

Biblical Principles Regarding Prayer

1) Prayer can affect the spiritual realm. Daniel 10:1-14

- Daniel mourned and fasted for three weeks after receiving a message.
- At the end of the three weeks, Daniel had a vision of a heavenly being.
- The messenger told Daniel that his words were heard, and the heavenly being was sent as soon as Daniel began humbling himself and praying.
- The heavenly being was opposed by an evil spiritual being for twenty-one days.
- Our prayers can affect the activities of angels and demons in the spiritual realm.

2) Pray for wisdom amidst trials. James 1:2-8

- **trials:** *peirasmois* - examination, submit another to a test, to learn the true nature or character of
- **wisdom:** *sophias* - wisdom, prudence (acute discernment), discretion, i.e., the capacity to understand, and hence act wisely
- **faith:** *pisei* - trust, believe to a complete trust (This is the second occurrence of the word in verse 6; the first occurrence in verse 3 actually refers to the Christian faith / belief in the Gospel.)
- **doubting:** *diakrinomenos* - doubt, be uncertain
- We need good judgment and discernment to act wisely when the genuineness of our faith is tested, and James encourages his audience to ask God for this, believing, not doubting, that God will in fact supply wisdom.

3) Pray when you are suffering. James 5:13

- **suffering:** *Kakopathei* - suffer distress, withstand trouble, endure hardship
- Compare 2 Chronicles 33:10-13, where Manasseh, king of Judah, is afflicted by God for disobedience, humbles himself and prays in his distress, and is then restored by God.
- Compare Psalm 18:1-19, where David calls upon the Lord when confronted by death and ungodliness, and the Lord hears him and responds with powerful displays and by delivering David from his enemies.

4) Pray for healing for the sick. James 5:14-17

- **sick:** *asthenei* - be weak, be in a state of incapacity; be ill, sick
- **anoint:** *aleipsantes* - anoint, pour on, smear oil or ointment on head or body, for health, healing
- **oil:** *elaiō* - olive oil
- **offered in faith:** *tēs pisteōs* - trust, believe to a complete trust
- The **elders of the church** are to pray in faith and anoint with olive oil.
- Compare Matthew 10:1, where Jesus gives the twelve disciples authority to cast out evil spirits and perform healings, and Mark 6:7-13, where Jesus sent the disciples out with authority.

- In all three passages, only specific people have authority to heal (or cast out demons).
- Compare Mark 16:15-20, where Jesus commissions His disciples to go preach the gospel, stating that certain **signs** would accompany those who believed and were saved. **Reminder: signs were only prevalent during three periods of human history: Moses, Elijah / Elisha, and Jesus / the early church. The purpose of the signs was to establish the divine authority of Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Jesus, and the early church, as well as to authenticate their message. We will not see signs again until the time of great tribulation, some of which will be from the enemy, whose purpose is to deceive the elect if possible (Matthew 24:15-28).**
- The same Greek word is used for “faith” in Mark 11:22. In Mark 11:24, Jesus tells his disciples to “believe” that they will receive the things for which they have prayed and asked. The Greek word for “believe,” “*pisteuete*,” comes from the same root word as the Greek word for “offered in faith.” See #9 below for context.
- **effective: *energoumenē*** - function, work; cause to function, grant the ability to do (middle voice - the action is the main subject of the sentence)
- **of a righteous man: *diakaiou*** - righteous, just, upright, *i.e.*, being in accordance with God’s compelling standards
- **can accomplish: *ischyei*** - be capable of, be able; be strong, powerful, mighty
- The prayer of a righteous person is powerful.
- This passage says nothing about declaring a person to be healed or about losing healing power.
- There may be sin associated with the illness.

