

What every Christian Ought To Know. How To PRAY (With POWER)



- (Matt. 6:9-13) **“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”**

INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER

- If you were to study the exemplary prayers in Scripture, you cannot help noticing that all of them are brief and simple. Prayer that is heartfelt, urgent, and unfeigned must be of that style. Verbiage and windbagery are badges of *insincerity*, especially in prayer. Here are a few examples.
- 1. The prayer of the **publican**: (Lk. 18:13) is as short and to the point as possible: *“God, be merciful to me, a sinner!”*
- 2. The prayer of the **thief** on the cross: “Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!” (Lk. 23:42).
- 3. Peter’s cry for help when he was walking on water:—sometimes cited as the shortest prayer in the Bible: *“Lord, save me”* (Matthew 14:30). All of these prayers are cut from the same cloth.
- Scripture records very few long prayers. Much of (Psa. 119) is addressed to God in the language of prayer, and of course, that is the Bible’s longest chapter. Other than that,
- (Neh. 9:5-38) contains the longest prayer in all of Scripture, and it can be read aloud with expression in less than seven minutes.

- **(John 17)** is the **New Testament's** longest prayer. It's also the longest of Jesus' recorded prayers, just **twenty-six** verses long.
- We know, of course, that Jesus prayed much longer prayers than that, because Scripture records several instances where He prayed in solitude for extended periods of time (**Matt. 14:23; Mk. 6:46**).
- When it suited Him, Jesus would even spend the entire night in prayer (**Lk. 6:12**).
- Jesus made it a habit to pray, both privately and with His disciples (**Jn. 18:2**). And the pattern was clear: His **long prayers** were the ones He prayed **in private**. His **public prayers** were perfect examples of **crisp, forthright, plain speaking**.
- Listening to Jesus pray and observing His constant dependence on private prayer gave the disciples an appetite for prayer. So, they asked Him, ***"Lord, teach us to pray"*** (**Lk. 11:1**). He responded by repeating the very same model prayer He gave in the **"SERMON ON THE MOUNT."** We call it the **"LORD'S PRAYER."** We should probably think of it as the **"Disciples' Prayer,"** because its centerpiece is a **petition for divine forgiveness**, something Jesus would never need to pray for.

- Like all great praying, it is both **straight forward** and **without *elegance***. There is not a wasted word, not a hint of vain repetition, and not a single note of **attracting attention (SELF)**, or religious **ceremony** in the whole prayer: Notice (Lk. 11:2-4) *“And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. 3 Give us day by day our daily bread. 4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.”*
- This prayer was a pattern for the disciples to follow, not a mantra to be recited without engaging the mind or passions. The various elements of Jesus’ prayer are all reminders of what our praying ought to include: **PRAISE, PETITION, PENITENCE**, and a **PLEA** for grace in our sanctification. Those are not only the key elements of prayer, but they are also some of the principal features of **AUTHENTIC WORSHIP**.

- Scripture repeatedly promises that if we ask for anything in faith, God will answer—meaning if we ask, “in accord with **GOD’S WILL** as prompted by His Spirit,” He will always graciously and generously respond **Notice (Matt. 21:22) “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.” (Matthew 7:7-11; 17:20; 21:22; Mark 11:24; James 1:6; 1 John 3:22).**
- God often grants our requests according to (Eph. 3:20) *“exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.”*
- The nature of a **“TRULY FAITHFUL PRAYER”** is clearly spelled out in (1 Jn. 5:14) *“This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.”*
- In other words, the promise of answered prayer is not an unqualified blank check. The promise is made only to **FAITHFUL, OBEDIENT, SOBER-MINDED, BIBLICALLY INFORMED** Christians whose prayers are in **“harmony with the will of God.”** It’s not a guarantee of cargo to every gullible or superstitious religious enthusiast who uses **“JESUS’ NAME”** as if it were an abracadabra.

- Notice what Jesus said in (Jn. 15:7) *“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”*
- Far from being merely a wish list, **“GODLY PRAYER”** is fundamentally an **“ACT OF WORSHIP.”** It is an expression of our **“PRAISE,”** our unworthiness, our desire to see God's will fulfilled, and our utter **“DEPENDENCE”** on Him for all our needs. Thus, every aspect of prayer is an **“act of worship.”**
- That includes the **“PETITIONS”** we make, because when we properly make our requests known to God—without anxiety, through **prayer** and **supplication**, and with **thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6)**—we are **“acknowledging”** His sovereignty, **“confessing”** our own total reliance on His grace and power, and **“looking”** to Him as Lord and Provider and Ruler of the universe—not as some kind of celestial Santa. **Proper prayer is PURE WORSHIP, even when we are making requests.**

