

Steps to Christ  
Chapter 11  
The Privilege of Prayer

“Through nature and revelation, through providence, and by the influence of His Spirit, God speaks to us. But these are not enough; we need also to pour out our hearts to Him. Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend, not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us but brings us up to Him.” Steps to Christ, p. 93

Thought Question: What do you think it means to talk to God as to a friend?

I. Some Elements of Successful Prayer
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**Praise**

 **Read Psalm 52:9; Psalm 56:4; Psalm 136:1**

Discussion Questions:

1. When do these texts say that praise is not important?
  
2. Suppose you are going through a trial in your life. How would praise make things better?


**Thanksgiving**

 **Read 1 Corinthians 16:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:18**

Discussion Questions:

3. How would you describe what it means to be thankful?
  
4. Under what situations would it be impossible for a Christian to give thanks?


**Confession**

 **Read 2 Corinthians 7:10; 2 Peter 3:8; 1 John 1:9**

Discussion Question:

5. Why do you think confession and repentance are important elements of prayer?


**Petitions**

 **Read Matthew 7:7 and 26:42; Luke 11:2; 1 Peter 5:7**

Discussion Questions:

6. If God already knows what we need, why is it necessary for us to ask?
  
7. What are the significance of the words “seek” and “knock” in respect to prayer?
  
8. What did you discover should be our attitude when we pray?
  
9. In 1 Peter 5:7, it says we may cast all our cares on Jesus. Do you think there are any parameters to the words “all our cares”?

### III. Hindrances to Successful Prayer

 **Read Psalm 145:18; Proverbs 21:13; Isaiah 59:1-2; Ezekiel 14:3; Mark 11:26; James 4:3; 1 Peter 3:7**

The above texts reveal seven hindrances to answered prayer. Identify these hindrances and discuss their significance.

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| (1) | (5) |
| (2) | (6) |
| (3) | (7) |
| (4) |     |

### IV. Biblical Examples of Prayer

#### Daniel

 **Read Daniel 6:10**

Discussion Question:

10. What was the significance of Daniel's praying three times a day?

Discuss the importance of having morning devotions.

#### Peter

 **Read Matthew 26:41**

#### Peter in the Garden of Gethsemane

Discussion Questions:

11. Discuss in what ways the night of Jesus' betrayal might have been different had the disciples prayed instead of sleeping.
12. Share how sleeping is often a hindrance to the devotional life.
13. In what ways does prayer keep a person from falling into temptation?

#### Peter in Prison

 **Read Acts 12:5-11**

Discussion Questions:

14. How did the church aid in Peter's deliverance?
15. What role do you believe prayer should play in the church?

"The darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray. The whispered temptations of the enemy entice them to sin; and it is all because they do not make use of the privilege that God has given them in the Divine appointment of prayer." Steps to Christ, p. 95