



THE BIBLE STANDS

*The Bible stands though the hills may tumble,
It will firmly stand when the earth shall crumble;
I will plant my feet on its firm foundation,
For the Bible stands.*

Prayer and Your Problems

God has given us many beautiful promises that if we will take the time to pray to Him, He will take the time to answer those prayers. In the Bible, there are many stories of wonderful answers to prayer, but not all wonderful answers to prayer are found just in Bible times. There are many true stories of how God answers prayer in amazing ways in our days.

During the days of the civil war in the United States in the 1800s, many people wanted to get in to see President Lincoln. In order to have a few minutes with the president, a person had to have very important business. To get in required a pass, but passes were only given to those who had problems considered important enough, or who were important people in the government. There was one exception to this rule, however. The president had a small son, Tadd. You know, it really didn't matter how full the waiting room was with important people, waiting to see the president, or how busy the president might be, when Tadd wanted to see his father, he was able to get past all the guards, and all the waiting people, without that necessary pass. The difference was that the president was his father.

Well, you and I have a Father who is vastly more important and busy than the President of the United States, or the head of any other state. Though He controls the whole universe, directing in all that takes place, we can always get in for an immediate visit, and He is never so busy that He won't listen and answer. In fact, He has given us a most beautiful promise in Psalm 91:15. "He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him."

In this world we find that appeals, petitions, and entreaties can be used to move others to grant our requests, but prayer moves heaven. Isn't that an exciting thought? There, are, however, some very important conditions to answered prayer.

Conditions to Receiving Answers to Prayer

1. What is the basic condition to having our prayers answered?

Hebrews 11:6. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Note: God is willing to do great things for us, and the reason we don't see more answers to our prayers is we lack faith. Many times, if God answered our prayers, it would come as a great surprise to us. When, however, we go to God in earnest prayer, and in faith, answers will come. Faith is not just 'making yourself believe'; faith must always be based on the Word of God. Faith really means believing that God means what He says, that He is real, and that He keeps His word. So you can see that FAITH must be based on God's Word! It can't be just something we make up ourselves that we want God to do and then try and make ourselves believe and somehow that will force God to answer our prayer; No! God wants us to base our asking on what He has promised in His word.

2. What does the Lord promise to those who come to Him in prayer?

Psalm 102:17. "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer."

3. What has God done for us to show us how much He is interested in our needs?

Romans 8:32. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

Note: We usually value something according to how much it costs us. If we can get it for a few pennies, or even a very few dollars, in most cases, it isn't terribly important. If, on the other hand, something cost us a great deal of money, we are very careful to protect and take care of the object, whatever it may be. There aren't very many things, though, that we would consider valuable enough that we would give our life for them, but that's just how important we are to God. He paid for us when He gave Jesus to die on the cross for us.

Elijah the Prophet

This is the story of the Prophet Elijah back in ancient Israel. It is found in the Bible in 1 Kings 16-18. This took place before Jesus was born on this earth and so the sacrificial system of offerings was still followed.

There were sad bad days in Israel. Ahab the king had married a heathen princess and priestess of Baal, Jezebel and it was a disaster! Jezebel's name is known even today as a wicked and cruel woman. She hated the true worshippers of God and wanted to kill them all. Fearing neither God nor man, she loved her heathen idols, and was known for her violent temper. Maybe this was why Ahab just let her have her own way. She tried to force Baal worship on all Israel and killed many worshipers and prophets of the True God of heaven.

Jezebel did everything she could to uphold idol worship in all its splendor. She took care of Four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, besides four hundred prophets of the groves who ate at her table. The worship of the idol Baal was very wicked. Israel was part of the 'chosen people of God', and yet, led astray by its leaders, it was now serving Satan and persecuting the real people of God.

Up in the mountains in Gilead, there lived a godly man named Elijah. His name meant, 'whose God is Jehovah'. He served God with all his heart. He prayed and did all he could to fight against the terrible wrong Israel was doing in serving Baal. God called him to be a prophet.

A prophet is someone that God chose so He could give them messages from heaven and they would tell them to the people. One day God sent Elijah to go to the palace of King Ahab and tell him that because of the wicked ways of Israel there would be no more rain or dew until he said so. Now this was very meaningful because the priests and prophets of Baal taught the people that it was Baal that sent the rain and dew and made the crops grow!

