

DOCTRINE OF PRAYER

- I.** Preliminary Considerations.
- A.** Prayer, like other doctrines of Scripture, has suffered due to failure to know and apply the WOG promoted by religious reversionism today.
 - B.** Prayer and the issues that relate to it must be taught to the Royal Family. Luk.11:1
 - C.** A consistent prayer life is a Royal Family Imperative; we are commanded to devote ourselves to prayer. Rom.12:12; Col.4:2; 1Thess.5:17
 - 1.** The Greek word translated “devote” and “devoted” is *proskartere, w* (*proskartereo*); it means attend constantly to something.
 - 2.** In 1Thess.5:17, “*without ceasing*” is *avdia, leipto j* (*adialeiptos*); the word means incessantly.
 - 3.** All three verses are exhortations or commands for believers to constantly and habitually engage in prayer.
 - a.** Prayer should not be an occasional function, or a last resort.
 - b.** We should pray for others and ourselves on a daily basis.
 - c.** Since we have such strong commands to constantly engage in prayer, we need to discipline our lives to accommodate its pursuit in both the areas of content and time.
 - d.** This demands focus and may mean preempting non-essential activities to ensure its priority in life.
 - e.** Prayer is an absolutely essential part of the believer's function and success in the Christian way of life.
 - D.** Like every other area of Divine good production, prayer must be handled according to the directives of Scripture.
 - E.** Prayer is not approaching God like a “sugar daddy”; we must ask according to the principles of sound doctrine, according to the will of God, Cp. Jam.4:2,3; 1Joh.5:14,15
 - F.** Prayer is not a system whereby we somehow seek to persuade God to our way of thinking or trying to convince Him to do something that we want Him to do.
 - 1.** God answers (on a grace basis) prayers that are according to the directives of Bible doctrine; they are, therefore, prayers that are offered according to His will. Cp. Heb.4:16
 - 2.** God will never compromise His will and therefore will not honor prayers made outside His will.
 - 3.** What is ensured is that God will always honor His word. Psa.138:2
 - 4.** We can be sure that God will never reward us on the basis of STA activity or human viewpoint content.
 - 5.** We must understand that God causes good to happen even towards the evil and applies grace to all men (Mat.5:45), but this is a far cry from God responding to men operating under His permissive will compared to those that communicate with Him according to His directive will.

- G.** Because of the pervasive religious reversionism of these last days, a great deal of human viewpoint has been promoted by the churches concerning prayer, including:
- 1.** The notion that some traditional language such as the King James English (Thee, Thou, Thy, Thine, wilt, dost, art, etc.) somehow commends a prayer to God.
 - a.** A perfect example of the extent to which this human viewpoint has been carried is the insertion of this KJV English into the prayers of the NASB. Cf. Mat.6:9
 - b.** The NASB is otherwise a very good translation in modern day English from the original languages.
 - c.** A quote from the explanation of the general format of the NASB reveals the nature of this thinking: “Thou, Thee and Thy are not used in this translation except in the language of prayer when addressing God”.
 - d.** This is simply a marketing strategy catering to the erroneous thinking of some fundamentalists.
 - e.** These people actually believe that saying “thee, thou, thy, or thine” rather than “you, your, and yours” somehow commends one to God in prayer.
 - f.** It is quite common to hear fundamentalist preachers praying to Jesus (violates prayer protocol; rather than God the Father) and using “Thee, Thou, Thine, and art”.
 - g.** This type of affectation is utter nonsense; “Thee”, and “Thou” are archaic forms belonging to the English of 1611, which have no place in modern English and which are not found in either the Hebrew or the Greek texts.
 - 2.** A second area of gross human viewpoint is that the repetition of some written or stock prayer has the ability to get God's attention.
 - 3.** The idea that God will hear us better if we assume a particular posture (for example, kneeling or face down) is totally erroneous; God reads the heart.
 - 4.** The notion that the length of a prayer somehow impresses God; the human viewpoint on public prayer generally seems to be “the longer the better”. Cp. Mar.12:38-40 where Jesus gives the Divine viewpoint on the matter.

