

What Should We Ask God For In Our Prayers?

Philippians 4:6 [NIV] *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”*

Everything!! Did Paul really mean everything?

Surely some things are **not** spiritual enough to ask God for help.

Other things are too insignificant to bother God about, aren't they?

Were such thoughts going through the mind of King Ahaz when God commanded him to pray for small as well as big things?

Isaiah 7:11-12 [NIV] *“Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the **deepest depths** or in the **highest heights.**” But Ahaz said, “I will **not** ask; I will **not** put the LORD to the test.”*

Ahaz considered he was righteous by **not** testing God by asking for what was but a small thing.

How did God react to this rejection of what He had commanded?

Isaiah 7:13 [Living Bible] *“Then Isaiah [God’s servant] said, O house of David, **you aren’t satisfied to exhaust my patience, you exhaust the Lord’s as well.**”*

God then gave through His servant Isaiah the greatest “*sign*” of His love for all humanity.

The birth of Jesus Christ to one who was part of the house of David.

Is God trying to tell us something?

That if we do not ask God for all our needs we may miss out on some great message God desires to give all humanity through us!

King Ahaz lost out on that great opportunity and God gave another human being, Isaiah, the job of making this proclamation, who was **not** part of the direct genealogy of the house of David into which Jesus Christ was born [see **Matthew 1:1-17**].

It is interesting that God rebuked Ahaz for **not** asking, while nowhere in God’s Word, the Christian Bible, do we see anyone rebuked for asking too much.

God means what He tells us through apostle Paul to pray about everything.

Everything includes all our physical, emotional and spiritual needs, as well as all those things we are concerned about and all our desires.

Psalms 37:4 [NIV] *“**Delight yourself in the LORD** and he will give you the desires of your heart.”*

The Hebrew word translated “*delight*” is “*ânag*” expressing a yielding, pliable attitude of mind.

A total realisation of our complete dependency on our Creator God.

Matthew 6:7-8 [Living Bible] *“Don’t recite the same prayer over and over as the heathen do, who think prayers are answered only by repeating them over and over again. Remember, your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask Him.”*

The words we use in our prayers must **not** be meaningless repetition of the same words.

Our prayers must be the product of our thoughts and emotions that come from our heart and spirit.

Philippians 4:18-19 [NIV] *“I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. **They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.** And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”*

Note that Paul refers to what he had received was a “*fragrant offering*”, referring directly to the burning of incense that was symbolic of the prayers of Christians [see **Revelation 8:3-4**].

Exodus 30:36 [King James] *“**And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy.**”*

This incense was beaten to a very fine powder, indicating that our prayers should include fine details, not just generalisations.

We all need to communicate to God our needs, thoughts, plans, hopes and desires in fine detail.

On the physical level failing to have detailed communication even on small matters can cause problems.

Problems between husband and wife, parent and child, employer and employee.

Problems will arise in our day-to-day life if we are not communicating with our Creator God in fine detail.

James 4:1-3 [NIV] *“**What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.**”*

A list of problems that come as a result of failing to ask God in a right way, with the correct attitude.

When we pray about everything in fine detail we are opening up our lives to our Creator God.

Then God can purify our motives and give us His true perspective for our lives.

1 John 1:5-7 [NIV] *“**This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.**”*

True benefits of detailed prayer and our one on one communication and relationship with our Creator and Saviour.

Psalms 143:1-2 [King James] *“**Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness. And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.**”*

The Hebrew word translated “*prayer*” is “*tephillâh*” referring to God’s direct intercession on our behalf.

The Hebrew word translated “*supplication*” is “*tachănûwnâh*” referring to earnest in entreaty for God to show us mercy and kindness.

One other thing must pervade all our prayers and supplications.

Colossians 2:6-7 [NIV] “*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and **overflowing with thankfulness.***”

Make sure our prayers are overflowing with thankfulness for all the blessings, spiritual and physical, that God has poured out on us.