Can you imagine the scene? Here is Ahab on his throne doing the business of his court, and all of a sudden here stands this man dressed in plain, rough garments, right in front of the throne. God helped Elijah to be able to walk right past the guards and they did not see him until there he was in front of the king.

Solemnly he tells Ahab the words God told him to say, "Because you have forsaken the God of heaven to serve Baal, there shall no rain or dew happen until I say so." The king didn't know what to do or say, and before he could yell for his guards to seize the man, the prophet was gone. Quickly and quietly he walked, again past all the palace soldiers, and out of the city.

God knew Ahab and Jezebel would try to kill Elijah, so He sent him to a place in the wilderness where there was a sparkling stream of water and told him he would use the ravens to bring him food. Now I

have heard some people say that the ravens brought him the meat that they would eat. The Bible does not say this at all; it says morning and night they brought him both bread and meat. Now I don't know about you, but I have never seen a raven baking bread. So where did the birds get the food?

Well I sort of imagine they got it in a very interesting place. I think maybe they got it right off of Queen Jezebel's huge tables, where she fed her almost a thousand priests and prophets of Baal every day. We know that she spared no effort to keep her religion going in Israel. To feed so many, no doubt tables were set up out of doors and those pesky ravens would swoop down and select from the table some nice bread and roast, and away they would go over the hills to the little stream where Elijah was waiting for his meal.

Did you know there was somebody else who was fed from the stores of food that Jezebel had planned for her Baal priests? Yes, the servant who was in charge of the food supplies in the palace was Obadiah, and he was a true worshipper of God. When he learned of Jezebel's plan to kill all the true prophets of God, he took a hundred of them and hid them in two caves. Then he sneaked out every night and brought food to them from the palace supplies.

God can use the very plans of His enemies to help His people. He can turn a curse into a blessing for those who love Him. Well, time went on and things in Israel dried up. Ahab was looking all over for Elijah but he could not find him. Elijah was quite happy living down by the little brook, but as things got dryer, the brook began to dry up and he was having a hard time to find any water.

He told the Lord about the problem and God told Elijah to go out of Israel to Zarephath, where there was a widow woman who would feed him. Off he went and when he got there he saw a poor woman out in the field gathering sticks with her young son. Now both the faith of Elijah and the faith of the woman were about to be tested. The woman sure did not look like anyone he would think could feed him during the famine, but he asked her for a drink of water. She went to get it and as she was leaving he called and said, 'Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.'

At this the woman turned back and said sadly, "As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

Now Elijah made a strange request, he asked her to make him a cake first and then make for herself and her son; "For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth." 1 Kings 17:14.

It took faith for the woman to do this; she was not even an Israelite; but even though she did not know a lot about Israel's God, she believed in Him, and so she did what He asked. Sure enough, every day there was always enough flour and oil to make bread for the three of them for the day. Elijah stayed there in a room in the loft.

God knew that this woman was more worthy of His blessings than most of Israel because she lived up to all that she knew was right. The widow shared what little she had with Elijah, and in return her life and that of her son were saved.

For three years no rain or dew fell in the kingdom of Israel. Animals and even people died. Even the king and Jezebel with all her prophets of Baal to feed were having a hard time.

The idol worshippers said that Baal the sun god was the one that sent the rain and made things grow on the earth. God was showing them this was not so. The priests of Baal were trying every ceremony and sacrifice they could think of to get Baal to make it rain, but nothing happened.

They also did everything they could think of to try and find Elijah, but they could not. Maybe some of the people began to see that this idol Baal wasn't really God at all, and they should go back and worship the real God of heaven. But most of the people just followed their leaders and believed what the leaders told them. The leaders told them that Baal was angry and would not stop being angry until Elijah was found and killed.

Showdown on Carmel

Three and a half years had passed with no rain or dew. The land of Israel was like a desert. Then God sent Elijah to Ahab to call a showdown. He found the king out searching for water to try and save his horses. "Have the people and all the priests of Baal, meet me on Mount Carmel" Elijah commanded and King Ahab, even though he hated the prophet of God, quickly obeyed as if Elijah were the King and he the servant. Messengers hurried through the land to call the people to the meeting.

