

PRINCIPLES LEARNED FROM THE PRAYERS SERIES

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PRINCIPLE 1: Persistent

Consistence and Persistence Brings God's Assistance.

The point of Jesus' parable in Luke 18 is to **always pray and not give up.**

I must have a clear goal and have dedication to that goal when I pray.

PRINCIPLE 2: Reflect

I should ask these three questions:

1. Is God listening to me? (1 John 3:21-22):

Does my heart condemn me or have I received and believe his forgiveness?

Have I kept God's commands?

Have I done what is pleasing to him and not just avoided wrong?

2. Am I talking TO God? (Acts 12:5)

I must have a realization that God is listening to me as I pray.

My focal point must be on God not on what I need.

I must train my mind to focus.

Starting with worship can help!

3. Am I asking for something God could approve of (John 14:13-14)

I must pray in the name of Jesus

I must pray according to God's will

I know his will from the Bible

I know his will from the Holy Spirit's leading

PRINCIPLE 3: Appreciate

Thanks Builds up, Neglect Tears Down.

1. If I do not spend a significant amount of time thanking God for what he's done, I'll never spend a significant amount of time trust God for what he'll do.

2. Like the lepers I should be willing to praise God LOUDLY!

Jesus expects me to be thankful for answered prayer and to express it.

3. If I stop praying and thanking after God answers my prayer I am worse off because I received a blessing but forgot about God.

4. Thank offerings are a way to demonstrate my love and gratefulness to God.

5. If I write down my prayers I can mark them as "ANSWERED" or "NOT ANSWERED" and keep track of the great things God has done, so I don't forget!

PRINCIPLE 4: Yield

YIELDING to the Lord: PRAYER involves PATIENCE and PEOPLE.

Psalm 27:14 says, "Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord."

It's easier to move/panic/run/act than it is to listen, wait on the Lord, and be patient.

- I must recognize that God always does what is best for me. While waiting, I don't need to know what's next, because I know God will come through and speak at the right time.

- Hearing God looks like sitting in silence. Pray and tell God your needs and what you would like to have happen, and ask what the right decision is. You can write it down. *Wait*. Sometimes ask God, "Is it right to do *this*?" Then wait. Breathe. Listen. "Or should I do *that*?" Then wait. Breathe. Listen.

- I should seek wise God-fearing, Jesus following, jerk-friends when I have a revelation from God. And I must be open to the possibility I heard wrong or just heard my own head.

PRINCIPLE 5: *Energy*

I must pray with ENERGY AND INTENSITY!!!! (Luke 11:5-10)

When Jesus tells us to "ask God", he uses the Greek word that means, "To ask with urgency! It's nearly a demand for something due!" from a lesser person to a greater one.

In 1 John 5:14-15 the Greek word for "confidence" literally means boldness, confidence or frankness.

PRINCIPLE 6: *Reasonable*

I must truly believe that God is real and listening and wants to answer my prayers. The Biblical definition of faith includes evidence and being reasonably convinced. (Hebrews 11:1 & 1 John 5:13-15)

- I should not simply accept my doubts but study to know: How do I know God is real, how do I know Jesus rose from the dead, why do bad things happen to good people, how can I know the Bible is from God?
- This is called "Apologetics" and it's worthy of my time and study.

I should get confidence, then go pray with boldness and intensity knowing that Jesus is God's son, and because of that God answers me.

PRINCIPLE 7: *Scrutinize*

God wants to answer my prayers! So, if he doesn't I should scrutinize and wonder why not.

Here are nine reasons God might not have answered my prayer:

1. God is doing something greater, something that will result in a deeper happiness and Holiness for me.
2. I don't believe that God will answer (James 1:5-8).
3. I am not treating my wife with respect (1 Peter 3:7).
4. I didn't actually ask or plead with God (James 4:2-3).
5. I asked with impure motives - to spend what I get on my selfish pleasures (James 4:2-3).
6. I have not forgiven someone who wronged me (Mark 11:22-25).
7. If I see sin in my life and am not repenting or if I haven't given my life to Christ yet (Psalm 66:18).
8. I am not helping the oppressed, poor, or needy (Isaiah 58:2-9).
9. I have not prayed long enough or I gave up or I didn't follow one of the other principles we learned about in PRAYERS.