

**Today's Order of Worship**

Announcements: Greg Lowery

Song Leader: Josh Berryhill

Opening Prayer: Arlen Foss

On the Table: Head - Greg Lowery  
Servers - Billy Box  
Gary Addison  
Eddy Dickinson

Closing Prayer: Charles Berryhill

Preparing the Lord's Supper Lellie Dickinson

**Weekly Service Times**

Sunday

Bible Study 10:00 am

Morning Worship 10:45 am

Evening Worship 5:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:00 pm

**Visit Our Website**

[www.brilliantchurchofchrist.org](http://www.brilliantchurchofchrist.org)

Elders: Deacons: Al Corkren / Josh Berryhill

Leonard Key / David Key

Billy Box / Eddy Dickinson Minister: Greg Lowery

**Contact Information:**

Phone: (205) 465-9142

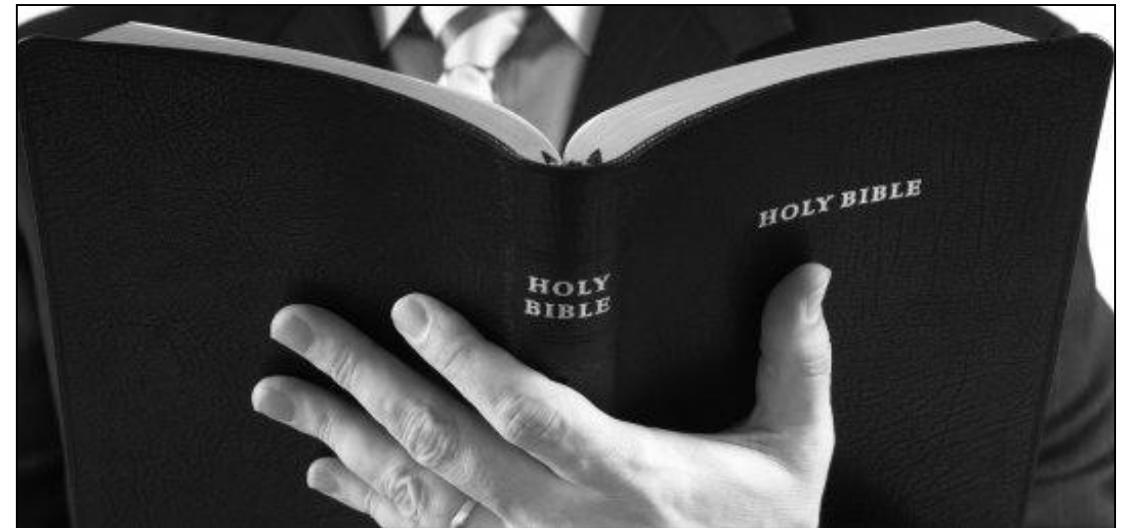
Brilliant Church of Christ

930 Main Street

P.O. Box 222

Brilliant, AL 35548

# Gospel Meeting



*The  
Brilliant  
Beacon*



**Five Ways to Improve Your Prayer Life**

By Hiram Kemp

In a world where we can communicate in so many different ways with so many different people many Christians struggle to communicate with God. God has blessed His children with the spiritual blessing of prayer, but are we taking full advantage of it (Eph. 1:3)? While the Bible is now available in many different formats and versions for Christians to read and study, there is no modern update available for prayer. Prayer must be done the way it always has, with words from our lips to God’s ears. Paul encouraged Christians to pray continually, but in our busy world with constant emails and notifications, it may seem like incessant prayer is impossible (1 Thess. 5:17).

I want to pray more, and I know many Christians who would like to strengthen their prayer lives. The truth is, many Christians do not know how to pray. Think about it—a sinner obeys the gospel, and then is told he or she can talk to God about anything. The problem, however, is that new Christians are seldom shown how this is done. Most people get their ideas about prayer and how it should be done from the public worship assembly on Sunday, and that can be a good or bad thing. To confess that you do not know how to pray is not a bad thing. It has been said that the first step to overcoming a problem is admitting that you have one. Jesus’ disciples needed help with prayer, and the Holy Spirit is said to help us when we struggle to put our requests into words (Lk. 11:1; Rm. 8:26-27). I want to offer five simple ways to help improve your prayer life if you struggle with prayer. If you do not struggle with prayer, these five things may help to further strengthen your prayer life as well.

