

— *Navigating Prayer Through the Christian Life* —

How should we pray?

Looking into this topic on Prayer, it is important to investigate the examples of prayer we see in scripture. From the Old Testament to the New people have been offering up these manners of worship for thousands of years. This worship has been offered from many countries, people, regions, and demographics; all the while, they had the same intention to connect with the transcendent being that reigned over all of His creation, God/Yahweh.

Here we will see examples of eight different forms of prayer, before we land on the “Model Prayer” in which we will analyze further. These examples include:

1. Adoration (praising God for His nature)
2. Confession (admitting sins)
3. Thanksgiving (expressing gratitude for blessings)
4. Supplication/Petition (asking God for needs)
5. Intercession (praying for others)
6. Lament (crying out in sorrow or pain)
7. Consecration (dedicating oneself or something to God)
8. Corporate Prayer (two or more people praying together)

1 ADORATION (Praising God for His Nature/Character)

Psalm 8

[Acknowledging God’s Character as God]

1 O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.p

2 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

3 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

[Acknowledging David’s Heart Posture of Humility and Man’s Lowly Position as Mankind]

4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

7 All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

9 O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

[Also, see Hannah's prayer at the temple when giving up Samuel for the use of the Lord's servant in 1 Samuel 2:1-10]

2 CONFESSiON (Admitting to one's wrongdoing against God, sin)

Psalm 51

[Explains His position in sin]

1. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me...

3 THANKSGIVING (Expressing gratitude for blessings)

Psalms 136:1-6

1 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

2 O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.

3 O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.

4 To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.

5 To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever.

6 To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever.

4 SUPPLICATION/PETITION (Ask God for needs)

1 Chronicles 4:10

10 And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.

5 INTERCESSION (Praying for others)

Exodus 32:11-14

11 And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?

12 Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people.

13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.

14 And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

6 LAMENT (Crying out in sorrow or pain)

Psalms 6:1-5

1 O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

2 Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed.

3 My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?

4 Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

5 For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

7 CONSECRATION (Dedicating oneself or something to God)

1 Kings 8:22-23, 27-29

22 And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven:

23 And he said, LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart:

27 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?

28 Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee to day:

29 That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.

8 CORPORATE PRAYER (Two or more people praying together)

Acts 4:23-26

23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:

25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

The one example that we will spend some good amount of our time on is the one Christ gave us, “the model prayer,” which we can see in Matthew as His instructions to the disciples’ inquiry on how to pray. But instead of just repeating this prayer out of vain repetition, as some religions do, we see this as a model for building a well-rounded and purposeful prayer. We should look at this prayer as the building blocks for what to include in your time when you come before the Lord in Prayer.

Matthew 6:9-13

⁹ 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.

1. Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Hallowed: “be pure, consecrate, and holy”

The beginning of Christ’s prayer brings adoration and acknowledgment to God’s position. He recognizes that God is in heaven, that He stands above us all. He points out God the Father as being “Hallowed”, which by definition means to “be pure, consecrate, and holy”. This means to begin our prayer, we should take time to acknowledge the position that God has over all the world, and to point out who He is in His characteristics of Holiness, Purity, Transcendence, Omnipotence....

This acknowledgment sets a mindset and a position of the heart as you go into your prayer, establishing a position of humility. Placing yourself as the humble servant that has reached the foot of the king of the universe’s throne and out of genuine adoration for Him you bring your requests and praises.

2. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Will: “what one wishes or has determined shall be done.”

Putting God's desires above our own. Remembering that God has a complete and full understanding of the entire universe at all times. That God stands above our small perspective as all knowing and sovereign.

To usher in the perfected world of God. To plead for the perfected kingdom of God to come and look forward to God bringing in His new Earth. To ask for His perfection to take place over this sin stricken world. And to agree on behalf of God as to the need to the cleansing and abolishment of the corruption of sin and the death it brings.

3. Give us this day our daily bread.

Daily bread: "the bread that suffices for each day."

This places yourself in a position of humility (Proverbs verse and getting only what you need) that places yourself under God as your caretaker and provider. This also includes the perspective humility that says "I don't deserve more than what I need daily, and I'm trusting you to decide what I need daily".

4. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Forgive: "to let go, let alone, let be"

To approach the throne of grace with the heart of forgiveness and the prayer to strengthen your forgiveness for others in the way God forgave your sins.

This would be a prayer that would reflect an appreciation for the forgiveness that has been given you and praying for that kind of forgiveness to offer to others.

5. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

Temptation: "an internal temptation to sin"

This is the prayer of recognizing your temptations and that you deal with temptations. This is the pleading for the relief from sin and its temptations. This draws in the heart of one who desires so strongly to embody the nature of God as the example to the World of His Character.

This is the prayer of one recognizing their struggle and are in a continual pursuit of growth with Christ that they are praying for the strength to overcome all son nature that so easily besets them.

Pleading for the need of mankind, the removal of evil/sin/temptations.

6. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever

Kingdom: "royal power, kingship, dominion, rule"

This prayer is the benediction, positioning God in His rightful place of supremacy over all the universe. His is the kingdom; He is the rightful king and ruler over all things, deserving the reverence and honor His rulership deserves.

Why should we pray?

- We should pray because God commands us to pray. (1 Thess. 5:17; Phil. 4:6-7)

- We should pray because it communicates with Gods, nurturing our relationship. We see from scripture that while Christ was on this earth, He regularly communicated with God the Father through prayer. (John 17:1-26; Matt. 3:17, Luke 1:11, 3:22; Matt: 26:36-46; Mark 14: 32-42; Luke 22:40-46)

- We should pray because you miss out on so much that a Giving Father desires to give to you. Matthew 7:7-11 ⁷Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.⁸For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.⁹Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" This may not mean that you will receive what you ask for but God is capable to provide and He will what He thinks best for His Children.

- We should pray because there are people in need of prayer. (James 5:17, 1 Timothy 2:1,2; James 5:14-16