There were altars to Baal on this mountain and before the drought it had been a most beautiful place, where the idol worshippers liked to have their holiday feasts in the groves of trees. Now the trees had no leaves and were withered. Way up on the mountain was an old altar to the God of heaven, long broken down and unused.

God had been greatly dishonoured by the people as they left serving God and worshipped Baal, and by the wicked things done in the groves on Carmel. He chose this place to show His power to them.

Early on the morning of the chosen day, the people gathered near the top of the mountain. Jezebel's prophets march up in imposing array. In regal pomp the king appears and takes his position at the head of the priests. The idol worshippers shout his welcome. But there is dread in the hearts of the priests. At the word of this prophet, the land of Israel for three years and a half has had no dew or rain. The gods in whom they have trusted have been unable to prove Elijah a false prophet. For all these months they tried all the tricks they knew, but their frantic cries, their prayers, their tears, their magic rituals, their revolting ceremonies, their costly and ceaseless sacrifices had done no good at all.

All the so-called power of pagan religions and witchcraft really only comes from Satan and is used to trick people into thinking that the priests or idols have secret powers. Only God has real power. Elijah, the one true prophet of God stood alone and said to all the people, "How long are you going to wonder what is true? If Jehovah is God, follow Him; but if Baal is god then follow him." And the people did not answer a word.

I am sure that many of them knew Who the real God was, in fact maybe most of them did, but they would not stand up and speak out to honour the name of God! They were cowards and just followed their leaders even in what they knew was wrong. We must not be like this!

Facing King Ahab and the false prophets, and surrounded by all the people gathered there, Elijah stands alone for the God of heaven. The whole kingdom has tried to find him for all these months to kill him, and here he is, apparently unarmed before the king of Israel, the prophets of Baal, the men of war, and the people. But Elijah is not alone. Above and around him are heaven's mighty angels and wicked men and Satan's angels cannot touch him.

Now Elijah said for 2 bullocks to be brought for sacrifice. The wicked priests could choose which one they wanted and get it ready and put it on their own altar just how they wished. But they were not to put any fire on it. Then they were to pray to Baal and ask him to send fire down to burn up the offering. The test is so fair and so right that they all have to agree to it. The prophets of Baal dare not refuse to make the trial or the people would know they were frauds. They pretended to be bold but inside they were afraid.

The false priests prepared their altar, laying on the wood and the victim; and then they begin casting their spells. Their shrill cries echo and re-echo through the forests and the surrounding heights, as they call on the name of their god, saying, "O Baal, hear us." The priests gather about their altar, and with leaping and writhing and screaming, with tearing of hair and cutting of flesh, they plead to their god to help them.

The morning passes, noon comes, there is no reply to their frantic prayers. No fire comes from Baal. Elijah knows he has to watch them carefully, as if they could somehow cheat and set the fire themselves, they would! Satan could have sent fire for them of course, but on mount Carmel, he was prevented from doing this. Satan has no power against God's true people, unless he can get them to disobey God, and then he can lead them into evil.

The Bible says that at noon, Elijah mocked them, and said, "Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is out hunting, or he is in a journey, or maybe he is asleep and must be awaked." [1 Kings 18:27] Then they cried louder and cut themselves so the blood flowed out.

At last, their voices hoarse from shouting, their clothes stained with blood from cutting themselves, the priests become frantic and their pleading was mixed with terrible cursing of their sun-god, and Elijah still watches close for any trick.

Evening draws on. The prophets of Baal are weary, faint, confused. One suggests one thing, and another something else, until finally they cease their efforts. Their shrieks and curses no longer sound over Carmel. In despair they give up the contest.

All day long the people have watched the baffled priests leaping round the altar, as if they would grasp the burning rays of the sun to serve their purpose. They have looked with horror on them cutting themselves with knives, and have had time to think about how foolish idol worship is.

Now the people watch Elijah with deepest interest. It is the hour of the evening sacrifice, and Elijah tells the people, "Come near unto me." They tremblingly draw near and he turns to the broken-down altar where once men worshiped the God of heaven, and repairs it. He is careful to follow the rules God had given for His altars.