**1. Pray the Scriptures**

While it is not original with me, I think praying the Bible is a good place to start. Sometimes our prayer lives are in a rut because we simply say the same things in the same ways. However, if we took a passage of Scripture and prayed it back to God, it would help. The early church prayed the Scriptures (Acts 4:24-26). There are a few advantages in praying Scripture. The first is that we are praying God’s Word to Him and therefore are safe to say that we are within the will of God (1 Jn. 5:14). Second, it helps us to further internalize God’s Word into our hearts as it becomes personal to us. How is this to be done? I would recommend that you start with the psalms or one of the shorter books from Paul. One could read one of the psalms and take the words of David or whoever wrote the psalm and pray it back in his or her own words to God.

**THOSE WHO NEED OUR PRAYERS**

Don Lawrence: surgery for block arteries went well but discovered that he has blockage to his kidneys, please be praying that recover goes well from recent surgery and that the blockage to his kidneys can be removed

Mary Rainey: she has bone cancer throughout her body, please be praying for her and her family

Maylene McWhirter: her blood gases are showing signs of myeloid leukemia, please be praying for her and her family

Jack Waldon: {Linda’s Brother-In-Law} he is under hospice care, please keep him and his family in your prayers

Billy Lee: {Carolyn’s Brother} diagnosed with renal failure, please keep him in your prayers

Jimmie Ann Hardy {Carolyn’s Sister}: is back in the nursing home in Guin, please continue to pray that her health continues to improve

Connie Autrey: recent scans show that the cancer is shrinking, please continue to pray that the treatments will continue to work in defeating her cancer

Doug Roberts: is in the nursing home in Hamilton recovering from a recent stroke, please keep him and his family in your prayers

Bobby Sanderson: is back home and continuing to improve, please pray that this improvement continues and that he has no further problems

Arthur Ewing: has lung cancer, please pray that he will be able to receive treatment that can help him

Robeana Green: has been diagnosed with cancer, please be praying that with treatments that this cancer can be defeated

**Upcoming Events**

Today	Fellowship Meal	
Today - Wednesday	Our Gospel Meeting { Guest Speaker: Roy Williams }	
	- Service Tonight @ 7:30 pm -	
Today	Bible Bowl { Whites Chapel }	2:00 pm
October 28 <sup>th</sup>	Tri-County Singing	2:00 pm

**THOSE WHO NEED OUR PRAYERS**

Angie Ganey Gardner: she has been diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer, please pray that this cancer will be treatable

Amy Weeks {Donna’s Niece}: has asked for prayers to help overcome addictions, please pray that she will turn to God for help and strength

Dan Treas: is in the nursing home for rehab, please pray he has a good recovery

Jeff Sutherland just had a heart transplant and Tiffany Watts has pneumonia and lung disease in critical condition (Friends of Melba Palmer)

This can be done line by line until the psalm is completed. It will add diversity and depth to our prayer lives as we think about things that we would not normally mention in prayer. While our circumstances may not be a direct parallel to the psalmist or Paul, there is nothing new under the sun and our problems are addressed in some shape or form in Scripture (Eccl. 1:9). Praying Scripture in our own words provides a guide on what to say but also teaches us that our prayer lives should have an authenticity to them as we engage with our heavenly Father.

**2. Start the Day with Prayer**

It’s a shame that everyone is not a morning person; half of life is lived in the morning. As it relates to prayer, it is a good idea to start the day off with conversation with God. The person who begins the day on his knees has already defeated the problems that will come up throughout the day. It is not wrong to pray at night or in the afternoon, but if prayer is already a struggle for you, postponing it can hardly be a good thing. Jesus woke up early to get away from everyone to pray (Mk. 1:35). The psalmist told God that he would hear His voice in the morning (Psa. 5:3). While David prayed three times a day, other first of those was in the morning (Psa. 55:17). What if you prayed as soon as you were conscious? Do not even get out of bed or let your feet hit the floor, before thanking God for another day and praying to Him about the things you will face later. Start off with prayer and then fill the gaps of the day with prayer as well.

