

A Prayer Revolution: The Prayer of the Lord

The concept of offering up requests in the hopes that an invisible, distant God would deliver what we desire is the primary model of prayer for many Christians today. Read the list of prayer requests and hope for the best!

I remember growing up as a young Catholic boy people reciting the Lord's Prayer over and over again as if I was fulfilling some religious duty. Those were not happy days as I lived in unhealthy fear presuming God would reject me unless I fulfilled the quota.

Now, I do agree that even simple, faith filled recitation of God's living Word is healthy and extremely positive. However, too many presume reading the Lord's Prayer or other scriptures is the totality of their assignment in prayer. Read it, agree with it and move on.

This is the error I want to talk about.

Prayer isn't a stale, tedious chore that, once accomplished, we earn favor with God and our desires (or demands) are met as requested. Prayer is the expression of the passion of our heart as we come into fervent, joyful agreement with God. That expression is explosive, and it's actually laughable to presume it can be limited to the mouthing of words! True prayer is comprehensive, and it overwhelms us into radical agreement with God and aggressive response to His directives.

Prayer Isn't Mostly About Us

Prayer is at its most powerful when the focus isn't on us.

"When you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street

corners that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward" (Matt. 6:5, MEV).

While we may not bring focus to us by religiously praying on the street corners, is it possible that the content of our prayer is at times narcissistic? Is it about bringing attention to us and our situation or to God and his?

"But you, when you pray, enter your closet, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly" (Matt. 6:6, MEV).

Prayer Isn't About Coercing God

"But when you pray, do not use vain repetitions, as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their much speaking. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him. Therefore pray in this manner: Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name" (Matt. 6:7-9, MEV).

I was repeating the Lord's Prayer over and over again as a young child, convinced that my devoted work of speaking out loud would please God and result in a big thumbs up. If you think about that, it's kind of demented thinking! It reminds me of tribal religions in which people sacrifice chickens and mark their bodies as an offering to their gods in the hopes that they are spared from drought, floods and other natural disasters.

Prayer for the Christian comes from the place of deep, abiding love and a wondrous relationship with Jesus.

"Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your judgment as the noonday" (Psalm 37:4-6, MEV).

Again, our prayer is simply an expression of our revelation of Jesus! We are ignited with passion as a result of knowing God intimately. We can't help but declare the wonders of our God!

Imagine what would erupt out of you after having an experience as is described in Revelation 19. That outburst, that response, is prayer!

"I saw heaven opened. And there was a white horse. He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on His head are many crowns. He has a name written, that no one knows but He Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood. His name is called The Word of God. The armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, with which He may strike the nations. "He shall rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury and wrath of God the Almighty. On His robe and on His thigh He has a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev. 19:11-16, MEV).

The Prayer of the Lord

The Lord's Prayer is just that—the passions of Jesus. It is truly the prayer of the Lord.

We aren't to be limited to a simple recitation of words on paper. There is a fervent passion that should be sizzling in our veins as we declare this potent, culture-rocking prayer.

"Confess your faults to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much" (James 5:16, MEV).

The Lord's Prayer is an intense declaration of lifestyles that are shaking and shocking our culture. It is an expression of agreement with the plan of God for the nations of the earth!

Holy Are You

"Therefore pray in this manner: Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name" (Matt. 6:9, MEV).

This verse shouldn't be easy to be casually read aloud! The call is for us to have a visitation of God and his holiness! A revelation that causes us to collapse to our knees with our faces buried in our hands as we tremble and cry, "Holy!"

Can you imagine what it will be like to gaze upon perfect purity in our beautiful God's countenance second after second forever? Oh, Lord Jesus, come! What an eternity that will be! Day and night never ceasing to declare, "Holy is the Lord God Almighty!"

"Before the throne was a sea of glass like crystal. In the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures covered with eyes in front and in back. The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. The four living creatures had six wings each, and they were covered with eyes all around. All day and night, without ceasing, they were saying: 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,' who was, and is, and is to come." (Rev. 4:6-8, MEV).

Your Kingdom Come

"Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10, MEV).

The conflict of flesh vs. spirit should be causing veins to bulge in our necks as we cry out to God, "I despise the limitations of the flesh! I reject my own natural wisdom and I declare with boldness that Your wisdom, Your government, Your kingdom is superior!"

This prayer can't be limited to a one-sentence, three-second

read. As we draw closer and closer to Jesus, we develop a never-ending yearning for God and His leadership. Everything else will appear as foolishness in comparison with the government of Jesus.

Our Daily Bread

"Give us this day our daily bread" (Matt. 6:11, MEV).

Related to the previous point, we are declaring our joyful dependence on God. Instead of our Santa Claus-style requests flying heavenward in hopes of having our desires gift wrapped and delivered by God, we tell Him, "Get me whatever You want."

How powerful is it to move beyond asking God for the obvious and allowing Him to surprise us! Talk about an addicting prayer life! Sometimes the best prayer is not to pray at all. What I mean is, if we have faith that He will supply all of our needs, why would we beg Him for our needs to be met?

We can certainly have honest discussions with God about what we are struggling with, but we should do so without worry or frustration. We simply rejoice as we trust God to give us our bread every single day, and I think it's best if he chooses just what that bread is!

Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will protect your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:4-7, MEV).

"Therefore, take no thought, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' (For the Gentiles seek after all these things.) For your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be given to you" (Matt. 6:31-33, MEV).

Forgiveness

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (Matt. 6:12, MEV).

Again, this cry of our heart should be automatic. The Lord’s Prayer is a passionate decree of the reality of our lives in Christ. Sin should cause us to weep and grieve as we again draw near to God with confession on our lips. Unholy decisions should so disrupt our flow in the Holy Spirit that we are nearly crushed under the weight—only to find God Himself running to us to forgive us and give us new life!

The seriousness and destructiveness of sin should also cause us to forgive quickly—instantly—others who have wronged us. That declaration of freedom for others bellows out of us as we unlock prison cell after prison cell, allowing the guilty to go free!

In fact, this point in the prayer is so critical it is revisited again at the end:

“For if you forgive men for their sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men for their sins, neither will your Father forgive your sins” (Matt. 6:14-15, MEV).

A lifestyle of setting people free should mark every one of us. It’s what God does, and it’s what we do!

Deliver Us From Evil

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen” (Matt. 6:13, MEV).

As inhabitants of a fallen world, we are keenly aware of the power of evil and the enticement of the enemy. This passionate plea should be forever on our lips or until we enter eternity, at least.

The thought of anything compromising our energizing, fiery,

zealous relationship with the Lover of our souls should result in sobriety and a locked-in demeanor. We must understand the power of sin, and we have no option but to be continually aware of its devastating force.

“Whomever you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if I forgave someone anything, for your sakes I forgave it in Christ, lest Satan should take advantage of us. For we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Cor. 2:10-11, MEV).

It's All About God

“For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen” (Matt. 6:13, MEV).

This is true worship!

I want to exhort you to allow the Prayer of the Lord to become your own. Let it be an expression of your overflowing, all-in lifestyle of worship and surrender to Jesus.

It's not just a good group of words to read before bed. Prayer, especially prayer like this, is a testament to who we really are and what we really believe. It's an expression of our raging passion for God and a decree of our agreement with and position in Him!

Watch the accompanying video here. {eoaf}

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