

## Prayer: A Privilege and a Partnership

*If my people, who are called by my name, will **humble themselves** and **pray** and **seek my face** and **turn from their wicked ways**, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.  
2 Chronicles 7:14 (NIV)*

Note the four “IFs” prior to the “THEN”:

- **Humble themselves**
- **Pray**
- **Seek my face**
- **Turn from wicked ways (Repent)**

### I. Why is HUMILITY essential in relating properly to God?

*Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.  
Proverbs 16:18 (ESV)*

Humanity’s fall into sin resulted directly from pride, which is our desire to be our own god and take ownership of ourselves. But we were created to be God’s children and servants, to live out His agenda for our lives. To return to God means cultivating a loving, humble relationship with Him and others. (This reflects the Lord Jesus’ nature.)

To encourage this in us...

*"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."  
1 Peter 5:5c (NIV) [Quoting Proverbs 3:34]*

### 2. Why must we PRAY? (Ask God to do His will)?

*The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:7-10 (NIV)*

### 3. What does it mean to “SEEK GOD’S FACE?”

*Glory in His holy name; Let the heart of those who seek the LORD be glad. Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face continually.  
1 Chronicles 16:10-11 (NASB)*

When two persons are in right relationship with one another they can look at each other “face to face” and look each other in the eye. God speaks of this in Aaron’s blessing:

*The LORD bless you, and keep you; **The LORD make His face shine on you**, And be gracious to you; **The LORD lift up His countenance on you**, And give you peace.'  
Numbers 6:24-26 (NASB)*

When we “seek God’s face” we are seeking to reestablish a right, loving relationship to Him!

### 4. Why does God tell His to people to repent of wickedness to be heard? (Hint: It’s not because sin ticks Him off!)

*You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This is my command: Love each other. John 15:14-17 (NIV)*

**Because we need to have God’s heart, plans and perspective to ask Him to fulfill His agenda! Jesus and His early disciples all taught us to pray with this in mind: Jesus taught thus:**

*Pray like this: “Our Father in heaven...may your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Matt.6:9-10 (ESV)*

*I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; -Paul in 1 Timothy 2:8 (ESV)*

*The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.  
-Jesus’ brother James in James 5:16b (ESV)*

*Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and **humble**. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. **He must turn from evil and do good**; he must seek peace and pursue it. For **the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous** and **his ears are attentive to their prayer**, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."* 1 Peter 3:8-12 (NIV)