II. Vocabulary.

A. Hebrew.

- 1.** **חָלָה** (chalah) 16x; to beseech, to entreat.
- 2.** **חָנַן** (chanan) in the Hithpael stem is used of supplications to God.
- 3.** **תְּחִינָה** (techinnah) 24x; supplication, a prayer for grace.
- 4.** **תְּחִינּוֹן** (tachanum) supplication. Is always used in the plural and emphasizes the outpourings of a troubled soul.
- 5.** **פָּלַל** (palal) 84x; to intercede, to intervene, to pray. Most often refers to intercessory prayer.

6. תְּפִלָּה (tephillah) 76x; prayer.
 7. שָׁאַל (shaal) 176x; to ask, to inquire.
 8. שְׁאַלָה (sheelah) 15x; request, petition, demand.
 9. מִשְׁאַלָה (mishealah) 2x; petition, desire.
- B. Greek.**
1. aivte, w (aiteo) 71x; to ask, request, demand.
 2. ai; thma (aitema) 3x; request, demand, a thing asked for.
 3. de, omai (deomai) 22x; to ask, request, beseech. The nuance of this word is a request with urgency, based on some pressing need.
 4. de, hsi j (deesis) 19x; a request, an entreaty. With a nuance of urgency.
 5. e; nteuxij (enteuxis) 2x; intercession, petition, appeal. The nuance is the request of an inferior to a superior.
 6. evntugxa, nw (entugxano) 5x; to intercede to a superior.
 7. evrwta, w (erotao) 58x; to ask, to request.
 8. eu; comai (euchomai) 6x; to pray.
 9. euvch, (euche) 3x; a prayer, an oath, a vow.
 10. proseu, comai (proseuchomai) 87x; to pray. This verb is the most comprehensive term for prayer in the New Testament.
 11. proseuch, (proseuche) 37x; prayer. Like the cognate verb proseu, comai (proseuchomai) this word is a general term for all kinds of prayer.

III. The protocol of prayer.

- A. The believer is to direct his prayers only to God the Father. Mat.6:9; Luk.11:2; Eph.3:14; 5:20
- B. The believer is to pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Joh.14:13; 15:16
- C. The believer is to pray in the power of God the Holy Spirit. Eph.6:18; Jude 20
- D. We are not to address our prayers to the Son or to the Holy Spirit.

IV. Prayer in the Old Testament.

- A. In the Old Testament believers who acclimated to the Word of God were heard when they prayed. Pro.15:8,29
- B. The unbeliever and the maladjusted believer were not so regarded. Pro.28:9
- C. God definitely heard the prayer of adjusted believers. Psa.6:9; 66:16-20; Isa.38:5
- D. David and Elijah are good OT examples of praying effectively. Psa.72:20; Jam.5:17-18
- E. The temple was called “a house of prayer”. Isa.56:7; Mat.21:13
- F. The importance of prayer was taught through ritual in the tabernacle (later the temple). Exo.30:1-10
 1. The altar of incense was the designated place where a specific formula of incense was to be offered. vs.1
 2. The smoke of the burning incense going up symbolized prayers

