

Prayer

By Bob Gard

Hollister, Missouri church of Christ

www.hollisterchurchofchrist.org

Slide 1

Sometimes knowing how to pray and what to pray for can be difficult. Even the disciples weren't sure on how to pray. After the disciples saw Jesus praying we read in Luke 11:1...

Jesus had this to say concerning prayer in Matthew 6:5-15...

Slide 3

It is hard to imagine, but when we are praying we are coming before the throne of God and talking with the Creator of the whole universe.

As Christians we have access to God 24/7. He is always there for us, but we need to approach Him in the right manner. In the secular world we show respect to those in authority, police, judges, the President. If we were to go before the President of the United States we would show respect by what we said, how we say it and what we do. God deserves and demands that kind of respect, even more.

So, how do we approach God and what do we say?

Let's begin by noticing what Jesus says about how **not** to pray....

Slide 4

"You shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men."

"Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward."

Their reward is exactly what they want, "to be seen of men." God will not reward them with blessings from heaven'

We are to pray in private. Does this mean we can not pray in public? Of course not, but we are not pray to put on a show.

I Timothy 2:8 it says, "I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere..."

I Thess. 5:17 tells us to "pray without ceasing." It simply means that our prayer life is not to consist of public prayer only and that our prayer life is not to be done to seek approval of men. Neither are we to pray as the heathens who use vain repetitions or making long flowery prayers.

God just wants us to pray with a sincere and honest heart. Jesus tells us...

Slide 5

...how we should pray.

In verse 9 Jesus begins by saying, “In **this manner, therefore pray...**”

We are to pray in this manner or pattern “**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name...**” This shows our relationship with God, He is our Father and the relationship we have as children of God.

Hallowed is similar to “holy” meaning to be separate from common and profane things and dedicated to God. God is Holy. His name is Holy.

He is our Father, which denotes a close, intimate relationship, yet He is to be Hallowed by us, kept holy and deserving of our awe and respect.

Just as children are to give honor and respect to their parents, we as God’s children are to honor and show respect to our heavenly Father when we approach Him in prayer.

Your Kingdom come, Your will be done...” In all things God’s will is to be done. We must pray for the will of God to take place in all aspects of our lives, even when it is not our will.

Jesus also tells us things for which to pray...

Slide 6

“**Give us this day our daily bread...**” We are to ask God for the necessities that we need, not the luxuries we want. We are to live for God one day at a time but we have a tendency to live in the future even though we are not promised tomorrow.

Our focus should be upon our needs for today and if we have enough for today that should be sufficient. Remember Matthew 5:?? Says that God knows what we have need of. We must have faith and trust that God will provide what we need for today.

“**And forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors...**” God’s forgiveness of our sins is conditional. Unless we are willing to forgive others God will not forgive us. We should not expect from God what we are not willing to give others.

We can not hold a grudge against someone and be right with God. Yes, we have people do things or not do things or say something that hurts us. But remember, we have all sinned against another person at one time or another. We are not perfect. We need each others forgiveness as much as we need God’s.

When we have forgiven others then we can go to God in prayer and ask Him to forgive us. Jesus emphasizes the fact that we must forgive others by stating it again in verses 14-15 “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your

heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Slide 7

“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” We can not fight Satan by ourselves. We need God’s strength to help us against Satan.

In **Ephesians 6 10-17** Paul tells us to put on the whole armor of God. Our best weapon against Satan is God’s Word. We are also told that with every temptation that comes our way God has provided a way of escape.

I Corinthians 10:13, “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

The problem is many times we are not looking for a way to escape.

The prayer ends by acknowledging God’s Glory and Power. God is all powerful. Aren’t we thankful that we are on God’s side?

Though not mentioned in the Lord’s model prayer there are other things in scripture for which we are told to pray.

Slide 8

Wisdom -- James 1:5-6, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.”

God wants us to ask for wisdom but we must ask with faith. If we doubt, God will not listen to us.

Wisdom is using knowledge correctly.

The Sick -- James 5:13-16, “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”

We are to pray for one another and for those that are sick.

Praying for ourselves - II Cor. 10:7-10

II Cor. 12:7-10, “And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

Here Paul was praying to have a "thorn in the flesh" removed.

Giving Thanks -- **I Thessalonians 5:17-18**, "pray without ceasing, 18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Luke 17:11-19, "Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. 12 Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. 13 And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" 14 So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. 15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, 16 and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. 17 So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? 18 "Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" 19 And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

Slide 9

Point #1

Point #2

Point #3

Point #4

We are encouraged by God to take everything to Him in prayer. As with any Father He wants to hear from His children. Let us give God the glory and praise and be faithful in our prayers to Him.

Are You Praying?