¹³ Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. ¹⁴ Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. **James 5:13-16 NLT**

Obstacles to prayer:

- Sin
- Unforgiveness
- Dishonoring our spouse
- Ingratitude

Next Steps

- I will memorize Jeremiah 29:13... *If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me.*
- I will commit this day to learn to be a prayer warrior for my family, my church, my community, and my nation.
- I will set aside a time each day to be still before God and pray.