- going up to God. Cp. Luk.1:5-10
3. The altar was made of acacia wood overlaid with pure gold.
 - a. This portrays Jesus Christ, the God\man.
 - b. The gold portrays His Deity; the wood His humanity.
 4. The fact that the incense could be offered only on this altar, teaches that all prayer is to be offered through the person of Jesus Christ, the one mediator between God and mankind. 1Tim.2:5; Joh.14:13
 5. The altar of incense was located in the Holy Place, which represents Ph₂.
 6. The altar of incense was specifically located directly before the veil that separated the Holy Place (Ph₂) from the Most Holy Place (Ph₃).
 7. This teaches that we offer our prayers, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to the throne of grace, located thousands of light years away. Cp. Heb.4:16
 8. The incense was composed of a specific combination of aromatic substances. Exo.30:34-36
 - a. This represents the content of prayer, which is specified by the Word of God.
 - b. The burning of any other formula of incense (called strange incense) was forbidden. Exo.30:9 cp. Lev.10:1; this illustrates God's attitude toward prayer with incorrect content and/or prayer offered in an incorrect manner.
 - c. Some examples of "strange incense" in prayer.
 - 1) Praying to Mary (or anyone except God the Father).
 - 2) The prayers of an unbeliever.
 - 3) Prayers from the lust grid of the STA/OSN. Cp. Jam.4:3
 9. The incense was not to be manufactured by anyone for their own private use. Exo.30:37
 - a. Only the priests could use this incense and only in a specific way, at a specific time, and at a specific place.
 - b. This teaches that prayer is not for unbelievers but only for believer-priests.
 - c. Anyone who made the formula for their own private use was to be excommunicated from Israel. vs.38
 10. The order of worship.
 - a. The priest had to first go to the bronze altar to obtain fire to light the incense.
 - 1) Only fire from the bronze altar could be used to light the incense.
 - 2) The bronze altar and the fire in it symbolized judgment.
 - 3) This altar was the place where the sacrifices were killed and burned.
 - 4) Thus, the bronze altar portrayed the cross where Jesus Christ, the perfect sacrifice, was judged on our behalf.
 - 5) The fact that the priest had to light the prayer incense with fire from the bronze altar, teaches that God does not hear

- the prayers of those that reject the work of Christ on the cross.
- b.** After he went to the bronze altar for fire, the priest then had to use the bronze laver to wash his hands and feet. Exo.30:17-21
 - c.** The laver and washing the extremities taught rebound (confession of personal sins).
 - 1)** The laver was made of bronze hand mirrors that had been melted down to construct the large basin. Exo.38:8
 - 2)** Throughout the tabernacle, bronze symbolized judgment.
 - 3)** The hand mirror motif taught judgment of self, an important ingredient in rebound. Judging self with respect to sins, was taught through the analogy of examining oneself in a mirror. Cp. 1Cor.11:28-31
 - 4)** As we go through life we pick up “dirt” (unrighteousness) in the form of personal sins; these quench or grieve the Holy Spirit making rebound necessary to restore fellowship.
 - 5)** When we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1Joh.1:9
 - 6)** As the priest worked in the tabernacle, he picked up dirt on his hands and feet.
 - 7)** The washing of that dirt in the water of the laver symbolized and taught rebound.
 - 8)** The fact that the priest had to use the laver before entering the holy place (Ph₂, the life of the believer in time), shows that there is no service in Ph₂ apart from rebound. Exo.30:20 cp. 1Cor.11:30
 - 9)** The use of the bronze laver before entering the holy place to burn the incense, teaches that prayer is reserved for believers and effective only for believers in fellowship.
 - d.** The priest needed the light of the golden lampstand to offer the incense.
 - 1)** The lampstand symbolized, among other things, the light of the Word of God.
 - 2)** The fact that the lampstand illuminated the altar of incense spoke of the light of the Word of God that one needs to pray correctly.
 - G.** The case of King Uzziah further demonstrates that only qualified, authorized people (believers in fellowship) may offer effectual prayers. 2Chr.26:16-21
 - H.** David recognized that incense was analogous to prayer. Psa.141:2
 - I.** The offering of incense to the false gods of the Gentiles represented prayer to someone other than God. 1Kgs.3:3; 11:8; 22:43; 2Kgs.12:3; 16:2,3
 - J.** Incense is used to picture the prayers of saints, which precede the judgments of the Tribulation. Rev.5:8

