

## Exemplify Prayer

*Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. — Romans 12:12*

*He who runs from God in the morning will scarcely find Him the rest of the day.  
— John Bunyan*

### **Doctrine**

Scripture impresses the need for continual prayer in the believer's life. This is a divine command, not an earthly suggestion. It is sometimes asked: *If God is sovereign over all His creation, why pray?* After all, He will always accomplish whatever He has purposed (Eph 1:11; Ps 135:6; Prov 19:21, 21:1), so what difference does my prayer make? Such an approach to sovereignty and prayer is the result of backwards thinking. Scripture provides at least five reasons for the Christian's obedience in prayer:

- 1) God has Commanded Us to Pray – Luke 11, 18, 22:40; 1 Thes 5:17; Eph 6:18-19; and 1 Tim 2:1
- 2) Jesus Modeled a Life of Prayer – Matt 14:23; Luke 5:16, 6:12, 9:18 and 28, 22:31; and John 17
- 3) God is Able to Respond to Our Prayers – (Good luck finding a verse in the Bible that does not prove this point.)
- 4) God Actually Does Respond to Our Prayers – Matt 7; 1 Chron 4:10; and James 5
- 5) God Has Ordained Prayer as a Means by Which He Accomplishes His Eternal Purposes – Gen 20:7 and 17; Job 42:7-9; and Jer 29:12-14

Prayer should continually characterize the daily conduct of our lives. It ignites the soul with godly passions and holy trajectory. It is essential to the vitality of our walk with Christ.

### **Philosophy**

It is better to flip the initial question around and ask: *If God is not sovereign over all His creation, why pray?* If He is just as surprised by our experiences as we are, then what assurance do we have that He will hear our prayers at all (let alone do anything about them)? I would rather pray to a God who knows all things, controls all things, and rules over all things. That God has the ability to answer prayer according to His perfect wisdom, power, and authority. The fact that God knows everything should be a great comfort to us when we pray. If He didn't, our hope would be fastened to the inadequate abilities of an imperfect deity who wishes He could do more for us than He can. Thankfully, our God is so much greater than that.

Our response to God's command for prayer must be one of faith and obedience. Our Savior is the only man who has ever walked in perfect faithfulness to God's righteous standard in all things. If anyone might possibly have a right to throw God's sovereignty onto the table as an excuse for neglect, it was Him. Rather, He modeled continual prayer through trust and submission. Scripture is replete with examples of God altering the course of human history in response to the prayers of His people. These truths and more should continually drop us to our knees.