

Study Guide
Characteristics of New Testament Ministry & Prayer
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Before you begin, will you please take a moment and pray this prayer audibly in agreement with me and others who are preparing for our time together? May I also recommend that you include a prayer like this prior to each time you begin this study or prior to any time you seek to spend time with Jesus in His written word. Thank you!

Lord Jesus we honor you as Lord of all! I offer you my worship and give myself to you in mind, body, and spirit. Because I have the mind of Christ, I submit my thoughts and feelings to your control and ask you to protect the vulnerable areas in my life. And, in Jesus' name, I suspend and render powerless all influences that seek to oppose Christ and the knowledge of his truth during this time or during our time together. If there any influences purposed against me or others in our group, I command you to leave along with all your effects and go to the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ right now, in Jesus' Name. And now Lord Jesus I ask you to come cleanse and fill me with your Holy Spirit. Renew my mind and lead me into all truth just as you promised you would. Teach me and open my mind to understand your Word. I exchange my understanding and knowledge for yours knowing that your words can only be understood through the Spirit of truth you gave us. I cover and seal this time with you and in your presence. Amen.

1. In Ephesians 6:18 the Scripture says, "And praying in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints." What is the context or situation in which this admonition is given?

2. What does this verse tell us about prayer and how to pray?

3. What does the writer mean when he refers to, " all kinds of prayers and requests? And is there a distinction between the two? If so, how would you characterize this distinction?

4. In verse 19, what specifically is Paul requesting prayer for? And what implications does this have in praying for your pastor and leaders?

5. Gospel Survey: Using your Bible, page through the four Gospels paying attention to the chapter and section headings that are generally italicized and that give a phrase or title that summarizes the content that follows. Page through the Gospels and look for those accounts where Jesus or the disciples are ministering *to an individual*. Please observe and make note of the following:
 - a. What is the occasion for ministry - healing a sick person? freedom from some kind of oppression? leading someone to faith? forgiveness? raising the dead, etc?
 - b. In particular, please note or highlight **what Jesus or the disciples *do and say*** on these occasions for ministry i.e., what *words* or *vocabulary* do they use?
 - c. How would you characterize these interactions? Are they prayers addressed to God or some other form of prayer or address?

6. Perhaps of greater significance for us is what the disciples and the first believers were doing after the resurrection and following the coming of the Holy Spirit whom Jesus promised to send in His place. Again, it's important to observe not only the situations in which they are ministering but the *method of their ministry*. For example:
 - a. In Acts chapter 3, Peter and John encounter a crippled beggar on the way to the temple. Please observe, take note and highlight the nature of their interaction with this man. How do they “pray” for healing? How does it compare to the manner in which Jesus prayed for the sick?
 - b. Is this a “prayer” addressed to God? Or, how would you characterize this interaction?
 - c. Acts 4:23-31 gives us a glimpse of corporate prayer. What observations can be made about the nature, content, and grammar of this prayer? Would you consider any part of this prayer structured in the form of a request?
 - d. In Acts 13:4-12, Paul and Barnabas along with John were invited by the Governor of Cyprus to tell them about the Word of God. During their presentation of the Gospel the governor's attendant, Elymas, kept interrupting and tried to dissuade the governor from believing their message. Because Elymas was a sorcerer, and given the nature of Paul's address, it is clear that this was a spiritual battle. Again, please observe how Paul handles this situation. Does he pray? If so, to whom is the prayer addressed? If not, how would you characterize this intervention? What was the outcome?
 - e. Acts 16:16-18 gives the account of Paul once again engaged in a spiritual battle. What can we observe in the content and grammar contained in this passage when we suspect or wonder if there are spiritual influences involved?
7. In 2 Corinthians 1:8-11, Paul refers to the near-death hardships he and his companions suffered in Asia. In addition to his hope in God, to what does he credit his past and future deliverance?
8. Acts 12:1-18 gives the account of the apostle James being put to death at the hands of King Herod. Verse 3 indicates that the King intended to do the same thing to Peter. What are the possible implications resulting from the Church's activity represented in verse 5 on the outcome of Peter's captivity compared to James'?
9. In the New Testament can you identify any passage of Scripture or interaction where either healing is administered or where demonic activity is suspected or evident that the intervention or/ prayer is addressed to God exclusively in the form of a request?
10. What implications does all of this have for us and for the way we pray and/or minister?