

An Overview

The Prayer in My Hand

Text: Ephesians 3:14-19

- I. THE FIST: PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE ENEMIES
 - A. Gratitude: Give thanks for the power of prayer (Acts 16:25-34).
 - B. Pray for those who hate and mistreat you (Matthew 5:43-45; Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60).
 - C. Pray that enemies may become friends in Christ.

- II. THE THUMB: PRAY FOR THOSE CLOSEST TO YOU
 - A. Gratitude: Give thanks for salvation and fellowship with God (2 Corinthians 6:16).
 - B. The thumb is the nearest finger, reminding us to pray for those closest to us.
 - C. Pray for your spouse (1 Peter 3:7), your children (Matthew 19:13; Ephesians 6:4), your parents (Ephesians 6:2), and your extended family.
 - D. Pray for your spiritual family, the local congregation (Acts 12:5; Eph. 3:14-19).

- III. THE INDEX FINGER: PRAY FOR THOSE WHO POINT THE WAY
 - A. Gratitude: Give thanks for God and His inspired Word (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 - B. Pray for the leaders of the congregation, the elders.
 - C. Pray for those who guide by preaching and teaching (Rom. 15:30-32; 2 Cor. 1:11).
 - D. Pray for teachers, coaches, mentors, and others who guide.

- IV. THE MIDDLE FINGER: PRAY FOR THOSE WHO RULE AND LEAD
 - A. Gratitude: Give thanks for God and His church (1 Thessalonians 2:12; Heb. 1:8).
 - B. The tallest finger reminds us to pray for our rulers and leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-4).
 - C. Pray for their submission to God or their removal from power (Titus 3:10; Acts 23:3; cf. Psalm 58).

- V. THE RING FINGER: PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE IN NEED
 - A. Gratitude: Give thanks to God for answered prayer (Romans 8:3; 2 Cor. 12:9).
 - B. The weakest finger reminds us to pray for those who are weak, sick, and in need.
 - C. Pray for the sick (James 5:14-15), the poor, the grieving, and widows and orphans (James 1:27).
 - D. Pray for the spiritually sick, those who are lost or wayward (Luke 22:32; Acts 8:24).

- VI. THE LITTLE FINGER: PRAY FOR YOURSELF
 - A. Gratitude: Give thanks to God for His love and protection (Luke 1:13).
 - B. The smallest finger reminds us to humble ourselves before God in prayer and to put others before ourselves (Philippians 4:6).
 - C. After praying for others, our own needs will be placed in a proper perspective.

CONCLUSION:

1. Prayer is a vital part of the Christian's life.
2. May we learn to pray for all who stand in need.

Practical Prayer

Exercises

Prayer Is Essential

1. Read 1 Chronicles 16:7-11. Why should we seek the Lord's face continually?
2. Evaluation: On a scale of 1 to 10, how essential has prayer been in your life? Explain why this is the case.
3. What do you find most enjoyable about praying? What do you find most difficult?
4. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18. What does it mean to "pray without ceasing?" How can one "give thanks" in everything?
5. What change can you make to give more time to prayer?
6. Read Luke 18:1. What are some things that cause you to grow weary in praying consistently?