- V. The Model Prayer.
- A. This prayer, which has erroneously been called “The Lord's Prayer,” is in reality a model prayer and was given by Jesus on two separate occasions. Mat.6:5-15; Luk.11:1-4
1. Jesus, gave it as a model, in response to a request from His disciples that He teach them to pray. Luk.11:1
 2. The Lord presented it to the disciples as a pattern to teach the content of prayer. Luk.11:2, “*And He said to them, ‘When you pray, say...’*”; Mat.6:9, “*Pray then in this way...*”
 3. The request for a prayer lesson came because the disciples had observed the consistent prayer life of Jesus. Luk.11:1, “*And it came about that while He was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray...’*”
 - a. Jesus prayed both privately and publicly.
 - b. His public prayers were short in conformity with His own admonition about privacy in prayer. Mat.6:6
 - c. While the disciples knew that Jesus prayed frequently, they did not know the precise content of His long private prayers.
 4. It is evident from other examples that this was not the exact format of all of our Lord's prayers. Cp. Mat.11:25,26; 26:36-46; Mar.14:32-42; Luk.10:21; 23:34,46; Joh.11:41,42; 14:16; 17:1-26
 5. It is clear, therefore, that the prayer that is commonly called the Lord's prayer, is in reality a model prayer.
- B. This prayer was not given to be repeated in mindless repetition. Cp. Mat.6:7
- C. This prayer was given as a model in regard to prayer content and direction. (Remember, this was a lesson in how to pray. Recognize that the lesson included more than just the model prayer.)
- D. The fact that Jesus honored the disciple's request for the lesson demonstrates that it is legitimate to ask for Divine viewpoint on any subject. Cp. Jam.1:5
- E. The prayer and its content:
1. “*Our Father*”: Stresses our familial relationship as children of God. Cp. Gal.3:26; 1Joh.3:1,2; Joh.1:12
 2. “*In heaven*”: While God is omnipresent, this emphasizes the location of the throne of grace in the third heaven, the place where God chooses to manifest His essence.
 3. “*Your kingdom come*”: This is a prayer for the Millennial Kingdom, the personal reign of Christ on planet earth.
 4. “*Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*”: This part of prayer content relates not only to the Millennium but also to the ultimate resolution of the Angelic Conflict.
 5. “*Forgive us our debts*” (Mat.6:12) “*Forgive us our sins*” (Luk.11:4): Both terms relate to sin and our subsequent indebtedness to God. This phrase teaches self-examination and rebound as part of the content of prayer.
 6. “*As we also have forgiven our debtors*” (Mat.6:12) “*For we*

ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us” (Luk.11:4): Forgiving those who are indebted to us, means much more than just forgiving the debt of someone who owes us five dollars or a cup of sugar. This phrase teaches the concept of forgiving those who have wronged us. So this teaches forgiveness and grace orientation as a prerequisite to effective prayer. The one who refuses to forgive will not be forgiven. Mat.6:14,15

7. *“Lead us not into temptation...”*: This phrase does not indicate that it is possible for God to tempt us to sin (cp. Jam.1:13). This phrase deals with the recognition that it is possible for each of us to become casualties in the Angelic Conflict. Part of our prayer content should be that God will keep us from situations that could cause our downfall. This emphasizes true humility and the recognition of our external enemy, Satan, and our internal enemy, the indwelling old sin nature. Cp. Jam.1:14,15

VI. When we follow the prescribed protocol and have complied with the necessary prerequisites for prayer, God the Holy Spirit intercedes for us. Rom.8:26,27

- A. Even a believer that is positive to Bible doctrine and in fellowship may have certain weaknesses in prayer.
- B. One problem is being able to speak or think the correct prayer in a given situation.
- C. Lacking omniscience, we are inadequate at times to offer a prayer that covers all the bases in a particular situation.
- D. When we offer a legitimate prayer, God the Holy Spirit takes up the slack, perfects the prayer, and brings it to the throne of grace.
- E. The Holy Spirit presents the prayer through our mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is totally cognizant of the believer who is offering up the prayer. (Is he positive? Following MPR? etc.)
- F. The request that is presented is now totally in line with Divine essence and Divine viewpoint.

VII. Classifications of prayer (C-TIP).

- A. C: Confession of sin. Mat.6:12; Luk.11:4; 1Joh.1:9
- B. T: Thanksgiving.
 1. For specific blessings: (The noun is used 15x and the verb 39x in the New Testament. The list of blessings includes: God, His plan, His Son, our salvation, prayer, rebound provision, living grace, RM/RW, the local church, your pastor-teacher, deacons, other positive believers in the local church, your job, angelic protection, SG₃, Bible doctrine, etc.).
 2. Praise directed towards God and His essence. Ex., Mat.6:9; Luk.11:2; Psa.148:1-150:6; Luk.10:21; Heb.13:15
- C. I: Intercession for others. Num.14:11-19; 2Cor.13:9; Eph.1:15-19; Phi.1:9; 1The.5:25; 2The.1:11; 3:1; Heb.13:18
- D. P: Petition for self. Psa.4:1; 5:1-10; 7:1-11; Mar.14:38