5) Obey and please the Lord so you can pray with confidence. 1 John 3:21-22

- **heart: *hē kardia*** - inner self, never the literal part called the “heart,” this is a reference to the areas of the inner self, including: **the volition, the mind, the desires**, etc., though the faculty of the intellect may be slightly more emphasized (Compare **Philippians 2:13 - God works in us to will according to His pleasure;** **1 Corinthians 2:16 - we have the mind of Christ;** and **Colossians 3:1 - we are to actively and continually seek / desire / want heavenly things.** It is Christ and the Spirit that transform and conform our wills, minds, and desires to their own. So “heart” may refer to the conscience, which for believers is under the governance of Christ’s Spirit, who dwells within us [1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19].)
- **condemn: *kataginōskē*** - condemn, convict
- **confidence: *parrēsia*** - courage, boldness, confidence, frankness (Compare Hebrews 4:16; 10:19-20; 1 John 5:14 [#6 below].)
- **we keep: *tēroumen*** - obey, observe
- **are pleasing: *aresta*** - pleasing, desirable; proper, right

- If we obey God and do what He desires, and our hearts do not condemn us, then we can pray with confidence.
- Compare Proverbs 15:8, 29; 28:9.
- Compare 1 Peter 3:8-12, in which Peter exhorts his audience to be harmonious, kind, humble, etc., and quotes from Psalm 34:12-16, which teaches that righteousness and wickedness do affect God's response to our prayers.

6) Ask according to God's will. 1 John 5:14-15

- **confidence:** *parrēsia* - courage, boldness, confidence, frankness
- **according to:** *kata* - in accordance with, with relation to, a marker of correspondence (Compare Matthew 16:27 and Luke 2:22.)
- **will:** *to thelēma* - desire, wish; purpose, will, decision, intent
- **hears:** *akouei* - hear; pay attention to, to believe and respond; obey, listen and conform to what was heard (See Matthew 18:15, where a brother who is confronted about sin "listens to you," and Matthew 17:5, where God tells Peter, James and John to "listen to" His Son. Each verse uses the same Greek word. This word seems to imply that the person speaking and the person listening are in a right relationship, or in accord, with each other.)
- If we are not in a proper relationship with the Lord, that is, if we are in sin, then we should not expect God to hear us and grant our request. (Contrast James 4:1-3.)
- God's will is revealed in His Word. See #8 below for specifics.

7) Pray in secret, not to be seen and honored by people. Matthew 6:5-6

- **hypocrites:** *hypocrite* - pretender, i.e., a duplicitous (deceitful), insincere person; hypocrite
- **reward:** *ton misthon* - a wage; reward, recompense, what is paid back
- **in full:** *apechousi* - be enough, be sufficient
- **will reward:** *apodōsei* - reward, pay back, recompense
- If we pray in public with the motivation of impressing others rather than with sincerity, that is sufficient reward in itself. On the other hand, if we pray privately, only to be seen by God, He will reward us in the future.
- Some people are gifted in the area of praying out loud in prayer meetings, while others are not. **Regardless of which camp you fall into, be on guard against pride.** People who are gifted can be tempted to get puffed up with pride in their gifting. However, refusing to pray out loud for fear of sounding ineloquent or stumbling over words also has its root in pride.

8) Pray with intentionality, not by rote or with babbling. Matthew 6:7-13

- **praying:** *proseuchomai* - pray (The same Greek root word [*proseuchesthe*] is used a few verses later.)

- **use meaningless repetition:** *battalogēsēte* - use many words, prattle, to speak much; babble, utter meaningless sounds, speak incoherently (This is not the same as speaking in tongues because Jesus refers to Gentiles here.)
- **Gentiles:** *ethnikoi* - heathen, pagan, Gentile
- **many words:** *tē polylogia* - speaking much or a long time, speaking many words, wordiness
- **ask:** *tou aitēsai* - ask for, request
- **in this way:** *Houtōs* - thus, in this manner; as follows
- **hallowed:** *hagiasthētō* - honor as holy, hallow (respect greatly, venerate), regard as holy
- Honor God's name as holy.
- **kingdom:** *hē basileia* - reign, as a king
- Pray for God's earthly reign to come. Since Daniel 2:34-35, 44 state that God will set up His kingdom on earth, this prayer is a cry for God to do what He has promised.
- **will:** *to thelēma* - desire, wish; purpose, will, decision, intent
- **be done:** *genēthētō* - come to exist; happen, implying what happens is different from a previous state
- Pray for God's purposes to be accomplished on earth. This means we are not pursuing our own will. **Question: Do our prayers line up with God's will as revealed in the Bible?**
- **daily:** *ton epiousion* - daily, on each day; i.e., our daily sustenance, which for the poor and common laborer in Jesus' day may well have been literal
- **bread:** *ton arton* - loaf of bread; food, any kind of nourishment
- Pray for daily sustenance, but not just for yourself: Jesus said to pray "give **US** this day **OUR** daily bread," not "give **ME** this day **MY** daily bread."
- **forgive / forgiven:** *aphes / aphēkamen* - forgive, pardon; cancel a debt
- **debts:** *opheilēmata* - debt, amount owed; sin, moral debts (Compare Luke 11:4.)
- **debtors:** *tois ophēiletais* - debtor; sinner, one who incurs moral debt
- Pray for the forgiveness of our (plural) sins, but **make sure that you are forgiving those who have sinned against us.** See Mark 11:25-26 (#10 below) and Matthew 18:21-35.
- **lead:** *eisenenkēs* - cause to, enter into a state or event, lead one
- **temptation:** *peirasmon* - temptation, trial, given for the purpose to make one stumble (This word can also be translated as "test" or "trial," with a positive connotation, as in James 1:2, but it must mean "temptation" with a negative connotation here because James [James 1:2] makes it clear that "**trials**" produce endurance, which leads to perfection and completion; Peter [1 Peter 4:12-13] makes it clear that fiery ordeals can come "**for your testing,**" we should not be surprised at this, and we should even rejoice when we share the sufferings of

