



## How to Receive Answers to Your Prayers

**I**n 1988 the political Iron Curtain between Russia and the United States was removed. This radical change allowed the Native folk of St. Lawrence Island, which is only 38 miles from Siberian shores, and their Eskimo relatives in Siberia to be reunited. Because of this dividing line there were many on the Russian mainland who hadn't seen or talked to relatives on St. Lawrence Island for 40 years, even though only a few miles separate this U.S. island from Russia.

In 1991 many of the Russian Native people requested help from their U.S. relatives in understanding God's plan for their lives. They were hungry to learn more about God, because the communist government hadn't

*Three days had passed with no word from the missing boat.*



allowed Christianity to be freely practiced in their land.

With the barriers now taken down, Christians from St. Lawrence Island visited their relatives in northeast Siberia, teaching them about God and the power of prayer.



In 1992 four walrus-skin boats from Provideniya, Siberia, filled with men, women, and young people, set out for the village of Gambell on St. Lawrence Island. The people in the boats wished to visit their relatives again and also to learn more about the Bible. The first boatload arrived late one morning. Those on board told the islanders that three other boats had gotten lost in the fog. Only their boat made it to the island.

The Christians of Gambell began praying that the other three boats would land safely. They continued to pray for their safety day and night. Three days passed with no word from the missing boats. On the evening of the third day the lost boats landed safely at Gambell. The passengers told this miraculous story.



**T**hey remembered what they had learned about the power of prayer.

On the third day while still lost in thick fog, they were calm but very worried. They remembered what they had learned about the power of prayer. The women bowed in prayer while the men continued watching for land. During the prayer a strange feeling came upon those watching when they saw an opening in the fog the width of their boats. It was like a tunnel about 12 feet wide and 12 feet high in the direction of the island. Though the sea was rough they headed their boats through the tunnel opening and soon came to land directly on the shores of the village of Gambell.

When they climbed out of their boats, the first thing they said to those who came to greet them was, “God is very strong. Nothing can match Him. He has cared for us, and we believe in Him.” The Christians in Gambell told how they had been continually praying for the lost boats.

Today many Native people are learning about the power of the great Creator. They are learning about salvation from the guilt and power of sin through trusting in Jesus as Lord and Savior. They are also learning about the lifestyle God wishes them to follow in preparation for Jesus’ second coming.

The purpose of this lesson is to show how to unlock heaven’s storehouse through prayer and receive blessings from God that we won’t have room enough to hold.



When we pray in Jesus’ name, we are praying in accordance with everything that Jesus stands for.



**Key Thought:** When we hear dramatic stories of prayer like this, it makes us wonder why we don’t see more answers to our prayers. What is the purpose of prayer, and how can we pray so God can answer our prayers? How can we align ourselves with God so we can experience answers to our prayers? This lesson will give us many of these answers.

## BIBLE ANSWERS

**1. What does God want us to do in order to receive gifts from Him? Matthew 7:7-11.** “\_\_\_\_\_, and it will be given to you; \_\_\_\_\_, and you will find; \_\_\_\_\_ and it will be opened to you.” *(All quotations from the Bible in these lessons are taken from the New King James Version (NKJV) unless otherwise noted.)*

**Note.** God wants us to allow Him to help us by asking Him for help with our needs.

Christians find that our choice frees God’s hands to do things beyond our imagination, if we will but give Him the opportunity to do so. James 4:2–3 reminds us, “You do not have because you do not ask.”

