

5 Pillars

- Prayer
- Word of God
- Sharing Gospel
- Expectation Miracles
- Embrace Suffering for the Glory of Christ

(Chinese Church-Francis Chan)

People who live without God face five dangers.

It stifles the prayer life. (1-3)

It makes them a friend of the world and an enemy of God. (4-6)

They neglect God's will in their lives. (7-10)

It produces insult and slander of fellow believers. (11-12)

It produces people who plan their lives without seeking God. (13-17)

—rebuke of self-sufficient attitude (13-14)

—description of the right attitude (15)

—explanation of their present evil attitude (16-17)

- Submit to God
- Resist the Devil
- Draw Near to God
- Wash Hands
- Purify Hearts—double minded
- Grieve, Mourn, Wail, Change
- Humble Yourselves

Principles

- We sometimes scheme and fight to obtain what God would give us if we would only ask.
- God yearns for us to give him our undivided allegiance.
- God exalts those who humble themselves before him.
- Only God has the ability to judge and evaluate our motives.
- Seeking the will of God must be the goal of our personal planning.
- We must beware of sins of omission as well as those of commission.

•Holman

Application

- Don't ask with wrong motives, or you will not get your requests from God.
- Seek grace from God to love him with your whole heart.
- Resist temptation, and God will enable you to overcome it.
- Don't slander other believers, for in so doing you set yourself above God's laws.
- Be concerned not only about what you do but also about what you fail to do.

•Holman

Answered Prayer

- First, we must come in an attitude of faith.
- Second, we must approach God with a commitment to obey him.
- Third, we must pray in accord with God's will.
- Fourth, we must make our requests with a right motive—Self-centered motives prevent us from receiving God's answer to our requests.

Even though we may meet the above conditions, God is not obligated to meet our request in the way we ask. He still may answer as he answered Paul. Paul asked God to remove the “thorn in the flesh” (2 Cor. 12:7–10). God left the thorn with Paul but gave him a plentiful supply of grace so that he understood both his weakness and God's power.

(Holman)

- Do I really need what I have asked for?
- Am I asking for special treatment from God?
- Is it in the best interest of God's kingdom and his will that I receive this request?
- What do I plan to do when God grants my request?

•Life Application Bible

No Middle Ground

Faith, Hope, Love (1 Corinthians 13:13)

Love, Joy, Peace ... (Galatians 5:22)

Abundant Living (John 10:10)

Eternal Life (John 3:16)

Love of Neighbor (Matthew 7:12)

Strife/Quarrels (James 4:1–3)

Materialism (1 John 2:15–17)

Hopelessness (Ephesians 2:12)

Egocentric Living (James 4:3)

Death (Proverbs 14:12)

- By ignoring God, they demonstrated a lack of regard for his presence and power to help them.
- They lacked Godly wisdom because they refused to “ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him” (1:5).
- They lacked what they really needed because they did not rely on God. Instead, they depended on their desires to guide them.

•Life Application Bible

Tactics of War

Refuse to accept Satan's suggestion that we can be separated from Christ.

Ignore the temptation to doubt God's grace.

Reject the lie that we are beyond forgiveness.

Pray before, during, and after attacks by the devil.

Allow Christ to replace our way of thinking with his way of thinking.

Weapons

The belt of truth—wherever the truth is spoken and lived, the devil is unwelcome.

The breastplate of righteousness—living rightly is the result of advanced training in the faith. When we are living under God’s guidance we are on guard against the devil’s attacks.

The footwear of the gospel of peace—communicating the gospel is taking back territory controlled by the devil.

The shield of faith—our faith in Christ makes him our shield and protector.

The helmet of salvation—the salvation that God offers is our eternal protection.

The sword of the Spirit, God’s Word—the Bible is a weapon when its truth is put to use, exposing the devil’s work and helping those who are losing the battle.

Prayer—in prayer we rely on God’s help.

1. We make friendship with the world whenever we act in a way which is characteristic of the world such as displaying envy, strife, selfish ambition, jealousy, and hypocrisy (see Jas. 3:13–18).

2. We make friendship with the world whenever we tolerate a rival to the absolute lordship of Jesus Christ. What is most important to you? If it is job, pleasure, recognition, personal accomplishment, or personal gain, then you have set yourself at enmity toward God.

3. We make friendship with the world whenever we cherish a relationship with persons, institutions, or organizations which are indifferent to or hostile to God.

- Holman

Worry is a frustrated aspiration to omniscience—

“I know, and I’m sure God has to do this, and if he doesn’t do it, it’ll be a disaster. I know, and I’m afraid God won’t get it right.” That’s worry. What is that? That’s forgetting God. That’s forgetting who he is and it’s assuming incommunicable attributes. If you say that, you will be eaten up with worry, because you’re aspiring to omniscience.

Jonathan Edwards used to get up in the morning and sometimes used to say to himself, “I must remember this, that everything I enjoy today which is better than hell is strictly by the mercy and gracious upholding power of God.”

“Look at your life and every part of your life, and say, ‘This is all of grace. The fact that I’m alive, the fact that my heart is beating ... It’s all of grace, all of the gracious love of ... If God gave me what I deserved, I’d be wiped out. It’s only by God’s grace that I’m living! If God wills, I will live. It’s only by his will, it’s only by his grace, that I’m living.’

Humility is not a lack of confidence. It’s not thinking less of yourself. It’s thinking of yourself less. It’s focusing on yourself less. It’s not looking at yourself all the time, because on the inside you are supremely confident of your value to God and your worth and that God is taking care of the circumstances of your life.

Tim Keller

Battles Christians Face

- 1-3 Flesh
- 4-5 World
- 6-7 Devil

Warnings

- 8-10 Against Pride
- 11-12 Against Criticism
- 13-17 Against Arrogance and Self-confidence

Wiersbe, W. W.