



# Prayer

Saint Mina Church Preservants



# What is prayer?

- In Christianity, prayer is a conversation with the Lord and a favorite opportunity to enjoy the communion with God without limit.
- It is being in the divine presence, lifting up the heart to God without objection or hindrance.
- For nothing can stop man from talking and conversing with God.



# Prayer, as seen by the saints....

- Saint Basil the great says “It is the adherence to God in all moments and situations of life”
- Saint Augustine says “Prayer is the key of heaven. By its power everything is possible. It is the protection of our souls. It is the source of all virtues. It is the ladder by which we rise up to God, for it is the work of angels. It is the foundation of faith.”
- Saint David the Psalmist, King & Prophet says “.. but I give myself unto prayers” Psalm 109:4.
- He considers all his life a prayer and his prayer is life.
- Without prayer, he has no existence.





# Prayer as the greatest spiritual struggle of the believer's life.

- Saints consider prayer as the greatest spiritual struggle of the believer's life.
- **St. Agathon says "There is no greater struggle than always praying to God. For every time man wants to pray continually, devils present him as they know that nothing but prayer can suppress their power"**
- The Lord said to us in the holy bible as He calls us to pray ..
- **"Ask, and it will be given to you, seek, and you will find, Knock, and it will be opened to you" Mt7:7**



# The Perfect Example

- Over all this, the Lord God gave us, in himself as a perfect man, an example of how to pray.
- He was praying to the father, He spent all night in prayer.
- **“He went into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.” (Luke 6:12 and John 17)**





# “The benefits of prayer”

## (1) Enjoyment in God, meditation in Him, fullness from His love and beauty

- Before being a means of asking, seeking and taking from God, prayer is basically a means of being filled with God’s love and contemplating Him and His divine qualities.
- This is what we call prayer of praise and meditation.
- Saint John Saba (The spiritual elder) says is his prayer, **“Kindle in our heart, O Lord, the fire of your love to divest us from the pain of this age”**.
- Prayer is a great school where we learn Love.



## Cont.

- It is beautiful for the person who prays to lift up his heart to God Contemplating His perfect divine qualities which do not end.
- He speaks to God as the savior, the redeemer and the shepherd, God of mercy and source of consolation, generator of light and master of life, giver of knowledge, maker of grace, charitable to our souls, treasure of wisdom etc.





# “the benefits of prayer” (2)

## (2) Strengthening of faith & confirmation of hope in our hearts towards God

- Prayer is a support for the weak souls. It raises man above weakness and puts him closer and even in connection with the source of help and divine power, the powerful lord, the almighty.
- Saint Augustine says **“No one of those who are called can gain his evaluation without God’s help”**, also, no one is worthy of this help except by prayer.





### **(3) Through prayer we gain strength from God & overcome troubles/tribulations**

- **“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” Mt 11:28**
- Joshua prayed, so the sun stopped and he become victorious.
- Elijah prayed, so the sky rained & the Jordan closed.
- Elisha prayed, so also the dead boy awoke.
- Daniel prayed, so the lions calmed down and did not eat him.
- Prayers moved the mountain of Mokatam in Egypt.



**(4) Through prayer, we confirm receiving the Holy Spirit within us**

- “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him”  
(Luke 11:13)**





## **(5) Prayer is a chance for repentance & for asking for mercy/forgiveness**

- Saint Isaac says **“the one who neglects prayer and think that he has another door for repentance is deceived by the devils.”**
- **“And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespassed against us” (Matt 6:12)**
- Many are the prayers, psalms of repentance, asking for mercy and sanctification which we find in the book of prayers of the hours (the Agpeya)



# Prayer is...

## **(6) Prayer is the source of spiritual victory and conquest**

- “This kind (the devil) can not be driven out by anything, but by prayer and fasting” (Mark 9:29)

## **(7) By prayer, we acquire the purity of heart and many other virtues**

- Prayer purifies our hearts, sanctifies our feelings
- It fills hearts with coolness, happiness and peace.

## **(8) Prayer is a means of consolation and rest in times of tribulation and trials**

- “Is anyone among you afflicted? Let hem pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise” (James 5:13)





## **(9) Through prayer we get wisdom, knowledge & spiritual discernment**

- All saints known for their wisdom, understanding and knowledge, are people of prayer.
- **“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God (pray), who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5)**



# **(10) Prayer is...confirming brotherly love & fellowship**

- Prayer binds man with love for others and brings into fellowship as members of one body of Christ.
- **“The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects” (James 5:16)**





# (11) Prayer is the power of preachers and servants

- Every service and effort should basically rely upon prayer for we are unable to do anything without the Lord for we live, move and exist by Him.
- By prayer, God supports us with His grace, power, and wisdom to do any service in the church.



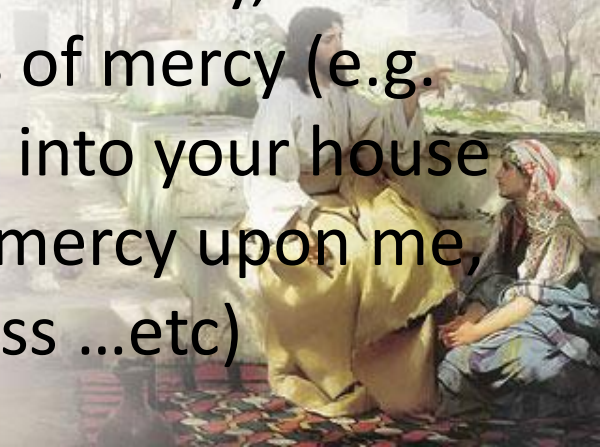
**How can we pray according to  
the will of God?**





# (A) Penitence, humility & repentance of the soul

- The person feels his sins, confesses them, and is always occupied by offering repentance.
- The person who is humble and repentant is very close to the divine assistance because God loves the humble and repentant one.
- There are spiritual practices in prayer which endured feeling of repentance and produce God's mercy, like kneeling down, repetition of the words of mercy (e.g. have mercy on me, sinner – I will come into your house in the multitude of your mercy – Have mercy upon me, O God, according to your loving kindness ...etc)



# **(B) Insistence & perseverance accompanied with faith & trust**

- The Lord Jesus teaches us insistence & perseverance in prayer
  1. The friend who comes at midnight (Luke 11:5-8)
  2. The persistent widow (Luke 18:18)
- From Matthew 7:1-8 & 17:19-21: we learn how we should have faith in prayer.





## **(C) Calmness, meditation & resistance to mind-wandering**

- Recklessness, usually comes from being absorbed by anxiety, suffering of this time, confusion & daily business of life.
- Spend 2-3 minutes in a hymn or praising to be calm before prayer.



# **(D)Resisting laziness, slowness & fighting the body & its weakness**

- We need to organize the time and way of living. i.e., have spiritual responsibility & consecrate a prime time to pray when one is fresh and full vitality.





## (E) A forgiving prayer

- A prayer should be from a pure and forgiving heart
- Look to the gospel according to: St. Matthew 6:14-15 and St. Mark 11:25.



## (F) Praying psalms (the Agpeya)

- The psalms are the words of God; David said them by the Holy Spirit.
- When we pray with psalms, we talk to God by His words.
- ***“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Phil 4: 6-7)***