**P** raying in “Jesus’ name” is not simply to utter a required phrase somewhere in one’s prayer.

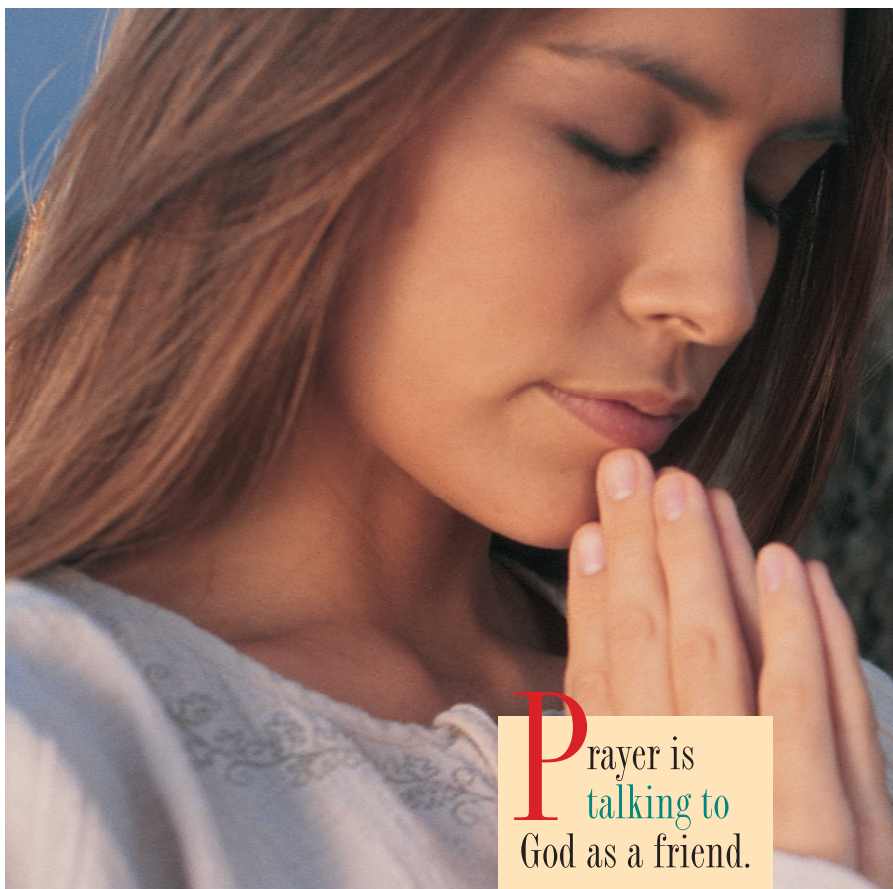
**2. In whose name did Jesus say we are to pray? John 14:13-14.** “And whatever you ask in \_\_\_\_\_ name, that I will do.”

**Note.** God wants us to bring our requests to Him “in the name of Jesus.” Through Jesus’ righteousness we can come before a righteous God even though we are sinful.

In the ancient world one’s name not only distinguished one person from others, but also brought to mind a person’s total personality, temperament, beliefs, standards, attitudes, goals, and actions. When we pray in Jesus’ name, we are praying in accordance with every-

thing that Jesus stands for. Praying “in Jesus’ name” is not simply to utter a required phrase somewhere in one’s prayer (Psalm 5:11; 20:1).

Asking in Jesus’ name means we are coming to ask for help with the same attitude that Jesus has toward God the Father. When He was on earth Jesus believed that His Father had great love and tenderness toward Him. He also knew that His Father is a rewarder of those who seek Him.



**P**ayer is  
talking to  
God as a friend.

To pray in the name of Jesus means to come with unwavering faith, believing that God will answer our prayers in the best possible way (James 1:6). Sometimes He will grant our request immediately; at other times He may say, “No, this isn’t the best thing for you.” There are also occasions when He will ask us to wait until the timing is better to answer our requests.

Praying in Jesus’ name is to believe that God is too wise to make mistakes in answering our prayers in ways that aren’t best. James says, “You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures” (James 4:3). God has promised to answer our prayers if we will ask in the name of Jesus and accept God’s way of answering.