The priests of Baal watch quietly, they hate Elijah worse than ever, but they are helpless. The calm, quiet ways of the prophet of God are so different from the wild frenzy of the followers of Baal. The ways of God are calm and quiet.

Now Elijah does even more; he digs a trench around the altar and then he puts the wood on it and prepares the bullock and puts the pieces on the wood. Then he did something that seemed crazy! He told the people to pour water over it all; four barrels of water from the nearby sea, and he told them to do it three times, until the trench was full and everything was dripping wet. Humanly, there was no way any fire could burn that offering. Elijah was making sure that no one could say that he cheated and set fire to the altar himself.

Bowing reverently before the unseen God, he raises his hands toward heaven and offers a simple prayer. Baal's priests have screamed and foamed and leaped, from early morning until late in the afternoon; but as Elijah prays, no silly shrieks sound over Carmel's height. He prays simply and earnestly as if he knows God is listening. He asks God to show His superiority over Baal, that Israel may be led to turn to Him.

Silence rests upon all. The priests of Baal tremble with terror, aware of their guilt in deceiving the people. Suddenly, flames of fire, like brilliant flashes of lightning, come from heaven and burn up the sacrifice, the water in the trench, and even the stones of the altar. The brightness of the blaze lights up

the mountain and dazzles the eyes of the people. In the valleys below, where many are watching, the fire is seen coming down from heaven. All are amazed at the sight.

The people fall on their faces in awe before the true God. They are afraid to look at the Heaven-sent fire. They fear that they will be burned up for their sins. They cry out together, "The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God." The cry sounds over the mountain and echoes in the plain below. They are ready now to admit that the God of Elijah is above every idol.

The ways of the heathen are foolish, but when people want their own way and refuse to obey God, they can't see the truth any more. Elijah ordered the prophets of Baal to all be executed. They knew they were doing wrong and were lying to the people to get them to serve idols.

Then Elijah told Ahab to hurry up and eat his picnic lunch because God was soon going to send a great rain, so things could grow again. When he said this there was not a cloud in the sky but he went to the top of the mountain and prayed for rain. Seven times he prayed and then sent his servant to go and look for clouds. Finally the servant said that he saw a little cloud rising out of the sea..

Quickly Elijah sent his servant to Ahab to tell him, "Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not." It was getting dark and the rainstorm burst upon the land. Ahab did not have time to get home before it hit.

Then God gave special strength to Elijah and he ran before the king's chariot guiding him safely to the gate of the city. Even though he had just prayed and God had answered with mighty miracles, Elijah was humble and did the work of a servant helping Ahab, who had been his enemy, safely home.

Elijah continued to work for God for many years helping the people to come back to the worship of the God of Heaven.

4. For what did Elijah pray?

James 5:17. "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months."

Note: This was a time of terribly apostasy in Israel. The people had turned from worshipping the God of heaven from whom all blessings come, to worshipping Baal, the sun god. They taught that it was Baal that sent the rain and made things grow. Elijah wanted them to know it was not. In answer to Elijah's prayer, God withdrew the blessing of rain. In a very short time, the rich and beautiful country began to look like a desert.

5. In answer to Elijah's prayer, what did God do?

1 Kings 18:36-38. "And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the LORD God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench."

Note: The priests of Baal had prayed and danced and shouted and cut themselves all day trying to get Baal to send down fire, but nothing happened. Elijah prepared his altar, being careful to do it as God had instructed, then he quietly prayed a simple prayer and God answered with fire.

6. For whose benefit are all these stories written down?

1 Corinthians 10:11. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

The story is told of the head of a tribe in what used to be the Congo in Africa. The chief had heard from some other natives, who had heard it from some other natives, who, in turn, had heard the story from other natives, that there was a "Chief" of heaven and earth.

One day, the chief's son became very ill. This chief walked many miles to try and find a mission station to see if they could help him. It was a difficult task to find a mission, but Chief Mayala finally did, and after describing his son's illness, he was given some medicine.

Returning home, the chief gave the medicine to the boy, but it failed to help him. Some of his people begged him to take his son to the witch doctor, but the chief refused.