Christ; Paul [Romans 5:3-5] encourages rejoicing in “tribulations” [different Greek word, *tais thlipsesin*, meaning trouble, distress, oppression, tribulation]. It does not make sense for Jesus to tell us to pray that God would not lead us into trial / testings when God has sometimes used them for good purposes. It does make sense for Jesus to tell us to pray that God would not lead us into temptation, the purpose of which is to make us stumble. That sounds more like the work of the devil (see next 2 bullet points).

- **deliver:** *rhysai* - rescue, deliver
- **evil:** *tou ponērou* - wicked, evil, bad, morally corrupt
- Pray that God would NOT lead us into situations where we would be tempted into sin, but rather that He would rescue us from what is evil (or WHO is evil).

9) Pray, believing that you will receive. Mark 11:20-24

- **faith:** *piston* - trust, believe to a complete trust
- **doubt:** *diakrithē* - doubt, be uncertain
- **believes / believe:** *pisteuē / pisteute* - trust, faith, believe to the extent of complete trust
- **it will be / they will be:** *estai* - be, exist; happen, occur (future tense)
- **you have received:** *elabete* - acquire, obtain possession of something; receive, accept an object or benefit (active voice)
- “Pray” and “ask” are in the middle voice, which means that the subject (in this case, “you,” which is plural and refers to Jesus’ disciples) is both the agent of the action and concerned with the action. This signifies that the praying and asking are done by the disciples on behalf of themselves. Compare Acts 4:23-31 for an example.
- Strong, unwavering belief is necessary to receive or acquire what we ask for ourselves, but the fulfillment may practically occur in the future.

10) Forgive others when you stand praying. Mark 11:25-26

- The context is praying with certainty that the things requested will in fact come to be.
- **Question: Should we expect God to hear and respond to our prayers if we hold on to unforgiveness toward others?** In Matthew 18:21-35, Jesus tells a parable about a servant who was forgiven an unpayable debt, but refused to turn around and forgive a fellow servant who owed him a very payable debt. The result was that the first servant was turned over to the jailors to be tortured until he had paid back everything he owed. In context, this means he was tortured for eternity. The idea is that the first servant’s unwillingness to forgive was evidence that he had not truly received forgiveness of his own debt, even though it had been offered.
- I suggest that Jesus is trying to communicate the idea that unforgiveness hinders the effectiveness of our prayers.