- The “**GODWARD FOCUS**” of Jesus’ model prayer is impossible to miss. The prayer starts with “**praise of God’s name.**” *“Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.”* It expresses a willingness for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done. **Pure worship thus precedes and sets the context for supplication.**
- Those opening lines establish the focal point of the prayer: the glory of God and His kingdom. In other words, the supplicant is concerned first of all not for his personal wish list but for the **honor of God and the extension of His kingdom.** Everything else fits into that context, so that the whole agenda of the prayer is determined by the kingdom and glory of God. That is perhaps the **most important** perspective to keep in mind in all our praying.
- Jesus said in (Jn. 14:13) *“Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son”* The purpose of all legitimate prayer is not to fulfill the felt needs or material desires of the one praying, but to acknowledge the **SOVEREIGNTY** of God and to magnify **HIS GLORY.**

- Prayer is not about getting what I want, but about the fulfillment of God’s will. The proper objective of prayer is not to enlarge my borders, build my empire, or expand my wallet but to **“further the kingdom of God.”** The point is not to elevate my name but to **“HALLOW”** God’s name.
- Everything in prayer revolves around **who God is, what God wants,** and **how God is to be glorified.** That is the sum and substance of proper praying. So how do we accomplish this? Through **reading, meditating,** and **memorizing** God’s **WORD.**
- Any prayers that are **self-consuming, self-indulgent, self-aggrandizing;** any prayers that seek whatever I want no matter what God wants; any prayers that suggest God must deliver because I have demanded it—those are prayers that take His name in vain. Such praying is an egregious sin against the **nature of God,** against the **will of God,** and against the **Word of God.**

We Must Submit To God's Paternity. #1

- The model prayer Christ gave His disciples stands in stark contrast to the kind of rambling repetition that we hear and often times exercise. Every word in the Lord's Prayer is **deliberate, intentional**, and loaded with **spiritual significance**—including the name Jesus used to address the Lord.
- **“And He said to them, *“When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. 3 ‘Give us each day our daily bread. 4 ‘And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.”*** (Luke 11:2-4).
- The prayer starts with a reference to God's **“PATERNITY.”** The first word—the address—is a reminder that **God is our heavenly Father**. We go to Him not only because He is a sovereign Monarch, a righteous Judge, and our Creator, but because He is a **“loving Father.”** That beautiful expression reminds us of the grace that gives us unlimited access to His throne, and it encourages us to come boldly, just as a son or a daughter would come to a loving dad.
- **Notice (Heb. 4:16) *“Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”***

- So, when we pray, we are going to a God who is our **LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER**. We can go with a sense of **INTIMACY**, and **CONFIDENCE** in the same tender, trusting way a little child would go to an earthly father. We can go boldly.
- We are approaching a loving deity who does not need to be appeased, but who embraces us as His own. In fact, because we are His true children, **Notice (Gal. 4:6)** *“Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”* **“ABBA”** is a term of deep affection, a common term for **“FATHER”** derived from the Chaldean dialect. Because it is easy to pronounce, it was how little children in New Testament times commonly addressed their fathers, like **“DADDY”** or **“PAPA”** in today’s English.
- When used properly, **“ABBA”** — **“FATHER”** — is an expression of profound worship filled with childlike trust. Here’s what that looks like:
- Father, I recognize that I’m Your child. I know You love me and have given me intimate access to You.
- I recognize that You have absolutely unlimited resources, and that You will do what is best for me.
- I recognize that **I need to obey You**. And I recognize that whatever You do, You know best. All of that is implied in the truth that God is our Father, and **THAT’S HOW JESUS TAUGHT US TO BEGIN OUR PRAYERS**.

We Must Seek God's Priority. #2

- **What is the most common motivation to go to the Lord in prayer?** Is it to **CONFESS SIN**? Or is it to make a petition on behalf of a loved one? Do we want to bring our latest requests to Him, or remind Him of something we think He may have overlooked? Far too much of our time in prayer is spent **FOCUSED ON US**, not on the One to whom we're praying.
- When was the last time you prayed simply to give God **glory**, or to express your **appreciation** for **His love**, **His mercy**, **His grace**, or **His character**? If prayer is an **"ACT OF WORSHIP,"** our prayer lives cannot revolve around us—our schedules, our trials, our needs, wants, and concerns.
- That self-centered approach stands in stark contrast to the model Christ gave His disciples. The Lord's Prayer is a **"WORSHIPFUL MEDITATION"** on **WHO** God is and the sovereign care He bestows on His people. It's a pattern for successful prayer—one that emphasizes the **glory** and **supremacy** of God.

