

What Is Prayer? Study Guide by Pastor MacLean
Pray Without Ceasing Series
First of Four Presentations ~ Fall 2022

Overview from Pastor MacLean

I confess that the subject of prayer has always caused my rational mind some difficulty. Some of the questions I've had in my life about prayer include: What is prayer? How does it work? How do I know if it's working? Over the years I have come to conclude that prayer is a mysterious intersection where we finite humans can meet and connect with our infinite God. Prayer really can change our relationship with God and change our lives.

Questions to Consider

- How would you describe your experiences with prayer?
- What do you understand the purpose of prayer to be?
- What do you long to experience in your prayer life?
- How do you deal with prayers that seem to go unanswered? Does this scripture help with that question?

"For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known." (1 Corinthians 13:12)
- Pastor MacLean breaks down the Lord's Prayer into five basic requests. Which one stands out the most to you? Why? Has time and circumstance changed which one stands out more to you through the years? How so?
 - For reverence
 - For the kingdom
 - For daily bread
 - For forgiveness
 - For help in testing times

Closing Prayer

Prayer attributed to a Civil War soldier that had fallen out of his pocket at the Battle of Gettysburg:

I asked God for strength that I might achieve.

I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.

I asked for help that I might do great things.

I was given infirmity that I might do better things.

I asked for riches, that I might be happy.

I was given poverty, that I might be wise.

I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men.

I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.

I asked for all things that I might enjoy life.

I was given life that I might enjoy, all things.

I got nothing that I had asked for. But everything I had hoped for.

Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.

And I am among all people now, most richly blessed.