

Title: Ask in Prayer

February 9, 2020

Text: Matthew 7:7–11

Call to Worship: Psalm 31

Scripture Reading: John 14:8–14

Theme: You must ask in prayer.

### **Introduction:**

Two helpful resources you should read: *A Call to Prayer* by J. C. Ryle and *A Guide to Prayer* by Isaac Watts.<sup>1</sup>

Have you ever gotten your car stuck in the mud? What do you then have to do? Ask for help. Why do we have to ask for help? Because we needed something that was beyond our resources and ability. This is the basic definition of prayer—asking God for something. **You must ask in prayer.**

## **I. Asking Comes in the Form of Petition**

### **A. Petition Means Offering Up Your Requests to God**

Philippians 4:6. See also Matthew 18:19; 21:22; Mark 11:24; John 14:13; 15:7, 16; 16:23, 24; James 1:5, 6, 17; 1 John 3:22; 5:14, 15.

### **B. Petition Means Qualifying Requests with Things Agreeable to His Will**

#### **1. This is Christ's Pattern**

Matthew 6:9–13

#### **2. This was Christ's Practice**

Matthew 26:39, 42; Luke 22:42

#### **3. This is the Christian Perspective**

Acts 21:14; James 4:13–17

## **II. Asking Comes in the Form of Intercession**

To pray on behalf of others.

### **A. Intercession is Seeking for God's Glory in Other People's Lives**

2 Thessalonians 1:11–12. See also Revelation 4:11. To desire or seek something apart from God receiving the glory is idolatry.

### **B. Intercession is Seeking for God's Grace in Other People's Lives**

1 Timothy 2:1–4. A full belly, warm bed, and even a full bank account seem like nice things to pray for, but is this what God really wants for you? See Matthew 6:25–34 (Also Luke 12).

### **C. Intercession is Seeking for God's Good in Other People's Lives**

Luke 6:27–28

## **III. Asking Comes in the Form of Pleading**

### **A. We Should Plead Boldly**

*παρρησία parrēsia* - a state of boldness and confidence, courage, confidence, boldness, fearlessness, esp. in the presence of persons of high rank.<sup>2</sup> See Ephesians 3:12; Hebrews 4:16; 10:19; 1 John 5:14

### **B. We Should Plead Persistently**

Luke 18:1–8 and also 11:5–13

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<sup>1</sup>Much of this lesson was taken from Isaac Watts' *A Guide to Prayer*, and Pearson Johnson's class notes from "Pastoral Leadership," Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, Spring 2008.)t

<sup>2</sup>William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 781.

### **C. We Should Plead Humbly**

Psalm 5:1–3

#### **1. On the basis of Christ's work and name**

John 14:13; 16:23–24; Hebrews 4:14–16

#### **2. On the basis of God's promises**

Matthew 7:7, 11

#### **3. On the greatness of your needs**

##### **a. What you do not have**

Matthew 6:7–8, 32

##### **b. What you cannot do**

Matthew 7:7

**Excursus** (a digression in a written text)

### **Receiving Answers to our Prayers**

- **God gives**
  - Peter released from prison in Acts 12
- **God withholds**
  - Hannah's desire for a son in 1 Samuel 1
- **God denies**
  - Paul's thorn in the flesh in 2 Corinthians 12

### **Accepting Answers to our Prayers**

No matter what God's answer, a believer's response is contentment. Hebrews 13:5–6. See also Matt. 6:25; 1 Tim. 6:7, 8; Phil. 4:11.

### **Conclusion:**

The Israelites of the Old Testament wandering are excellent examples of sinful human nature. In Exodus 16 we find one of the occasions of their grumbling against God. Things may not work out how we expect or would like, but we must continue **to ask in prayer**. Whatever God gives, we will praise him and be content.