11) Pray with persistence. Luke 11:1-13

- sins: *tas hamartias* - sin, wrong-doing
- who is indebted: *opheiloni* - be in debt; sin against someone
- bother: *kopous pareche* - bother, trouble, difficulty AND to cause, bring about
- persistence: *tēn anaideian* - persistence, boldness
- ask: *aiteite* - ask for, request
- it will be given: *dothēstai* - give; produce (cause to happen) (passive voice)
- seek: *zēteite* - attempt to find, try to attain some state or condition
- you will find: *heurēsete* - attain (succeed in achieving) implying discovery (active voice)
- knock: *krouete* - knock on a gate or door
- it will be opened: *anoigēsetai* open (passive voice)
- The context is the disciples asking Jesus to teach them how to pray, and Jesus granting their request.
- The Greek verbs for “ask,” “seek,” and “knock” are all in the active voice, meaning we (the subject) are performing these actions.
- The Greek verbs for “ask,” “seek,” and “knock” are all also in the present tense, meaning the asking, seeking and knocking should be ongoing.
- The Greek words for “it will be given” and “it will be opened” are in the passive voice, meaning the actions are being done TO the subject.
- The Greek words for “you will find” are in the active voice.
- The Greek words for “it will be given,” “you will find,” and “it will be opened” are future tense.
- Part of praying is being persistent (continuing in prayer); part of praying is being receptive (letting God do His part); part of praying is being active (in seeking that which is desired); and part of prayer is being patient (waiting for the answer).
- Jesus is encouraging us to be mindful of God’s character when we pray. He is arguing a fortiori: if earthly fathers, who are evil, are inclined to give good things to their children, how much more will God, who is Holy and righteous, give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him? (Compare Matthew 7:7-11, which uses a different phrase → what is good: *agatha* - good [moral qualities, in general]; good [value], pertaining to objects.)

12) Pray with persistence as you face the trials of the Christian life. Luke 18:1-8

- Now: *de* - and, a marker of an addition; and then, a marker of closely related events (This word may connect the parable back to chapter 17, in which Jesus talks about the days of the Son of Man and the day on which the Son of Man is revealed.)
- at all times: *pantote* - always, at all times
- ought: *to dein* - it is necessary, it is a must, to have to, implying inevitability, often as in the plan of God; should, one ought as a matter of necessity
- to lose heart: *enkakein* - become discouraged, give up, lose heart

- Prayer is not optional. In fact, *unceasing prayer* is not optional. It can guard us against discouragement and spiritual surrender.
- The Greek words for “bothers” are from the same root words as those used in Luke 11:7. They are also in the present tense, signifying that the woman keeps coming to the judge with her plea.
- *she will wear: hypōpiazē* - annoy, and thus wear out
- *Give . . . legal protection / I will give . . . legal protection: Ekdikēson / ekdikēsō* - give justice, grant a fair verdict
- *opponent: tou antidikou* - accuser, a plaintiff, legal opponent; adversary, hostile enemy
- *justice: tēn ekdikēsin* - the act of giving justice
- *elect: tōn eklektōn* - chosen, elect (Compare Deuteronomy 10:12-15 [God chose the descendents of Israel]; Psalm 33:12 [is this said of any nation other than Israel?]; Psalm 106:4-5; Isaiah 45:4; 65:8-9, 17-22; Matthew 24:22-31 [Jesus is speaking to a Jewish audience about the time of His second coming]; 22:1-14 [Jesus tells a parable in which He likens the kingdom of heaven to a wedding feast to which many are invited but few are elect / chosen, possibly referring to the remnant]; Romans 11:5-11 [“chosen” here, from a related Greek word, refers to the remnant of Israel], 25-29; 1 Peter 1:1; 2:9-10 [clearly a reference to the Jews and not to Gentiles]; 2 Peter 1:10 [Peter was an apostle to the Jews - see Galatians 2:7-9].)
- *call: boōntōn* - shout, call, cry out (The Greek word is in the present tense.)
- Every occurrence of the Greek word for “elect” in the Gospels has reference to the Jews, as do many of the occurrences in the rest of the New Testament. There are a few occurrences in Paul’s letters that seem to have reference to Gentile Christians, but the church, and by extension Gentile Christians, did not yet exist while Jesus was on Earth, so the occurrences in the Gospels cannot refer to Gentile Christians.
- The woman in Jesus’ parable is asking the judge for justice, and He goes on to promise that God will quickly bring about justice for the elect who persistently (“day and night”) call to Him.
- Compare the character of the judge (does not fear God; does not respect man; self-centered) to the character of God (righteous; just; holy).
- Jesus closes the parable with a reference to His second coming.
- Putting all of this together, the context seems to suggest that Jesus is teaching his disciples the importance of always praying during the hardships of the tribulation, which is the final 7-year period outlined by Daniel (Daniel 9:24-27) for the people of Israel and Jerusalem. The application for Christians in the church age is not difficult to ascertain: We should be persistent in prayer when facing the

difficulties of the Christian life, including persecution, trusting in God's righteous and just character.