**3. Count Your Blessings**

Maybe one of the reasons we struggle with prayer is because we struggle with praise. If we would take time to think on all that God has done for us, the natural response would be to bubble forth with thanksgiving (Psa. 103:1-2; 1 Thess. 5:18). How long and how well can you brag on God? Do you ever brag on God? Our prayer lives would be improved if we made it a point to think on all of the good things that God has done for us (Psa. 116:12). While prayer is a time for request and petition, it must also be an occasion for blessing and appreciation toward the one who bends His ear to earth to listen. Make a physical or mental list of all the things that God has blessed you with throughout the day and then pray that list of thanks to God.

#### 4. See the Strength in Simplicity

Simplicity is not synonymous with shallowness. I said that sometimes we learn to pray from what we hear in the public assembly and we may get the impression that we have to be professional orators to talk with God. God does not want to be impressed with our extensive vocabularies and our Twitter-worthy catch phrases. God wants us to humbly approach Him and communicate with Him in our own words. When Jesus taught the disciples to pray, the model He left them contains about 50 to 60 words, depending on your translation (Mt. 6:9-13; Lk. 11:1-4). The model prayer is easy to read and simple to memorize, but it is a deep, thoughtful prayer to model as it covers all of life's bases. Pray to God reverently, but do not turn into someone you are not in prayer. You will become exhausted in prayer if you have to put on a costume and a different voice each time you approach God. Your prayers may be shorter on some occasions and longer on others, but simply learn to talk with God in prayer in simple language. This will keep you from giving up on it.

#### 5. Deepen Your Confidence and Dependence on God

The only people that pray are those convinced that they really need God's help. Paul was a spiritual giant in his generation, but he requested prayer more than anyone else in the New Testament (Eph. 6:18-20; Phil. 1:19; Col. 4:2-3; 1 Thess. 5:25; 2 Thess. 3:1-2). Paul knew if he were going to accomplish anything worthwhile, he needed the help of God. Are we convinced of our total dependence on God? We must reject the world's advertisement that says if you are smart enough, strong enough, and gifted enough you can get it done. We need to remember that power belongs to God and that we cannot prosper without His help (Psa. 62:11). Not only do we need to see our need for God but also his nearness and willingness to help (Jas. 4:8). God can do more than we think he can do (Job 42:2; Eph. 3:20). What could we accomplish and overcome if we really believed we had divine resources at our disposal? God wants to help us, but we have to cast our cares on Him (1 Pet. 5:7).

Prayer is hard work. In prayer we are not telling God all the things He should give us, but we are communicating our cares and concerns to Him while knowing He will answer with what is best. Prayer is an avenue through which we praise and thank God for all of His blessings toward us. If we are doing it right, we will find ourselves struggling in prayer and that's ok. We have one of the greatest blessing in the world in prayer; may we use it to the glory of God. ([www.plainsimplefaith.com](http://www.plainsimplefaith.com))

#### A Sinful Man

By Kevin Cauley

In Jesus' early ministry, He taught in Galilee by the Lake. The shore made for a natural amphitheater. Jesus used Simon Peter's boat as a speaking platform. After He taught, Jesus told Simon to let down his nets for a catch. At first, Peter objected because they had caught nothing all night. Then he decided to listen. He caught so many fish a second boat was necessary. Luke records Peter's response: "When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!'" (Luke 5:8). Contrary to Peter's statement, Jesus desired to be with Peter. He said to him, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men" (Luke 5:10). So, Peter followed Jesus.

Why did Peter say, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man?" Was Peter's pride offended because Jesus showed him up? Did he envy Jesus thinking, "I wish I had found that spot on the lake?" Did he get angry because Jesus' knowledge was greater? Peter had a foul mouth and a bad temper (Mark 14:71), and he was an immodest at times (John 21:7), but Peter wasn't trying to pretend to be something that he wasn't. He didn't rationalize his sinful behavior to make it acceptable. He admitted His sinfulness, and confessed that he wasn't worthy to be in Jesus' presence. This made Peter the exact kind of person Jesus wanted to be with. David wrote, "The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit" (Psalm 34:18). Jesus can work with the honest person who knows his sin. He can't work with someone who rationalizes their sin or will not admit it. God bless you, and I love you.

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