

THEOLOGY I: Doctrine of Man - Prayer

Session 4 - Dr. Jeremy Kimble

KEY QUESTIONS

- Why Does God Want Us to Pray?
 - *He wants to relate to His people, we're called to pray.*
- What is the biggest hindrance to your prayer life?
 - *technology, our imaginations, our plans for the day, our next meal...*
- How can we pray effectively?
- What strategies/tools do you utilize to ensure prayer is a key part of your everyday Christian living? *PrayerMate App*

*Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us **rely not on ourselves but on God** who raises the dead. 2 Cor 1:9*

*But we have this treasure (the gospel) in jars of clay (our bodies), to show that the surpassing **power belongs to God and not to us**. 2 Cor 4:7*

*But he said to me, "**My grace is sufficient** for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Cor 12:9-10*

- How do you link up the Bible and prayer?

*"The point is this: I saw more clearly than ever that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was **to have my soul happy in the Lord**. The first thing to be concerned about was not how much I might serve the Lord, how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man might be nourished... Before this time my practice had been at least for ten years previously as a habitual thing to give myself to prayer after having dressed in the morning. Now I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the word of God and to meditation on it, that thus my heart might be comforted, encouraged, warned, reproved, instructed; and that thus, while meditating, my heart might be brought into experimental/experiential communion with the Lord.*

I began, therefore, to meditate on the New Testament from the beginning early in the morning. The first thing I did, after having asked in a few words the Lord's blessing upon his precious word, was to begin to meditate on the word of God, searching as it were

*into every verse to get blessing out of it; not for the sake of the public ministry of the word; not for the sake of preaching on what I had meditate upon; but for the sake of obtaining **food for my soul**. The result I have found to be almost invariably this, that after a very few minutes my soul has been led to confession, or to thanksgiving, or to intercession, or to supplication; so that though I did not, as it were, give myself to prayer but to meditation, yet it turned almost immediately more or less into prayer. When thus I have been for a while making confession or intercession or supplication or have given thanks, I go on to the next words or verse, turning all, as I go on, into prayer for myself or others, as the word may lead to it; but still continually keeping before me that **food for my soul as the object of my meditation**.” (Muller prayed with an open Bible)*

George Muller 1805-1898, Christian evangelist in 19th century England. He cared for 10,024 orphans during his lifetime, and provided educational opportunities for the orphans to the point that he was even accused by some of raising the poor above their natural station in British life. He established 117 schools which offered Christian education to more than 120,000.

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, John 11:25

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I believe you’re the resurrection and the life, I praise you for the life you have given to me, and though I may die someday, I shall live eternally because of you.

The Valley of Vision - a collection of Puritan prayers

The Gospel Primer - tool to preach the gospel to yourself daily to strengthen your faith and define what you believe and why.

Psalms

EXPLANATION AND SCRIPTURAL BASIS

- Prayer is personal **communication** with God. We hear from God in His Word, we respond and communicate in prayer. He wants us to pray beyond requests.
- This includes:
 - **Petitions**
 - **Confession of sin**
 - **Adoration**
 - **Praise and Thanksgiving**
 - **God communicated to us indications of his response.**

WHY DOES GOD WANT US TO PRAY?

Matt 6:8b: *Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.* (ESV)

- **So why pray?**
 - Prayer expresses our **trust** in God and enables our trust in him to **increase**.
 - Prayer expresses our belief in God's **wisdom**, **love**, **goodness**, and **power - indeed**, all of his attributes.
 - Prayer allows us to **relate** as persons to God as a person.

We pray to a sovereign God, the God we know, and God ordains that prayer is a means in which He accomplishes things.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PRAYER

- **Prayer Changes the Way God Acts.** Wayne Grudem/Systematic Theology
 - God is all knowing, he is planning and purposing perfectly in align with His character. It's not like God isn't sovereign and our prayers suddenly change Him into something else. He knows and has ordained to work His plan by means of the prayers of His people. God is immutable. His character is unchanging. He hears our prayers. God responds to prayers.
- **Jas 4:2b:** *You do not have, because you do not ask.*
- **Lk 11:9-10:** *And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.*
- **1 Jn 1:9:** *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
- **Effective Prayer Is Made Possible by Our Mediator, Jesus Christ.** (1 Tim 2:5)
 - In the OT, believers approached God in prayer through the **future work** of Jesus which was foreshadowed in the **sacrificial system**.

- Today, believers can enter the **Holy of Holies** through Christ.

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Heb 10:19-22

- **What Is Praying “in Jesus’ Name”? (Eph 5:20)**

- To come in the name of someone means that another person has **authorized** us to come on his authority, not on our own. (Acts 3:6; 4:7; 16:18; 1 Cor 5:4)
- Praying in Jesus’ name is therefore prayer made on his **authorization**.

*Whatever you **ask in my name**, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in my name, I will do it. John 14:13-14*

*Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you **ask of the Father in my name**, he will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. John 16:23b-24*

Amen - Let this be so!

- **Should We Pray to Jesus and to the Holy Spirit?**

- NT prayers are usually offered to the **Father**, though most of these are prayed by the **Son**.
- Yet, prayers to **Jesus** appear as well. Acts 1:24; 10:9-17; 2 Cor 12:8)
- Nothing in Scripture forbids prayer to the **Holy Spirit**, therefore it does not seem wrong to pray directly to the Holy Spirit at times, particularly when we are asking him to do something that relates to his special areas of ministry or responsibility.

And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” Acts 1:24-25

SOME IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS IN EFFECTIVE PRAYER

- **Praying According to God's Will.** (1 Jn 5:14-15)

- Prayer about issues on which God gives us **commands** or **direct declarations** of his will in Scripture. (e.g., praying for wisdom as per Jas 1:5-8)

*And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything **according to his will** he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him. 1 John 5:14-15*

You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? James 4:3-4a

- On other issues, this is an admission that we do not know God's will, but that we **yield** to it.

- **Praying with Faith.**

- A settled **assurance** that when we prayed for something, God agreed to grant our specific request.
- Only God can give us this **confident assurance**.

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. Mark 11:24

Spiritual Prayer: *Pray that I would have wisdom and discretion and knowledge from the Lord so as to walk in a manner worthy of His calling.*

- **Obedience.** (Ps 66:17; Prov 15:29; 1 Pet 12:1 Jn 3:21-22)

*Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the women as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, **so that your prayers may not be hindered**. 1 Peter 3:7*

- **Confession of Sins.** (Matt 6:12; Ps 19:12)

- **Forgiving Others.** (Matt 6:14-15; Mk 11:25)

- **Humility.** (Jas 4:6; Lk 18:9-14)

- **What About Unanswered Prayer?**

- We do not know God's **wise timing**.
- We do not **know how to** pray as we ought. (Rom 8:26)
- We do not always pray according to **God's will**. (Jas 4:3)
- We do not always ask in **faith**. (Jas 1:6-8)

We join the company of Jesus and Paul and David and many martyrs in history.
(Lk 22:42; 2 Cor 12:8-9; 2 Sam 12:20, 23; Rev 12:11)

We must **continue** to **trust** in God. (Rom 8:28)

We must continue to **pray**. (1 Sam 1:19-20; Lk 2:25-35)

And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" Luke 18:7-8