

# We Pray Only As Well As We Live

## A Christian Life

Prayer at its best is the expression of what we are, the way we think and live.

A satisfying prayer life can only be the result of a life that is lived in the Spirit.

**Romans 8:5** [NIV] *“Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.”*

Our prayers are influenced by the goals we have in mind, the direction of our thoughts.

**Romans 8:9** [NIV] *“You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.”*

Not only is this a description of a true Christian, it is what generates our prayer requests.

**John 14:14** [NIV] *“You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.”*

The key to effective answered prayer is to ask *“in Christ’s name.”* Remember in scripture a name is indicative of the character of the person, so our prayers must be what is pleasing too [**verses 12-13**] and the will of Jesus Christ.

**John 15:16** [NIV] *“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.”*

We must be producing eternal fruits [**Galatians 5:22-23**] if our prayers are to be answered.

All things else being equal, our prayers are only as powerful as our lives.

Some of our prayers are like a fire escape, only used in times of critical emergency.

Such prayers do not represent the regular life of the person who offers them, for no Christian wants to live their whole life on an emergency level.

**Psalms 46:1** [NIV] *“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.”*

God will always be there to help the person who is in constant communion with Him.

As we mature in our Christian life our thoughts and acts become our prayers.

**Romans 12:1** [The Message Bible] *“So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you. Take your everyday, ordinary life, your sleeping, eating, going to work and walking around life, and place it before God as an offering, embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for Him.”*

In this way our Creator God becomes very real to us in every aspect of our lives.

As those who have read my articles know, this verse is one which I have quoted far more than any other, for I have found it to be the key to living a Christian life.

To pray effectively it is required of us that there are **no** parts of our life that are not inhabited by the Holy Spirit, **no** impure desires allowed to live within us, **no** disparity between our prayers and the way we conduct our life.

Such a life is only possible by an active indwelling of the Holy Spirit and our willingness to be directed by Him.

**Galatians 5:16-17, 25** [NIV] *“So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.” ... “Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”*

If we desire to have within our lives the qualities that are listed in **verses 22-23** then we know we are being led by the Holy Spirit. At the same time we need to be careful **not** to confuse our subjective feelings with the Holy Spirit’s leading.

Being led by the Holy Spirit involves the desire to hear and obey God’s Word, the Christian Bible, making it the guide to all our thoughts and actions.

**Romans 8:26-27** [NIV] *“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.”*

This help of the Holy Spirit with our prayers is in context of the physical creation and our own personal longing for the return of Jesus Christ [**verses 19-25**] when we will be able to work alongside Jesus Christ to bring this world back to how God originally created it and for those who have never known Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

**Ezekiel 9:4** [Amplified Bible] *“And the Lord said to him [God’s servant], go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem [symbolic of God’s people], and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in the midst of it.”*

Part of our prayers should be that God would prepare a group of people ready to work with Jesus Christ on His return, for a reformation of the Christian Church that has drifted into paganism and worldliness.

Individual acts of prayer that spring out of this kind of total living will have about them a power **not** known to the careless or the worldly Christian.