Still the son grew worse and worse. Finally the people went to the medicine man and asked him to come help the child, but the father refused to let him in the house because, even though he had heard only bits and pieces of truth that there is a God in heaven, he said, "I believe in the power of the Chief of chiefs, God in heaven."

The people had all gathered around the chief's house and in derision, they called out: "We would like to see this power of God in heaven."

Without being boastful, Mayala replied, "You shall see it."

Going into the house and closing the grass door behind him, Mayala fell on his knees on the dirt floor, and began to pray to the Chief of heaven and earth. All alone in his hut, Mayala begged for this God, about whom he had heard, to show His power; not just for the sake of his dying child, but to prove that He really existed.

While the chief prayed, the boy fell asleep where he lay outside the hut. Everyone knew what this meant, for they had seen others who were sick do this just before they died, while the witch doctor tried all his tricks to make them well. The chief heard the people talking and he prayed even more earnestly with God for the boy's life.

The people were amazed at what they saw. The child was dying and the father refused to let the medicine man come near him. More than this, the father was inside the hut all alone.

A strange calmness came over Mayala. It was as if there were nothing to be afraid of any longer. He got up from his knees and went out to see his son.

As the chief went out, the people became silent. Before Mayala could touch his son, the boy opened his eyes, turned to his father and spoke, as if he had just awakened from a night's sleep.

The people were shocked and amazed. Turning to them, the chief announced, "There's the power of God that I promised you. That's the power of the God of heaven and earth. And all of you shall soon know more about Him as I am going to bring back someone to teach us all about the Chief of chiefs."

7. Do we always know what to pray for?

Romans 8:26. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

Note: Not everything we ask God for will be answered just as we hope. Even though we may have faith, God knows better than we do what is best for us. When we ask for something that God knows it is not best for us He will answer our prayer, but it may be in a different way than we expected.

One time after the scene on Mount Carmel, Elijah was very discouraged. In his discouragement, he asked God to let him die. This time, instead of answering Elijah's prayer to let him die, God sent an angel twice to prepare food and water for Elijah. Then later, God talked to Elijah, taught him special lessons and sent him back to work. A short time later, Elijah was taken to heaven in a flaming chariot. Just think how different things might have been, if God had answered Elijah's prayer as he asked.

If the answer to our prayer does not come just when we expected it, and in just the way we asked for it, we are not to distrust God. God knows the end from the beginning. He knows all about each one of us, and He loves us too much to give us anything that is not for our best. For this reason, when we pray, we must trust God to answer in the best way, and at the very best time. We should include in our prayers, "Thy will be done."

8. What is said about the prayer of a righteous man?

James 5:16. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." This means it does a lot.

Note: If we do God's will, if we live according to the truth He has given us, and we ask what is according to the will of God, He will answer our prayer.

9. What should be our attitude when we pray?

Psalm 95:6. "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our Maker."

Note: Jesus, our Example, "kneeled down, and prayed." Luke 22:41. Of the disciples it is recorded that they, too, "kneeled down, and prayed." See Acts 9:40; 20:36; 21:5. Daniel, a man beloved and greatly honored by God, "kneeled down on his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God." Both in public and private worship, it is our privilege to bow on our knees before God when we come to Him in prayer.

10. What did Paul tell the believers in Thessalonica about praying?

1 Thessalonians 5:17 "Pray without ceasing."

Note: Wherever we are, whatever duties we may be taking care of, our hearts are to be lifted up to God in prayer. We don't need to always wait until we can kneel down to pray. Though the Christian cannot at all times, and under all circumstances, kneel down to pray, he can keep his thoughts turned to God. There is never a time or place when it is wrong to seek God in prayer.

11. What is one thing we must do if we expect the Lord to answer our prayers?

Psalm 37:5. "Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass."

12. How must we ask for the things we want?

1 John 5:14. "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us."

Note: We must want God's will to be done. This is a matter of faith. Even Jesus, in His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, asked that His prayer be answered according to His Father's will. See Luke 22:42. If we expect God to hear us, we must have confidence that He loves us, and that He will answer us in the way that is best.

13. What can prevent God from answering our prayers?

Proverbs 28:9. "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."

