



What Should We Pray For?

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I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:1-4

Last time, we learned that prayer helps us understand God better. This time let's talk about what kinds of things God wants us to pray about.

In the Bible, in 1 Timothy chapter 2, God tells us four kinds of prayer:

Petitions – that means asking God for help.

Prayers – these are worship-type prayers, like the Psalms.

Intercession – that means praying for others.

Thanksgiving – thanking God for the good things he gives.

So, when you pray, God wants you to: Ask. Worship. Pray for others. Say thank you.

But here's something important: God doesn't just want us to pray for anything we want. He wants us to pray for what he wants—his will.

There's a kids' book called *Anytime, Any Place, Any Prayer*. It encourages children to talk to God whenever they want—and that's true! But God also tells children in the Bible what kinds of things are best to pray about.

(Continued on Next Page)

Jesus says it in the Lord's Prayer: "Your will be done." And the Bible says in 1 John 5:14: "If we ask anything according to his will, he hears us."

So how do we know what God's will is? From the Bible! The more we read Scripture, the more we know what to pray.

Here's a great idea: Open your Bible, read a few verses, and then pray about what you just read. For example, in 1 Timothy 2, God says we should:

Pray for rulers and leaders

Pray for peace

Pray to live good, godly lives

Pray for more people to be saved

You can also pray through a Psalm—like the one below.

Remember, you can talk to God anytime and anywhere—but it's also great to start with what he's already told us matters most.

Questions to Consider

What are some things you like to thank God for when you pray?

How do you feel knowing that God listens when you pray?

Why do you think God wants us to pray for things he wants, not just what we want?

What does it mean to pray for leaders like presidents, mayors, or teachers? Why is that important?

How does praying Scripture (like a Psalm) help us focus on what God wants instead of just what we want?

What is one part of your life where you want to pray for God's will to be done? (Now pray for it!)