



THE WAYS

PRAY FIRST AND PRAY AGAIN. Ask first for God's guidance and blessing in everything you do. Through prayer, ask for wisdom and for God's will to be done. Pray for others as well, that God's love and blessing would be revealed to them in good times and in bad.

1. What kind of issues normally make you pray?

READ Luke 11:1-13

1. What stands out about how Jesus prayed and what he prayed for?
2. In your experience, is verse 10 true? Why/Why not?
3. Does it matter that Jesus specified that the Father will give the Holy Spirit? Why?

Scenario: Your boss just told you that he put you up for a promotion, but it involves moving to North Carolina. It is a great opportunity for you and will help you better provide for your family. You spend some time praying over the decision but never feel like you get an answer. There are a few small things that stand out: a North Carolina license plate and an excitement about a new direction, but your spouse isn't sure about it.

1. When you are praying, what do you want from God?
2. What do you think God wants for you and your family?
3. What do you look for to show God is guiding you in a particular direction?
4. What do you do when you don't feel like you have received a clear direction?

Prayer is not a vending machine nor is it magic. We cannot say the right words or offer the right things to get our desired outcome. Prayer is difficult and frustrating because prayer is relational, and we are speaking to a personal God who has the right and the understanding to choose. *Pray First and Pray Again* because God values persistence, because it takes time to draw our will in line with God's, and because prayer is an intimate time with our Lord. *Pray First and Pray Again* because listening to the Spirit first involves knowing God's voice.

PRAY TOGETHER.

(Pray that the Spirit would teach you to know God's voice in prayer.)

DAILY Devotional

MONDAY: *READ:* Prov. 3:5-6. *THINK:* God will direct our paths. Like the pillars of fire and cloud through the wilderness, God will lead the way. God Wled Pharaoh through dreams, Abraham through angels, prophets through insight, and that same Spirit of the living God dwells in each one of us. *Pray First and Pray Again* because you are not alone, but the Holy Spirit is with you and will guide you wherever you go. *PRAY:* You would see the Spirit's leadership this week.

TUESDAY: *READ:* Eph. 6:18. *THINK:* We can become of the opinion that when there is nothing else to do, we can pray. Ephesians carries a different connotation. Like a night watchman, we must keep alert. Prayer is not the last ditch effort; it is the first line of defense against the enemy. Be alert and *Pray First and Pray Again* because the devil prowls like a lion waiting to devour. *PRAY:* for a sister or brother Christian whose faith is struggling.

WEDNESDAY: *READ:* Matt. 6:10. *THINK:* This prayer is our hope that this world become more and more as God would will it. We pray that our actions and our kingdoms begin to mirror God's kingdom as they were intended. It might feel so far from reality that it isn't worth praying, but God is about the work of renewing this world. *Pray First and Pray Again* because God's kingdom takes time, but it is worth it. *PRAY:* For this world to begin to look like God's Kingdom.

THURSDAY: *READ:* John 10:27. *THINK:* Do you know the shepherd's voice? You can learn to discern God's nature in Scripture, but you can only know his ways through intimate relationship. When you *Pray First and Pray Again*, you learn how God works in this world and in your life. In short, you learn his voice. *PRAY:* you would hear God's voice.

FRIDAY: *READ:* 1 Thess. 5:17. *THINK:* Two words: pray continually. Prayer is not the space between "Dear God" and "Amen." A life lived in relationship to God is prayer. Raise silent praises or petitions to him wherever you go. *Pray First and Pray Again* so you can seek his presence in everything you do. *PRAY:* without saying amen, so that you remember to pray continually.

SATURDAY: *READ:* Phil. 4:6. *THINK:* Prayer rightly orients work in your life. When we pray or when we sabbath, we acknowledge that there is a greater power than us. We pray, not because we are out of options, but because for God, all things are possible. Don't worry about what you can or can't do, *Pray First and Pray Again* and find that God is active and willing. *PRAY:* through your anxieties and acknowledge that God is in control.