

TRUE IDENTITY *I have called you by your name. You are mine.*

March 7 – Prayer | Knowing God & Self

1 Thessalonians 5:17

“Pray without ceasing.”

The bible tells us that we are to pray:

- In afflictions and adversities (Matthew 26:39),
- With thanksgiving for all things (Philippians 4:6),
- For deliverance (Philippians 1:19),
- For growth/understanding (Daniel 9:3),
- For our governmental leaders (2 Timothy 2:2),
- For our Spiritual shepherds (Matthew 9:37, Romans 15:30-32),
- Against oppression (Psalm 146:7),
- Against haughtiness/arrogance/vanity (Matthew 6:1, Psalm 27:2),
- For anointing (2 Thessalonians 1:12),
- For wisdom (James 1:5-8),
- For sincerity (Philippians 1:10),
- For our needs (Proverbs 30:8),
- For our spiritual life (Psalm 119:37), and
- Trusting, with faith in God (James 1:6-8).

We are to honor the place of prayer:

- For the sacred presence of God (in the temple/church – Isaiah 56:7, Acts 2:42), and
- Not for the witness of others (Matthew 6:6).

Everything the Bible mentions of importance about prayer is captured in one model prayer offered by Jesus in **Matthew 6:5-18**.

So,

⁵ *“When you pray, don’t be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. ⁶But when you pray, go*

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away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you."

Don't be pretenders – "like the hypocrites".

Desire God to be your only audience – "go pray by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private.

Also,

⁷ "When you pray, don't babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸ Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!

Don't "babble on and on" like those who have no faith (Gentiles).

God already knows the details.

So, why bother?

Because it's really not about what we want, it's about what God desires.

1 - God wants our attention.

In fact, our constant attention as reflected by Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, "Pray without ceasing."

2 – God wants our hearts leaning toward Him - ALWAYS.

We are described as children of God in Christ, so our Father wants us to run to him with thoughts, experiences, and hurts.

"I tell you the truth, unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven" Matthew 18:3.

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3 – God wants us:

TO KNOW WHO HE IS.

⁹ *Pray like this:*

*Our Father in heaven,
may your name be kept holy.*

- As a **Father** (*Abba* – an Aramaic term for an intimate connection of a child and its “daddy.”)
- As **Our** Father – our prayers are to be offered in fellowship with other believers.
- **His place** of sovereignty and authority – “*in heaven*”.
 - His defining and unchanging **characteristic of holiness** – “*may Your name be kept holy*”.

God’s holiness is completely unique, and utterly powerful, and radiating out from God like a form of energy that cannot be seen, totally understood, nor measured.

TO BOW IN SUBMISSION TO HIS LOVING RULE.

¹⁰ *May your Kingdom come soon.*

*May your will be done on earth,
as it is in heaven.*

May the rules that apply to your kingdom in heaven apply here on earth,
NOW!

This is the act of surrender that is found in our identity with Jesus while serving on His behalf.

“Not as I will, but as You will.” (Matthew 26:39)

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TO TRUST IN HIS PROVISION.

¹¹ Give us today the food we need,

Or, “Give us our daily portion, for today.”
This could be food or any essential need.

This request is not “banking” on the future supply of need, but seeking one day at a time from God’s supply.

This speaks of exercising faith, trusting each day for God’s hand to be on our lives, waiting patiently.

This is not a bail-out from God.

God has provided a wholeness about our being that incorporates our actions and thoughts, our ability and strength.

God has blessed us with a mind, body, soul, and strength.

All these together is God’s work throughout our lives for us to think, work, believe, and endure in this age.

TO BE FORGIVING AS HE HAS FORGIVEN.

*¹² and forgive us our sins,
as we have forgiven those who sin against us.*

¹⁴ “If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

This is not a condition for forgiveness, but rather insight of our personal understanding of God’s forgiveness given to us.

If we cannot understand the grace and mercy of God how can we be gracious and merciful to others?

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TO KNOW OUR PLACE OF REFUGE.

¹³ *And don't let us yield to temptation,
but rescue us from the evil one.*

The Disciple's Literal New Testament says, *"Do not bring us into a temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."*

God is our guide, and our deliverer.

Psalm 91:1-4

***"Those who live in the shelter of the Most High
will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty.***

² *This I declare about the LORD:*

***He alone is my refuge, my place of safety;
he is my God, and I trust him.***

³ *For he will rescue you from every trap
and protect you from deadly disease.*

⁴ *He will cover you with his feathers.*

He will shelter you with his wings.

His faithful promises are your armor and protection."

My identity is found in this truth, because of the promises through Jesus Christ on the cross:

My sins - forgiven,
My life - renewed,
My hope - assured,
My weakness - covered,
My joy - complete,
My fears - defeated.

I am redeemed!

I am His!