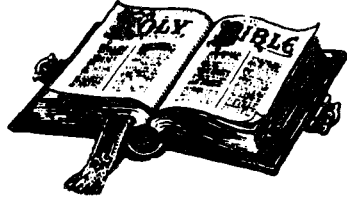


THE INSTRUCTOR



"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Timothy 3:16

Volume 30

NOVEMBER, 1993

Number 11

WHY SHOULD CHRISTIANS PRAY?

Many Christians fail to pray as they should because they do not understand why they should pray. A careful consideration of this question should prove to be beneficial. There are a number of reasons why Christians should pray. Here are some of them.

1. TO OBEY GOD! We are taught in the Scriptures to pray. Please study the following passages.

Luke 18:1 — "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

1 Thessalonians 5:17 — "Pray without ceasing."

Romans 12:13 — "... Continuing instant in prayer."

1 Timothy 2:8 — "I will therefore that men pray every where, ..."

2. TO BE FORGIVEN OF OUR SINS! Consider these passages.

Mark 11:25 — "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."

Acts 8:22 — "Repent there of this thy wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."

James 5:16 — "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

NOTE: These commands were given to God's children, NOT to alien sinners!

3. TO OBTAIN MERCY! Hebrews 4:16 says: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

4. TO FIND GRACE TO HELP IN THE TIME OF NEED! (Read Hebrews 4:16 again.)

5. THAT WE ENTER NOT INTO TEMPTATION! Jesus admonished His disciples, saying, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matthew 26:41).

6. THAT WE MAY LEAD A QUIET AND PEACEABLE LIFE IN ALL GODLINESS AND HONESTY! The apostle Paul exhorted that Christians pray "For kings, and all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

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THE INSTRUCTOR

(USPS # 581680)

Published monthly in the interest of truth and righteousness by the congregation of Christ, meeting at 4777 U.S. Highway 431, Albertville, Alabama.

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Second-class postage paid in
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Editorial . . .

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH (Part 2)

As we continue (and with this article conclude) our study of "**Rightly Dividing The Word of Truth**," let us note, understand and keep in mind **two more basic principles** if we would properly use and teach accurately the Scriptures. Here they are:

I. CONSIDER THE SETTING OF THE TEXT! STUDY THE CONTEXT! Here are some things to consider and keep in mind.

A. Observe who is speaking.

B. To whom is the message spoken or written?

C. Under what dispensation (or period of time) was it spoken or written? Was the message given before, during or after the dispensation in which the law which was given by Moses was in effect?

D. What is the occasion for the message?

E. What is the theme or purpose in view?

F. What are the conditions surrounding the one who is speaking or writing?

G. What are the conditions surrounding the one (or ones) to whom the message is directed?

NOTE: It is a misapplication of a passage of Scripture that is directed to **saints** showing conditions they must meet to be forgiven when they sin **if** the conditions of forgiveness contained in that passage are applied to **alien sinners**. For example: The commands to "**Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, . . .**" in Acts 8:22 and the command to "**confess your faults one to another, . . .**;" in James 5:16 are NOT directed to **alien sinners**, but they are directed to **children of God** who stand in need of forgiveness because they have sinned! (Also see 1 John 1:9).

The command to "**Be baptized**" in Acts 2:38 is NOT directed to **Christians!** It is addressed to **those who desire to obey Christ in order to have their sins forgiven**. Please read carefully and diligently study Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; 1 Peter 3:21 and Galatians 3:36-27.

OBSERVATION: There is NO Scripture that teaches that **God's children** should be baptized! Neither is there a Scripture that teaches that **alien sinners** should "pray through" to salvation!

H. We should consider whether the language is literal or figurative?

II. STUDY ALL THE INFORMATION GIVEN IN THE SCRIPTURES ON EACH SUBJECT! We should collect, compare and consider all the information revealed in the Scriptures on each subject. We should never isolate a passage from all other passages and draw a conclusion that would contradict the teaching of some other passage. We should seek to harmonize all the information given. Difficult passages should be interpreted in light of the easily understood passages.