Note: 'Hearing' in the Bible means more than listening with our ears—it means obeying. Those who receive answers to their prayers, are those who walk in the light of God's commandments. If we do His will, if we walk in the truth, then we may have confidence He will hear and answer us. How strange it would be for us to ask Him to care for our wishes and desires when we pay no attention to His will and His authority.

14. What is another condition to answered prayer?

Philippians 4:6. "Be careful [worried] for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

Colossians 4:2. "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;"

Note: If the loving-kindness of God called forth more thankfulness and praise from us, we would have far more power in prayer. When we consider His goodness to us, we will find that He will consider our wants.

15. If we want God to hear our prayers for forgiveness, what must we be willing to do for others?

Mark 11:25, 26. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

16. When we pray, to whom are we to pray?

Matthew 6:9. "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed (Holy) be Thy name."

17. In whose name are we to ask?

John 15:16. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, [Jesus] He may give it you."

18. What does James tell us our God is like?

James 5:11. "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

Note: Because God is so merciful and loving, we may know that He will hear, and answer, our prayers. When Jesus was upon the earth, He taught His disciples how to pray. He told them to ask their Father in heaven for all that they needed. He told them that their prayers would be heard, and this promise is for us too when we pray in Jesus name.

Problems in prayer:

What if there is something I know I should do or stop doing but I feel unwilling to—is there no hope for me? There is an answer, we can tell the Lord we have this problem and then tell Him we are "willing to be made willing", then the Holy Spirit will work in our hearts and minds and the chains that Satan has around us will be broken and we will be able to obey and even want to do so.

What if I can't believe very much, does this mean God won't help me? No, we can pray the prayer of the father of the sick boy in the Bible: **"And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."** Mark 9:24. Jesus will help us.

We can and should pray any time we feel the need to, but there are a few special times we should always pray:

First thing in the morning, as soon as we wake, we should pray and give our hearts to Jesus and ask Him to have complete charge of our lives. We can do this even before we get up and have our morning worship prayer.

Before we eat we should thank the Lord for our food and ask Him to bless it. For this prayer to be answered we need to eat only foods that are good for us. God can't bless junk.

Before we travel we should pray for God's guidance and protection.

Before we study our Bibles or lessons, we need to ask for the angels and the Holy Spirit to help us understand what we read and show us how to bring it into our lives.

Before we write any test or exam or have an important appointment, we can ask God to help us remember what we have studied and have wisdom to answer right.

Whenever we get a chance to witness for Jesus, we need to ask for His wisdom to know what He wants us to say. You don't need to kneel or bow to do this, just dart up a prayer in your mind for the Holy Spirit to help you.

Anytime we feel afraid or tempted, we can call quickly for help.

Before we go to bed, we should think over our day and ask for forgiveness for where we see we have failed to be like Jesus or have sinned, and ask for God's grace that we will not do that sin again. We need to ask for the very sin we did, not just 'forgive my sins'; and we have to be willing to stop doing that sin for it to be forgiven.

Prayer is not some kind of magic words we say to make something happen.

"Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him.

"Our heavenly Father waits to bestow upon us the fullness of His blessing. It is our privilege to drink largely at the fountain of boundless love. What a wonder it is that we pray so little! God is ready and willing to hear the sincere prayer of the humblest of His children, and yet there is much manifest reluctance on our part to make known our wants to God. What can the angels of heaven think of poor helpless human beings, who are subject to temptation, when God's heart of infinite love yearns toward them, ready to give them more than they can ask or think, and yet they pray so little and have so little faith? The angels love to bow before God; they love to be near Him. They regard communion with God as their highest joy; and yet the children of earth, who need so much the help that God only can give, seem satisfied to walk without the light of His Spirit, the companionship of His presence. {SC 94.1}

"The darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray. The whispered temptations of the enemy entice them to sin; and it is all because they do not make use of the privileges that God has given them in the divine appointment of prayer. Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence? Without unceasing prayer and diligent watching we are in danger of growing careless and of deviating from the right path. The adversary seeks continually to obstruct the way to the mercy seat, that we may not by earnest supplication and faith obtain grace and power to resist temptation." Steps to Christ 94