13) Pray with humility, not self-righteousness. Luke 18:9-14

- **some distance away:** *makrothen* - far (away), from a distance
- Compare this passage to Matthew 6:5-6 (see #7 above).
- Contrast the posture of the two men: the Pharisee was standing in the temple praying to or about himself, while the tax collector was standing far away, beating his chest, not even looking up.
- Contrast the content of each prayer: the Pharisee was focused on himself ("I" is mentioned 4 times), how he was better than others and performed acts of righteousness; the tax collector, on the other hand, pleaded for God's mercy upon himself, the sinner. Notice the use of the definite article "the" rather than the indefinite article "a". The tax collector is aware of his wretched state, as if he is the only sinner around. He was not concerned about the self-righteous Pharisee, or anybody else for that matter, just his own need for mercy. This is in stark contrast to the Pharisee, who was acutely aware of the presence of the tax collector, and even referred to him in a negative manner in order to justify himself.
- See the pride and arrogance of the revered Pharisee versus the humility of the despised tax collector.
- The tax collector, the one who humbled himself before God, went home justified. So whose prayer was heard by God? Obviously the tax collector's prayer was heard by God. On the other hand, the Pharisee did not go home justified, implying that the Pharisee's prayer was not heard.

14) Pray in the Spirit. Ephesians 6:18

- **prayer:** *proseuchēs* - prayer
- **petition:** *deēseōs* - plea, prayer, request, petition
- **time:** *kairō* - occasion, points of time; opportunity
- **in:** *en* - in union with; joined closely with; a marker to show association; OR by, from; a marker of an agent (a person or thing that takes an active role or produces a specified effect); OR by, by means of, through; a marker of means (Compare Romans 8:26-27.)
- **Question:** How do we pray in union with the Holy Spirit, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, or by means of the Holy Spirit? 1) Pray according to Scripture, since we know that Scripture is inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21), but make sure not to misuse Scripture. 2) Walk in obedience to God, because disobedience grieves the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) and disrupts our communion with Him.

15) Pray for the Gospel to be made known. Ephesians 6:18-20; Colossians 4:3-4

- **utterance:** *logos* - statement, that which is said; speech, the act of speaking

- **may be given:** *dothē* - give (passive voice - Paul is not depending upon himself to know what to say when he preaches the gospel [compare 1 Corinthians 2:1-5], but rather upon the Holy Spirit)
- **boldness:** *parrēsia* - courage, boldness, confidence, frankness
- **I may speak boldly:** *parrēsasōmai* - speak boldly, preach fearlessly; have courage
- Pray for evangelists and missionaries to have words and boldness for proclaiming the Gospel. It may not always be easy, even if they make it look easy. Those that are good at it still need to depend on the Spirit and not themselves.
- **word:** *logou* - gospel, the content of what is preached about Christ
- **so that we may speak forth:** *lalēsai* - speak, talk
- Pray for God to actively open doors for the gospel message in closed, hostile, and unreached countries.
- According to both of these passages, sharing the Gospel involves actually talking about Jesus, contrary to the famous quote attributed to St. Francis of Assisi: “Preach the Gospel at all times. Use words if necessary.” Words are always necessary! Therefore, pray for missionaries and evangelists, (and may I suggest *all Christians?*), to speak forth the gospel message of Jesus Christ.

16) Be devoted to prayer with thanksgiving. Philippians 4:6-7; Colossians 4:2

- **be anxious for:** *merimnate* - be anxious about, worry, have anxiety, be concerned (present tense)
- **supplication:** *tē deēsei* - plea, prayer, request, petition
- **thanksgiving:** *eucharistias* - thanksgiving, expressions of thanks, words of gratefulness
- Note that Paul is admonishing prayer *with thanksgiving*. **Don’t neglect to give thanks to God for what He has already done, what He is doing, and what He will do!**
- **Devote yourselves to:** *proskartereite* - persist, keep on with devotion (The same Greek root word is used in Acts 2:42.)
- **keeping alert:** *grēgorountes* - stay awake, to keep watch; be alert, be vigilant, the figurative extension of the prior definition
- Compare Acts 1:12-14 (pray in unity – **with one mind:** *homothymadon* - with one mind, unitedly, in togetherness, as one – If you are praying in a way that others do not agree with because it is unbiblical or misuses Scripture, then you are not praying in unity.); 2:41-42.