**B**ad habits, sinful thoughts, and desires we refuse to give up can block God from answering our prayers.

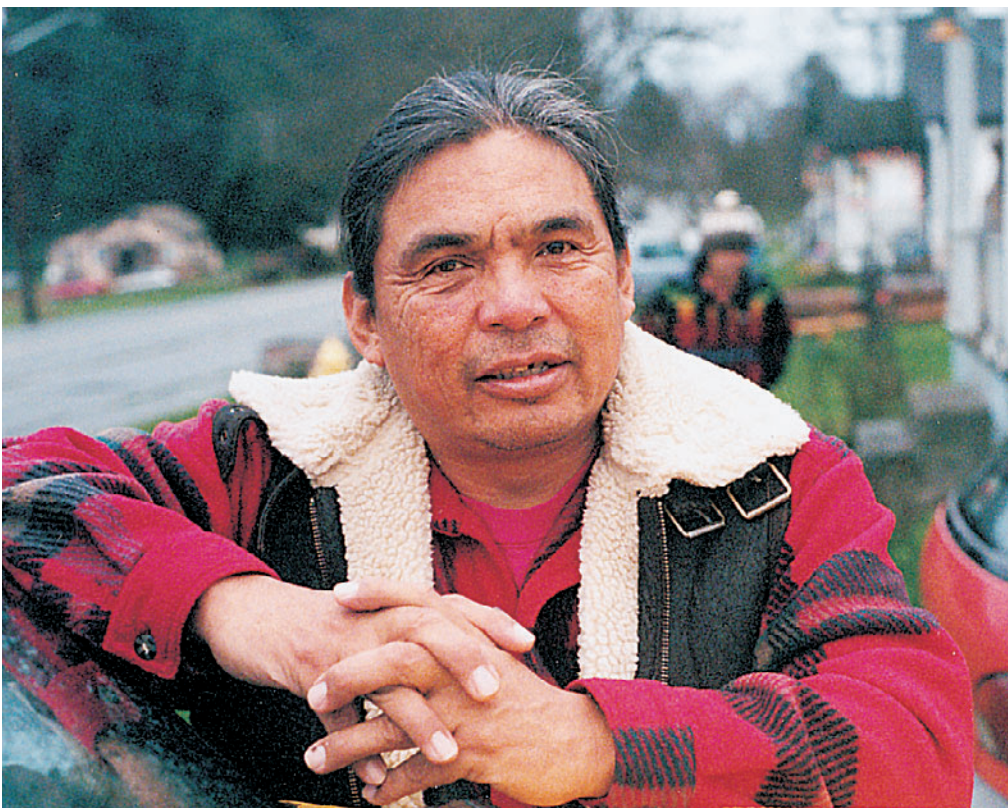
**3. What stops God from hearing and answering our prayers? Psalm 66:18.** “If I regard \_\_\_\_\_ in my heart, The Lord will not hear.” (See also Isaiah 59:1–2.)

**Note.** Many people don’t pray because they feel they are too sinful for God to even consider helping them. But all of us are weak and sinful. The key to answered prayers is whether or not we hold on to sins for which we should be asking forgiveness. The things that block God from answering our prayers are the bad habits, sinful actions, and sinful desires we deliberately refuse to give up.



It is “the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man [that] avails much” (James 5:16). A person whose life is characterized by sin with no desire to do right shouldn’t expect God to answer his or her prayers. However, though we are all humanly weak, we are counted as righteous if we are continually, daily growing spiritually by God’s help.

*Today many Native people are learning about the power of the great Creator. They are learning of the joy of salvation in trusting Jesus as Lord and Savior.*



**4. How often is it proper to pray to God? 1 Thessalonians 5:17.** “Pray \_\_\_\_\_ .”  
(See also Romans 12:12.)

**Note.** God isn't saying we are to walk around with our eyes closed and our hands folded in prayer all day. Rather we are to have the “attitude” of dependence on God, knowing that whatever the situation may be, we can immediately turn to Him and offer a prayer from our heart for help. We know that God is always willing to be by our side, able to wisely and powerfully help us with every aspect of our daily living. This attitude of dependence on Jesus by the dynamic Christian inspires others and is rewarded by God.



When the Holy Spirit speaks to us, His instruction will always be in harmony with Scripture.

**5. Who will help us pray like we should? Romans 8:26.** “Likewise the \_\_\_\_\_ also helps in our weaknesses.”

**Note.** What makes the Christian life a thrilling experience and powerful in its influence is that we have the power of the Holy Spirit to help us. The Holy Spirit will speak to our minds, giving us wisdom and answers to our questions and problems. He will not only help us with our needs, but He will also help us understand how to express our deepest longings and desires to God.

Those who enter into the experience of an attitude

of continual dependence on God for everything will quickly learn to know His voice when He speaks to them. The Bible tells us that our ears (our conscience) will be impressed or hear words behind us saying, “ ‘This is the way, walk in it,’ whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left” (Isaiah 30:21, last part).

When the Holy Spirit speaks to us, His instruction will always be in harmony with Scripture. When we follow His leading, we will always be blessed (John 16:13; Psalm 1:6).

**I**n bestowing on us  
the privilege of  
intercessory prayer,  
God has given us a  
wonderful gift (James 5:16).



**6. Does it pay to pray for those who don't know God? 1 Timothy 2:1.** (*Circle one.*) (1) Yes. (2) No.

**Note.** Yes! We have the wonderful privilege of intercessory prayer. This means that in spite of the presence of evil in the world God can honor our prayers for someone else. By our choice to pray for others, we are releasing Heaven's power to bless others.