VIII. The disciplines of prayer.

- A. Discipline One: Maintain the Filling of God the Holy Spirit. Joh.15:7, *“If you abide in Me (the filling of the Holy Spirit) and My words abide in you ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you.”*
- B. Discipline Two: Possession of Bible doctrine in the soul. Joh.15:7, *“If you abide in Me and My words abide in you (Bible doctrine resident in the believer) ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you.”* The filling of God the Holy Spirit, and Bible doctrine in the soul, insure that the prayer will be according to the will of God and, therefore, subject to an affirmative answer.
- C. Discipline Three: Consistency. 1The.5:17, *“Pray without ceasing.”*
- D. Discipline Four: Persistence.
 - 1. Luk.11:5-13: The parable of the persistent friend.
 - a. This parable immediately follows the model prayer that was given as a lesson to teach proper content in prayer.
 - b. This parable continues the prayer lesson and teaches persistence in prayer.
 - 1) The friend who is asked for bread symbolizes God the Father.
 - 2) That the Father is considered a friend denotes the believer that has established fellowship with God.
 - 3) Therefore, the one asking symbolizes the believer in fellowship (the one who has nothing is asking the one who possesses what is needed).
 - 4) The late hour is analogous to the believer being willing to cast his need upon God, whenever it may arise.
 - 5) There is no time that is inconvenient to God when we pray.
 - 6) The unexpected visitor portrays an unexpected need that arises in the life of the believer.
 - 7) The friend's initial resistance to the request illustrates the fact that all prayer requests are not always answered immediately.
 - 8) God's denial of the adjusted believers initial request is not because He is not our friend, but to illustrate His sovereign will as the priority in His answer to prayer.
 - 9) The friend's final acquiescence to the request demonstrates the fact that God will respond to the persistent requests of believers (as long as they are legitimate).
 - 10) Delays in answers to legitimate prayers are due to Divine timing and are sometimes designed to teach the believer patience.
 - 11) Finally, the parable teaches that God will supply our needs.
 - c. The Lord followed the parable with a promise concerning persistence in prayer. vss.9,10
 - 1) “Asking” refers to a prayer request.
 - 2) “Seeking” refers to the believer's prayer life as it relates to learning God's will.
 - 3) “Knocking” involves asking God to open a door.

- 4) Each verb is a command and carries a promise with it.
- 5) The application is, don't give up!
- d. Finally Jesus concluded the prayer lesson with an illustration of God's willingness to answer our requests and to provide every good and perfect gift. vs.11-13
 - 1) The Lord argues from the lesser to the greater to convince us that God will honor all bonafide requests.
 - 2) The father/son example is intended to emphasize our relationship with God and to encourage us to pray.
 - 3) Just as a natural father is usually willing to provide what is best for his son, so our heavenly Father is willing to provide for us when we ask.
 - 4) As an example of the good gifts, Jesus cites one of the greatest gifts that God the Father was willing to give to the one who would ask: the gift of the filling of God the Holy Spirit.
 - 5) Remember that the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit did not exist in the Age of Israel. Cp. Joh.7:39
- 2. Luk.18:1-8, where Jesus again teaches from the lesser to the greater that if persistence can pay off even under an unrighteous regime, then how much more so will God answer the consistent legitimate prayers of His elect.
- E. Discipline Five: Orientation to one's time in history. 1Pet.4:7
 - 1. Prayers should be consistent with revelations concerning the last days.
 - 2. Prayers for world peace (or for the spiritual recovery of the United States) are prayers that manifest an ignorance of prophetic events of the last days, and which, therefore, are contrary to Divine viewpoint.
- F. Discipline Six: Include everything in your prayer requests and thanksgiving. Phi.4:6, "*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and entreaty with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God.*"
- G. Discipline Seven: Privacy. Mat.6:5,6; 14:23; 26:36-39