17) Pray about everything, making your requests known to God. Philippians 4:6-7

- **everything:** *panti* - all, every, each, whole
- **be made known:** *gnōrizesthō* - make known, tell, reveal, cause information to be known by someone (present tense)
- **peace:** *eirēnē* - peace, harmony, tranquility; freedom from worry
- **will guard:** *prousesei* - guard against (future tense)

- **hearts:** *tas kardias* - inner self, never the literal part called the “heart,” this is a reference to the areas of the inner self, including: the volition, the mind, the desires, etc.
- **minds:** *ta noēmata* - mind, thoughts, schemes, the psychological facility of reasoning
- Paul is contrasting anxiety / worry with prayer and thanksgiving.
- Keep being anxious about nothing, and continue making your requests known in everything, with thankfulness, and God’s peace will eventually come upon you.
- The peace of God will replace anxiety.
- The verb tenses here indicate that persistent prayer must come first, and then the peace of God will come, implying that God’s peace will **not** come for those who do not persist in prayer.

18) Pray continually. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

- **without ceasing:** *adialeiptōs* - continually, constantly, unceasingly
- It is God’s will that we pray unceasingly, continually keeping the channel of communication open. Liken this to a marriage or close friendship, in which you are free to discuss anything at any time. You don’t tell your spouse that you can only talk to him/her from 8:00-9:00 each morning, or for 30 minutes a day. Rather, you converse any time you feel it is necessary or beneficial, and ideally you communicate multiple times throughout the day. How much more should our relationship with God involve ongoing communication?
- Saying “Amen” does not end the conversation with God.

19) Give thanks in everything and for all things. 1 Thessalonians 5:18;

Ephesians 5:18-20

- **everything:** *panti* - all, every, each, whole
- **give thanks:** *eucharisteite* - thank, express thanks; be thankful, be grateful (present tense)
- **always:** *pantote* - always, at all times, forever
- **giving thanks:** *eucharistountes* thank, express thanks; be thankful, be grateful (present tense)
- **all things:** *pantōn* - all, every, each, whole (same Greek root word as “everything” in 1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- Compare Romans 8:28: **all things:** *panta* - all, every, each, whole (same root word in Greek).
- It is also God’s will that we give thanks in and for all things. If God can bring good out of anything, then we (the called, those who love God) have reason to be thankful, even in trials, difficulties, and suffering.

20) Pray for all people. 1 Timothy 2:1-5

- **entreaties:** *deēseis* - plea (in order to persuade), prayer, request, petition (an earnest request)

- **prayers:** *proseuchas* - prayer
- **petitions:** *enteuxeis* - intercession (prayer, petition, or entreaty in favor of another), prayer
- **thanksgivings:** *eucharistias* - thanksgiving, expressions of thanks, words of gratefulness
- The context is Paul encouraging Timothy to fight the good fight and keep the faith, which some had rejected and by so doing shipwrecked their faith.
- **Paul also connects this exhortation to God's will that all men be saved and know the truth, suggesting that part of our prayer for all men, as well as those in authority, should be that they hear, and respond with saving faith to, the Gospel.**

21) Pray for those in authority. 1 Timothy 2:1-5

- **kings:** *basileōn* - king, a term in itself used of both petty kings and the most powerful of kings
- **authority:** *hyperochē* - high position, authority
- **we may lead:** *diagōmen* - behave in a certain way, to live, conduct a life
- **tranquil:** *ēremon* - quiet, peaceful, tranquil
- **quiet:** *hēsychion* - quiet
- **life:** *bion* - daily life, existence day to day
- **godliness:** *eusebeia* - religion, i.e., the devout practice and appropriate beliefs of God; piety (the quality of being religious or reverent); godliness
- **dignity:** *semnotēti* - propriety (fitness; suitability; appropriateness; agreement with established principles, rules or customs; justness; *propriety* of conduct, in a moral sense, consists in its conformity to the moral law; *propriety* of behavior consists in conformity to the established rules of decency), seriousness, respectful behavior
- See #20 above for the context.
- **The stated purpose is that we live peaceful and quiet lives in godliness (piety) and dignity (propriety, decency). One way to look at this is that we are to pray that those in authority would allow us to live in this manner. Another way to view it is that praying for (the salvation of) those in authority may lead to their actual conversion, resulting in transformation of how they carry out their governing role, and benefiting us by creating the conditions whereby we can live in said manner.**

