True Prayer

By Joline Stewart. Thoughts from the article "Praying in the Spirit" by John Bunyan, which was written from Bedford Jail.

John Bunyan (circa 1628-1688) was an English writer and preacher associated with a Puritan Nonconformist group at St. John's Church. He was imprisoned for his opposition to the restrictions of religious freedom and the Book of Common Prayer. The Book of Common Prayer reduced praying to the verbal repetition of prewritten prayers.

Bunyan, the author of the famous allegory The Pilgrim's Progress, chose time in jail rather than to renege on his personal conviction that prayer must be the spontaneous utterance of the heart. He insisted that prayer must be the very wrestling of the soul with Almighty God. He believed that true prayer is praying in the Spirit and therefore much more than mere words. I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also (1 Cor. 14:15 KJV).

He believed that prayer brings those who seek God into great familiarity with Him. It obtains great things from God for the person that prays and for the object of their prayers. Prayer opens the heart of God and fills the empty soul of the one praying. By prayer the Christian opens his heart to God and finds a true friend in God.

Bunyan distinguished between true prayer, praying with the Spirit, and merely voicing thoughts. In agreement with C. H. Spurgeon, he insisted that it is a spiritual business from start to finish, empowered by the Holy Spirit within. He stressed the importance of prayer lining up with scripture. Daniel Henderson in his book entitled Transforming Prayer, describes prayer as Spirit-led, Scripture-fed, and worship-based. Prayer is most effective when accompanied by an attitude of submission to the will of God and to the Word of God.



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AUGUST 2025 more consistent prayer life. Pray a verse a day! MONDAY **TUESDAY** WEDNESDAY **THURSDAY FRIDAY** Cords of 3/ Personal prayer I Corinthians 14:15 Women's Ministry/ Cords of 3/ LI leaders & groups/ Discipleship New resource Pastors & churches/ Spiritual impact/ Personal prayer Training/ development/ Government leaders More laborers Courageous believers Outreach & growth I Corinthians 14:15 Psalm 16:11 Deuteronomy 4:39 Psalm 126:3 Psalm 16:8 12 13 15 LI leaders & groups/ Discipleship John Stewart's Youth Ministry/ Cords of 3/ Pastors & churches/ Training/ writing/ Spiritual impact/ Personal prayer LI staff & volunteers More laborers Outreach & growth I Corinthians 14:15 Faithful believers Psalm 57:11 Romans 12:1 Philippians 4:6-7 Romans 8:1 18 19 20 22 LI leaders & groups/ Discipleship Greater gratitude/ Cords of 3/ New resource Pastors & churches/ Training/ development/ Evangelism/ Personal praver Government leaders More laborers Fruitful believers **Families** Isaiah 40:28-29 Philippians 4:7-8 John 3:16 Isaiah 44:3 Matthew 7:7-8 25 26 27 28 29 Cords of 3/ Gospel proclaimed/ Discipleship John Stewart's Men's Ministry/ Spiritual impact/ Personal praver 'Simple Evangelism' Training/ writing/ course/SR prayer class More laborers Outreach & growth Isaiah 40:30-31 Believing believers Proverbs 3:24 Psalm 5:12 Jeremiah 17:14 Galatians 6:9 Begin by thinking about the meaning of each keyword in that verse. PRAY SCRIPTURES How does it affect the meaning of that verse? "No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another. God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit." - 1 John 4:12-13 (NIV) "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." - Isaiah 41:10 (NIV)

Mark the box after you have prayed each day to help build a

"The only enduring motive for prayer is that God is worthy to be sought." - Daniel Henderson, Strategic Renewal Contact Joline Stewart for additional prayer resources: 952-294-0822 | Lamplighters USA.org

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