

STUDY GUIDE ON PRAYER

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Prayer raises three issues. Think about them; study the surrounding verses and other scripture portions by cross reference or a concordance. Write down answers to the accompanying questions, giving scriptural support wherever possible.

Problem 1: Matthew 6:8: "*Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*"

As respects the knowledge of God then,

1. What is prayer not for?
2. Explain why this or any other verse is no justification for not praying.
3. What reasons can we give for prayer that are not affected by this consideration? That is, why pray if God already knows what we need?

Problem 2: Matthew 5:45: "*God sends rain on the unjust [who do not pray] and on the just [who do pray].*"

1. What is prayer not necessarily for?
2. Of what significance is a righteous person's prayer for rain? Does James 1:5-6; 5:13-18 contradict Matthew 5:45?
3. What reasons can we give for prayer that this consideration does not affect; that is, why pray if it will not change anything?

Problem 3: Acts 12:2: "*And Herod killed James the brother of John with the sword.*"

1. Acts 12:5 says that the church made earnest prayer for Peter when Herod proceeded to do the same thing to him. We may be sure there were prayers offered for James as well. As respects the observability of the result and hence the proof that God is there, what is prayer not necessarily for?
2. What reasons can we give for prayer that this consideration does not affect? That is, why pray if we cannot tell whether we have been answered?
3. How do we know that our prayers are answered? We do know that.