22) Speaking in tongues must be accompanied by interpretation. 1 Corinthians 14:9-28

- The goal is the edification of the church (body of Christ).
- Speaking in tongues without interpretation is unfruitful for the minds of those who do not understand what is being said.
- If nobody with the gift of interpretation is present, the person with the gift of tongues should speak only to himself and God.

23) Do all things properly and in an orderly manner. 1 Corinthians 14:40

- **properly:** *euschēmonōs* - with propriety (the quality of being proper or suitable; appropriateness), fittingly, decently, becoming in manner; properly, with an implication of pleasing
- **orderly manner:** *taxin* - good order, a proper and correct order
- Compare verses 31-33, where Paul discusses prophets speaking one at a time, the spirits of prophets being **subject** (*hypotassetai* - bring under control) to prophets, and God being a God of **peace** (*eirēnēs* - peace, harmony, tranquility), not **confusion** (*akatastasias* - rebellion, disorderly insurrection; riot, violent disorder). The same Greek word is used in Luke 21:9 (tumults); 2 Corinthians 6:5 (riots); 12:20 (disorder); and James 3:16 (disorder). Paul could have used a different Greek word for “confusion”: “*sugchusis*,” but he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to use this strong term. Why?
- The principle is that a prayer meeting, as any gathering of the called out ones, should be orderly, not cacophonous, and people should be edified, not confused. Praying at the same time and praying in tongues without interpretation are not biblical because they are not proper or orderly.

24) Take time to be silent before the Lord / pray silently. 1 Samuel 1:13; Psalm 46:10; Psalm 62:5

- **heart:** *lib·bā'* - inner man, mind, heart
- The context for 1 Samuel 1:13 is Hannah praying at the temple of the Lord in Shiloh. She was praying because she was barren and her husband's other wife provoked and irritated her with respect to her barrenness. They had traveled to Shiloh to offer an annual sacrifice, and Hannah grieved her state of being childless. Even though Hannah was deeply disturbed by her circumstances, she did not cry out to the Lord, but rather prayed silently about her heart's desire.
- It is perfectly acceptable to pray silently to the Lord, as Hannah did. A good question to ask in a prayer meeting is: **Why do I feel compelled to pray everything out loud for others to hear? In other words, why not bring some of your requests to the Lord silently?**
- **Cease striving:** *hār·pû'* - sink, relax
- **know:** *ḡ'û* - know (This word can connote learning to know; perceiving; knowing by experience; recognizing, admitting, acknowledging, confessing; considering; knowing or being acquainted with a person.)
- The Hebrew for Psalm 46:10 literally translates as: “Be still and know I God I will be exalted among the nations I will be exalted in the earth.”
- The context for Psalm 46:10 is an acknowledgment of God as a refuge and strength, a present help in trouble, one who is present and helps, a stronghold, one who intervenes in human affairs. These are given as reasons why we should not fear, even if things seem to be out of control in the world around us.

- While it is good to bring our requests to God, it is also proper and fitting to rest in the truth of who God is. It is okay if we don't bring every request before Him when we pray corporately, because God already knows our hearts and our requests.
- *soul: năp'si'* - soul, life, self, person
- *wait in silence: dôm'mî* - be or grow dumb, silent, still
- The context for Psalm 62:5 is the psalmist (David) acknowledging God as his source of salvation; his rock and his salvation; his stronghold; his source of hope; his strength and refuge; the one in whom we should trust. It also appears from verses 3-4 that David is being threatened by murderous men.
- David does not pour out a series of prayer requests that his murderous foes would be prevented from harming him, punished by God, or even saved by God's grace. There is nothing wrong with praying for these things; in fact, some psalms include requests for vengeance on enemies. The point here is that David is simply telling his soul to be silent or still before God, trusting that God will be faithful and true to His character and nature.
- It might be beneficial for us to spend more time being still and quiet before the Lord, simply trusting Him for who He is, in addition to bringing our requests before Him.