- Notice again (Lk. 11:2-4) **“And He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. 3 ‘Give us each day our daily bread. 4 ‘And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.’ ”**
- The entire opening sentence of the prayer is a straightforward exclamation of **WORSHIP: “Father, hallowed be Your name” (Luke 11:2)**. That is expressed as a **“petition,”** but it is by no means a **“personal request;”** it is an expression of **praise**, and it reflects God’s own **PRIORITY:**
- Notice (Isa. 42:8) **“I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.”**
- Jesus established the truth that prayer is worship by beginning His model prayer that way.

To worship God is to **“sing the glory of His name” (Psa. 66:2)**. **“Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name” (1 Chr. 16:29; Psa. 29:2; 96:8)**. **“Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to Your name give glory” (Psa. 115:1)**. Such expressions capture the true spirit of a **“WORSHIPING HEART.”**

- Moreover, that first sentence qualifies every other petition in the prayer. It rules out asking for things “with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures” (**James 4:3**). It eliminates every petition that is not in accord with the perfect will of God.

- I love what **ARTHUR W PINK** had to say:

“How clearly, then, is the fundamental duty in prayer here set forth: self and all its needs must be given a secondary place and the Lord freely accorded the preeminence in our thoughts, desires and supplications. This petition must take the precedence, for the glory of God’s great name is the ultimate end of all things: every other request must not only be subordinated to this one, but be in harmony with and in pursuance of it. **We cannot pray aright unless the honor of God be dominant in our hearts.** If we cherish a desire for the honoring of God’s name, we must not ask for anything which it would be against the Divine holiness to bestow.”

- What does that expression mean: **“Hallowed be Your name”**? In biblical terms, God’s **“name”** includes everything God is—His **character**, His **attributes**, His **reputation**, His **honor**—His very **Person**. God’s name signifies everything that is **TRUE** about God.
- We still use the expression **“my name”** in that sense at times. If we say someone has ruined his good name, we mean he has disgraced himself and spoiled his reputation. He has diminished others’ perception of who he is. And if I give you power of attorney, I have **authorized** you to act in my name. You thereby become my legal proxy, and any legal covenants you enter into are as binding on me as if I signed them myself.
- That is precisely what Jesus meant when He taught us to pray in His name: **“Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it”** (Jn. **14:13-14**). He was delegating His authority to us to be used in prayer—authorizing us to act as if we were His emissaries when we let our requests be made known to God.

- God's name represents everything **HE IS**, everything **He approves**, and everything **He is known for**. So, when we pray, ***"Father, hallowed be Your name,"*** we are expressing a **DESIRE** for God's character, His glory, His reputation in the world, and His very being **TO BE SET APART AND LIFTED UP.**
- The word ***"HALLOWED"*** (Greek *hagiazō*) means **"consecrated," "sanctified,"** or **"set apart as holy."** It includes the idea of being separated from all that is profane. This phrase is a prayer that God Himself would be blessed and glorified. Jesus Himself prayed for that very thing in (Jn. 12:28) ***"Father, glorify Your name."*** It is a petition **God delights to answer.**
- By starting His model prayer that way, Jesus was reminding us of the **ultimate purpose of every prayer we ever offer.** The proper aim is for **God to be glorified, honored, known,** and **exalted** in **EVERY CONCEIVABLE WAY.**

- This needs to be a reminder **NOT** to call God “**Father**” in a cheaply sentimental or overly familiar way. He is our loving Father, but we are not to forget that **HIS NAME IS HOLY**. The fatherhood of God in no way diminishes His glory, and if we find ourselves thinking that way, here is the corrective: “**FATHER, HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME.**”
- The spirit of that plea is contrary to the main thrust of the so-called prosperity gospel. A story is told of a televangelist teaching the “**positive confession**” doctrine, and he told his audience that if they tacked the phrase “**not my will but Thine**” onto any of their prayers, they were not praying in faith. That is a lie from the pit of hell. Jesus Himself prayed “**not My will, but Yours be done**” (Lk. **22:42**). By teaching us to begin all our prayers with a concern that the name of God be hallowed, He was teaching us to pray for **God’s will over and above our own.**
- The kind of god who is at everyone’s beck and call and who must cave under to someone else’s desires **is not the God of the Bible.** Those who portray prayer in such a fashion are not hallowing God’s name; they are dragging His name through the mud. Their false teaching is a denial of the very nature of God. It isn’t just **bad theology**, it is **gross irreverence. IT IS BLASPHEMY.** They are taking God’s name in vain, and that is patently antithetical to the spirit of this plea.

