



Prayer in the life of... **The Early Church**

Prayer was a part of the daily community. It was normal.

- **Acts 2:40-42**

Prayer was associated with choosing leaders.

- **Acts 1:24**

- **Acts 6:6-7**

- **Acts 13:1-3** - Paul & Barnabas

- **Acts 14:23** - Leaders in new churches

Prayer was connected to the spread of the Gospel.

- **Acts 4:31** (vv. **23-30** - The prayer)

- **Acts 10** vv. **1-2** - Cornelius, who prayed continually...
 - v. **9** - Peter, in a time set aside to pray...
 - v. **30** - Answered prayers
 - vv. **34-48** - Peter preaches the Gospel, they believe and receive the Holy Spirit, and they are baptized!

Prayer for healing

- **Acts 9:40**

- **Acts 28:8** - For signs and wonders

Prayer in times of persecution and need

- **Acts 12:5-10** - Peter imprisoned

- **Acts 16:25-30** - Persecution and propagation work together through prayer

- **Acts 20:36** - When departing from a church he had planted

- **Acts 21:5** - When commending Paul to a dangerous situation and certain imprisonment for the sake of the gospel

Practical Takeaways

Consistently pray with others.

- There are natural moments.
- Prayer does not have to be extended or awkward.
- If you are in public, do you have to close your eyes? Is the waiter standing, staring, and waiting on you?

Pray the Word!

"Turn the Bible into prayer."

— Robert Murray M'Cheyne,
as quoted in Whitney (p. 37)

The Bible itself can be our teacher. We open it and use it to converse with God. Its words guide our thoughts, hearts, and words, directing us to the Lord. It is a bottomless well of wisdom that allows us to drink deeply of the Lord, guiding our prayer-filled times with Him.

"Open the Bible, start reading it, and pause at every verse and turn it into a prayer."

— John Piper,
as quoted in Whitney (p. 33)

Method: "To pray the Bible, you simply go through the passage line by line, talking to God about whatever comes to mind as you read the text. How easy that is? Anyone can do it."

— Donald S. Whitney
(p. 33)

"God's Word is living, and so it infuses our prayers with life and vitality. God's Word is also active, injecting energy and power into our prayer."

— Joni Eareckson Tada,
as quoted in Whitney (p. 43)

"Prayer is continuing a conversation that God has started through His Word and His grace, which eventually becomes a full encounter with Him."

— Tim Keller
(p. 48)

Book Recommendation



Praying the Bible
by Donald S. Whitney

Other Books on Prayer

Anderson, Bernard. ***Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today***. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000.

Bounds, E. M. ***The Necessity of Prayer***. Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, 1984.

Keller, Timothy. ***Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God***. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2014.

Miller, Paul. ***A Praying Life***. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2009.

Miller, Paul. ***A Praying Church***. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2023.

O'Hallesby. ***Prayer***. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1931.

Peterson, Eugene. ***Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer***. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1989.

Whitney, Donald. ***Praying the Bible***. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015.

Yancey, Philip. ***Prayer – Does it make any Difference?*** Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006.

Additional Resources for Studying the Psalms

Kidner, Derek. ***Psalms***. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (TOTC). Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973. An excellent commentary with clear explanations for understanding the text.

Keller, Timothy. ***The Songs of Jesus: A Year of Daily Devotions in the Psalms***. New York, NY: Penguin, 2015.

Longman III, Tremper. ***Psalms***. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (TOTC). Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014.

Motyer, Alec. ***Psalms by the Day***. Scotland: Christian Focus, 2016.

Spurgeon, Charles. ***The Treasury of David***. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson. Spurgeon offers his thoughts along with quotes from tons of puritans—rich and devotional.

VanGemeren, Willem. ***Psalms***. Expositor's Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991.

Wilson, Gerald. ***Psalms***. NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: 2002.