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RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

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The devil quoted Scripture to the Lord in Matthew 4:6, but Jesus replied in Matthew 4:7 that **"It is written again, . . ."** The teaching revealed in other passages had to also be considered. Many people err at this point. They read a passage such as Romans 5:1 that teaches we are **"justified by faith,"** and they conclude that we are **"justified by faith ONLY."** However **other** passages such as James 2:24 teach that justification is **NOT** by faith only!

With reference to the Lord's Supper some may read in 1 Corinthians 11:23-29 **"as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, . . ."** and conclude that it does **not** matter **how often** we partake of the Supper. However, a study of Acts 20:7 and Acts 2:42 will reveal that the early disciples came together on a regular basis to **"break bread."** The day upon which they assembled for this purpose was **"the first day of the week."**

When a person isolates Romans 10:13 that says: **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"** and concludes that the person who prays, **"Lord, save me, a sinner"** will be saved is guilty of **NOT** considering the context or other information given on the subject. A careful study of Romans 10:8-18 along with Matthew 7:21-23; Acts 2:21-42; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27; Acts 16:30-34; John 9:31, etc. should enlighten any honest seeker of truth on this matter.

The Psalmist declared that **"The sum of Thy word is truth, . . ."** (119:160 — NASV) and Jesus said: **"It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."** (Matthew 4:4).

Diligence should be given as we study the Scriptures that we **"rightly divide the Word of truth."**

CONSIDER THE HAMMER

1. The hammer is made of strong, solid material!

2. The hammer keeps its head!

3. The hammer doesn't fly off the handle!

4. The hammer keeps pounding away!

5. The hammer finds the point, then drives it home!

6. The hammer works in various positions!

7. The hammer looks at the other side, too; and thus it often clinches the matter!

8. The hammer does good although it is a knocker!

9. The hammer is sometimes blamed for the mistakes of another!

10. The hammer is designed to correct mistakes!

11. The hammer must be busy in order to accomplish its task!

12. The hammer never complains although it is often abused!

— Author Unknown

"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jeremiah 23:29).

As we study the Scriptures, let each of us have an **open mind, a love for truth and a "common sense approach."** and our search for truth will be greatly rewarded! (Cf. James 1:21; Matthew 5:6 and 2 Thess. 2:8-14).
(CRS)

WHY SHOULD CHRISTIANS PRAY?

(Continued from page 1)

7. THAT THE WORD OF THE LORD MAY HAVE FREE COURSE AND BE GLORIFIED! In 2 Thess 3:1-2 Paul said, "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you: . . ."

8. THAT OTHERS MAY BE RECONCILED TO GOD! In 2 Cor. 5:20 the apostle Paul declared: ". . . We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." NOTE: Paul prayed that others may be reconciled to God. So should we! (Compare Paul's statement in Phil. 4:9.)

9. THAT WE ENTER NOT INTO TEMPTATION! Jesus said: "Watch

and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: . . ." (Matthew 26:41).

10. THAT WE BE FORGIVEN WHEN WE SIN! In Acts 8:22 a child of God who sinned was told to "Repent . . ., and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." (Also see Jas. 5:16).

11. THAT WE MIGHT INCREASE IN KNOWLEDGE, LOVE, STRENGTH, GOOD WORKS, etc. (See Phil. 1:9-11; Col. 1:9-11; Jas. 1:5-6).

12. THAT OTHER CHRISTIANS MAY BE BLESSED! (See Eph. 6:11; Col. 1:3; 4:3; 2 Thess. 3:1; Heb. 13:8; etc.)

As Christians should pray often and with regularity. We have many good reasons to pray! (CRS)

— SENTENCE SERMONS —

Those who complain most are most to be complained of. — Matthew Henry

* * * * *

It is amazing how many people will struggle to learn what is right; and then not do it.

* * * * *

You can often tell what makes a person "tick" by the way he "unwinds."

* * * * *

Courage isn't having the strength to go on — it's going on when you don't have the strength.

* * * * *

A good laugh is sunshine in a house.

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