

# PRAYER & SCRIPTURE

Devotional | January 8, 2023

GRACE  
FELLOWSHIP

**Discuss:** What roles do prayer and Scripture play in your life as you follow Christ?

**Key Text:** *"If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."*  
(John 15:7)

Our church wants to start the new year of 2023 right with a focus on prayer and Scripture. Some people ask, "Which is more important for the spiritual health and growth of a Christian and a church—prayer or Scripture?" That's like asking which airplane wing—the left or the right—is most important for a plane to fly! Both are equally important, both are essential. Both prayer and Scripture are vital for a Christian and a church family to be able to live in faith and obedience toward the Lord. In today's lesson, we'll look at these two essentials of the Christian life: Prayer and Scripture.

## What Jesus Taught about Prayer:

### 1. We are to pray in His name—asking for what He would approve and authorize.

In John 14:14 Jesus said, *"If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it."* Jesus is not making a blanket statement here to do whatever we want when we want it simply because we conclude our prayer with the words, *"in Jesus' name I pray, Amen."* When you sign your name on a contract, you are indicating your agreement, approval, and authority. To pray in Jesus' name means we pray for things that Jesus would be willing to sign His name to—things that He would agree with, approve of, and authorize because they are in accordance with His character and will.

**Discuss:** How does Jesus' promise in 1 John 5:14-15 coincide with John 14:14?

**Discuss:** How can John 14:14 and 1 John 5:14-15 lead us to change our prayers?

### 2. We are to be watchful and alert as we pray

Jesus taught in Matthew 26:41, *"Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

**Discuss:** Why is watching—staying alert—important as we pray?

### 3. We are not to give up in our praying.

Jesus said in Luke 18:1, *“They ought always to pray and not lose heart.”*

**Discuss:** What can cause a Christian to lose heart and give up on praying?

**Discuss:** What else did Jesus teach about prayer in these verses? Matthew 21:22; John 15:7

## What Jesus Taught about the Bible:

### 1. The Old Testament pointed to Him.

In John 5:39, Jesus said to the Jewish religious leaders regarding the Old Testament: *“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me.”* Later, Jesus explained to two believers *“all the Scriptures the things concerning himself”* (Lk.24:27).

**Discuss:** Where do you see Jesus in these Old Testament passages? The Passover lamb in Exodus 12:5-6 (see 1 Corinthians 5:7); The bronze serpent in Numbers 21:6-9 (see John 3:14-15); The High Priest in Exodus 28:1-2 (see Heb.10:21-22).

### 2. He came to fulfill every requirement of the Old Testament, not to dissolve it.

Since the Old Testament pointed to Him, Jesus came to fulfill every requirement of it, not to render it invalid: *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them”* (Mat.5:17). To His disciples, Jesus said, *“Everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”* (Lk.24:44)

By perfectly living up to the requirements of the Old Testament (which we are unable to do) on our behalf, Jesus accomplished two things: 1) The Law could continue to fulfill its purpose of showing us that we are unable to live up to God’s Law (Rom.3:20), and 2) Jesus obtained our eternal salvation through His death and resurrection—we no longer need priests to offer sacrifices and enter the holy place for us (Heb.10:8-14). Now we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus (Eph.2:8-9).

**Discuss:** What key words and phrases regarding the relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament stand out in Galatians 3:23-25?

### 3. The New Testament apostles would speak and write on His behalf.

Near the end of His ministry, Jesus said in John 16:12-15 that He had more things to say to his apostles, but they could not bear it at the time. So, after His ascension, He would send the Holy Spirit to teach them those unsaid things. What the apostles would learn and then teach and write would become the New Testament—the complete and final version of Jesus’ own words. The Bible with its 66 books is now sufficient, authoritative, and complete. It cannot be added to or improved upon by anyone. God is no longer revealing Scripture since its purpose of revealing God’s redemption plan through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection is complete and recorded.

**Discuss:** What key words and phrases about Jesus do you see in Colossians 1:15-20?

## For Further Study:

Free online commentary on the Bible at [www.enduringword.com](http://www.enduringword.com)

Answers to questions about prayer, the Bible, etc. at [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)

*Understanding the Bible* by Kendall Easley