We have the privilege of asking for help not only for ourselves but also for our children, our loved ones, and even those we have not met personally but who we

know are in need. We are told to pray for our enemies and those who spitefully use us (Matthew 5:44). Thousands of Christians today can trace their conversion and deliverance from sinful lifestyles and tragedies to the prayers of parents and loved ones. In bestowing on us the privilege of intercessory prayer, God has given us a wonderful gift. (James 5:16.)

**7. With what attitude are we to pray today? Hebrews 4:16.** “Let us therefore come \_\_\_\_\_ to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy.” (See also James 1:17.)

**P** rayer is not flowery words; God wants us to talk to Him from our hearts.



**Note.** We are to come boldly to God, meaning that God is anxious to answer our prayers, if we will just come to Him and ask.

Often people say, “I haven’t prayed in so long,” or “I have such a hard time praying,” or “For some reason I haven’t felt as close to God as I should. How can I ever think that He would answer my prayers now?” Often we don’t think we are good enough to have an answer if we pray. The dilemma isn’t that God won’t answer our prayers as He has promised. It’s that we don’t pray and thus release God’s hands to work on our behalf.

It is important that we develop a consistent day-by-day, hour-by-hour attitude of prayer. We can only know God is speaking and leading us if we are praying people. Ask God to give you courage to ask for help in times of trouble and also in the little things of life. You will learn to trust God as you see Him fulfill His promises to you.

 Ask God to give you courage to ask for help in times of trouble and also in the little things of life.

**Closing Thought.** In the wilderness near Aleknagik, Alaska, Joe Chythlook learned that he served a God who is interested in even the smallest details of everyday life. Joe tells of his prayer experience when he went caribou hunting on his snowmobile. With winter temperatures dropping to more than 40 degrees below zero, Joe headed back to his village after a successful hunt many miles from home.

Encountering heavy snow and towing a heavy load, the track on Joe's overworked snowmobile became loose. He worked feverishly to repair the track, because he knew darkness would soon be upon him and he wouldn't be able to see to work. After getting his track back together, he laid down on his back beside the machine to readjust the track mechanism. In so doing he had removed his fur cap. When he leaned against the side of the snowmobile, his ear and the left side of his face touched the metal side of the track guard and instantly froze to it.

It was a tragic situation—with the freezing temperatures and night falling upon him! There was no way to free the side of his face and ear from the snowmobile without cold water, which he didn't have. He realized the only thing to do was to pull away quickly from the machine. He knew this would rip the skin from the side of his face.

He then quietly asked God, if it could be His will, to provide a miracle and free his face from this frozen grip of the weather. Immediately a warm sensation came over him, quickly thawing his face and ear, freeing Joe from the machine.



In all of his years of life and experience in the frozen wilderness, Joe had never seen or heard of anything like this before. Humbly he thanked God. God is always there no matter where we may be or how small or how dangerous the situation in which we find ourselves. Joe realized how thankful he was for parents who had taught him to pray daily. Those daily prayers gave him the courage to come boldly to God in time of need.



God wants to give you the guidance of His Holy Spirit in everything you do. It's wonderful to know that God will provide small as well as big miracles for your happiness every day—if you will just ask for His help.

**D**aily prayer, opening our hearts to God as a friend, strengthens our walk with Him.



**Next Lesson.** When we begin to learn about Jesus' great love for us and His plan for our lives, there will come a desire in our hearts to follow Him and do what He has asked us to do. One of the things Jesus clearly taught is the need to be baptized. He was explicit in this teaching when He said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16). Baptism is a very important matter.

What does baptism mean? Why is it so important? These are important questions that will be answered in our next lesson.



## Native New Day

P. O. Box 53055, Los Angeles, CA 90053-0055

EDITORS: NATIVE MINISTRIES NORTHWEST EDITORIAL COMMITTEE;

RUSSELL HOLT

ILLUSTRATIONS: A. J. McCOY

DESIGN & PHOTOGRAPHY: ED GUTHERO DESIGN: MICHELLE C. PETZ

COPYRIGHT © NORTH AMERICAN MULTILINGUAL MINISTRIES