- **Luther's catechism (section 39)** asks and answers this question: "How is God's name hallowed among us? Answer, as plainly as it can be said: **When both our doctrine and life are godly and Christian.** For since in this prayer we call God our Father, it is our duty always to deport and demean ourselves as godly children, that He may not receive shame, but honor and praise from us."
- So, when we pray, ***"Father, hallowed be Your name,"*** we are asking God to glorify Himself—to put His power, His grace, and all His perfections on display. One way He does that is by answering our prayers—**assuming our prayers are expressions of submission to His will** rather than merely flippant requests that arise from our own selfish desires.
- We were not created to enjoy prosperity in a fallen world. We were created to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. We ought to be more concerned for the glory of God than we are for our **own prosperity, our own comfort, our own agenda,** or any other **self-centered desire.** That's why Jesus taught us to think of prayer as an **ACT OF WORSHIP** rather than merely a way to ask God for things we want.
- **FOLKS THAT'S GOOD STUFF RIGHT THERE!!**

We Must Surrender to God's Program. #3

- Very few people make it through life without some sort of **PLAN**. The vast majority of us have to put a lot of thought into our schedules if we want to accomplish anything. And what we put the most time into planning says a lot about where our hearts are—too often **vacation, celebrations, and general leisure time** get lots of forethought, while responsibilities at work and around the house fit into our schedules as needed.
- **But where does God's will factor into our plans?** Are we too quick to get absorbed in our own plans and expectations for tomorrow without properly considering God's sovereign will?
- **Notice (Jam. 4:15) *"Instead, you ought to say, *'If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.'*"*** When planning the days and weeks ahead. We can't get carried away with our own program. **FAILING TO ACKNOWLEDGE GOD'S SUPREME WILL AND CONTROL IS DISRESPECTFUL—ESPECIALLY WHEN HE'S THE ONE WHO GRANTS OUR EVERY BREATH.**
- That same mindset needs to carry over into our prayer lives. It's easy to get caught up in petitions to the Lord regarding our immediate needs and desires. **IT'S MUCH HARDER** to routinely **surrender those things** to His will and wisdom, trusting in His perfect plan and provision.

- Christ's example to the disciples makes it clear—**the priority for believers is God's program, not our own.** As we saw earlier in this series, our relationship to God gives us bold confidence to bring our requests before Him. But those requests—and our entire lives—**must be subordinate to His plan.**
- **Notice (Lk. 11:2-4) *“And He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. 3 ‘Give us each day our daily bread. 4 ‘And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.’ ”***
- The closing phrase of **Verse 2** is ***“Your kingdom come.”*** It is a prayer for the advancement of God's kingdom. Like every phrase of the Lord's Prayer, this is antithetical to the prayers typically prayed by those who are concerned mainly about the advancement of their own programs, the building of their own empires, or the padding of their own pockets.
- **This is a prayer that God's program be advanced, and that His will be done.** In fact, in some Greek manuscripts the text includes the phrase, ***“Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth”*** (KJV). Jesus Himself included that phrase in the model prayer when he gave it in His **“Sermon on the Mount”** (Matt. 6:10) ***“Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.”***

- Every request we make in our prayers should first be run through this filter:
 1. **Is it in harmony with the goals and principles of God’s kingdom?**
 2. **Is it consistent with the expansion of the kingdom?**
 3. **Does it truly advance the kingdom, or does it merely fulfill some selfish want?**
- Name-it-and-claim-it theology is self-indulgent, and small minded. All it cares about is self-interest and selfish desires, with no thought for the greater cause of **CHRIST’S KINGDOM**.
- A godly attitude says, **Lord, advance Your kingdom if that means I lose everything**. That’s what the phrase **“Your kingdom come”** implies.
- The **“KINGDOM,”** of course, is the **“sphere where Christ rules—the realm where He is Lord.”** To pray **“Your kingdom come”** with sincerity is to submit one’s desires and to yield one’s heart without reservation to the **lordship of Christ**. To affirm the program of Christ’s kingdom is to set aside one’s own fleshly, materialistic, or selfish prayer requests, because, after all, according to **(Rom. 14:17) “for the kingdom of God is not EATING and DRINKING, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”**
- Any prayer that follows a different pattern is not an act of true worship, and therefore it is not a legitimate prayer.
- Remember, all true prayer is **WORSHIP**. We go to a loving Father, accepting that He knows best. Our prayers, then, reflect an obedient heart, a passion for His glory, and a desire to see the extension of His kingdom—that God might be honored. **Folks remember this statement!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**