IX. The objects of prayer.

- A. The prayer for wisdom is the single most important petition you can offer. Jam.1:5; Pro.2:3-5
- B. Establishment Chain of Command. 1Tim.2:1-4
- C. The royal chain of command (P-T and deacons). Rom.15:30; 2The.3:1,2
- D. The royal family at Lake Erie Bible Church. Eph.1:15-19; Col.1:3,9; 2The.1:11
- E. Living grace. Mat.6:11; Luk.11:3
- F. The MAJG. Col.4:12; Eph.1:18,19
- G. The rapture. Mat.6:10; Luk.11:2
- H. Other believers under testing. 2Cor.1:3-11; Phi.1:19; Jam.5:14,15
- I. All your cares. Phi.4:6; 1Pet.5:7

- J.** Your enemies. Mat.5:44; Luk.23:34
- K.** Other local churches and believers that are faithful to the Word of God and MPR. Eph.1:15,16
- L.** We are to withhold our intercessory prayers to extend life for those that are reversionists and on their deathbeds. 1Joh.5:14-16
- M.** Jesus did not pray intercessory for –V unbelievers. Joh.17:9
 - 1. The Lord’s prayer is on behalf of believers that have been given Him and not for the cosmos in general.
 - 2. Christ understands that God has provided all that men need to obtain salvation and establish reconciliation with Him, but that –V will not accept the terms and conditions of the peace God offers.
 - 3. Jesus understands the doctrine of volition and that the ball is in the court of all unbelievers and the final decision lies with each individual.
 - 4. Thus any prayer other than the expression of an inner desire for their salvation (Rom.10:1 cp. 1Tim.2:4) is tantamount to asking God to manipulate their volition, which He will not do.
 - 5. Therefore, any prayers regarding –V and enemies of ourselves and God must be confined within the limits of the principle of volition and understanding that God has and will continue to provide all that is necessary for these to express +V, if they so choose. Deu.30:19

- X.** Hindrances to effective prayer.
 - A.** Old sin nature activity and failure to rebound. Psa.66:18
 - B.** Wrong content based on negative volition and/or ignorance. Pro.28:9
 - C.** Rejection of Bible doctrine. Pro.1:28,29
 - D.** Wrong intent, praying from the lust grid of the STA/OSN. Jam.4:3
 - E.** Unbelief. Mar.11:24; Jam.1:5-8
 - F.** Lack of domestic harmony. 1Pet.3:7
 - G.** Lack of forgiveness. Mat.6:12,14,15; Mar.11:25; Luk.11:4
 - H.** Failure to ask. Jam.4:2
 - I.** Lack of compassion. Pro.21:13

- XI.** Concluding Observations.
 - A.** Prayer, like all divine good production, must fall under the doctrinal principle: “action with honor”.
 - B.** Like all other doctrines of the Word of God, it must be studied and applied correctly.
 - C.** Prayer is a wonderful privilege that we possess due to our position in Christ. Eph.1:3
 - D.** We are to have confidence in our heavenly Father and come to him as a child would to his natural father. Rom.8:15; Gal.4:6; Heb.4:16
 - 1. Our confidence is through our knowledge and faith-rest of God’s promises to us as His children and our relationship with Him.
 - 2. Therefore, our confidence is drawn from our faith in God and BD, not from within ourselves or from the cosmos.
 - 3. Jesus in His humanity had perfect confidence that God always

heard His prayers because He was always in fellowship with the Father and asked or did nothing apart from God's will. Joh.11:41b-42a cp. Joh.5:30

- E.** We may freely commit everything in our lives to God in prayer. Phi.4:6; 1Pet.5:6,7
- F.** Prayer is a royal family imperative to which we are to be devoted. Rom.12:12; Col.4:2
- G.** Certain individuals in the local church have a niche that permits them to devote large amounts of time to prayer. 1Tim.5:5
- H.** We are not to pray aimlessly, but according to sound doctrine and, therefore, in line with the will of God. Luk.22:42; 1Joh.5:14,15
- I.** Our success in prayer is going to be in direct proportion to our understanding and application of Bible doctrine. 1Joh.3:22
- J.** Doctrinally correct prayers of the adjusted believer that is intellectually honest can produce much on behalf of themselves and others. Jam.5:16