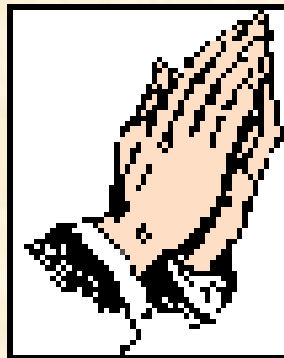


The Prayers of Jesus



"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."

Matthew 6:9-13

The Prayers of Jesus

by Carl Graham

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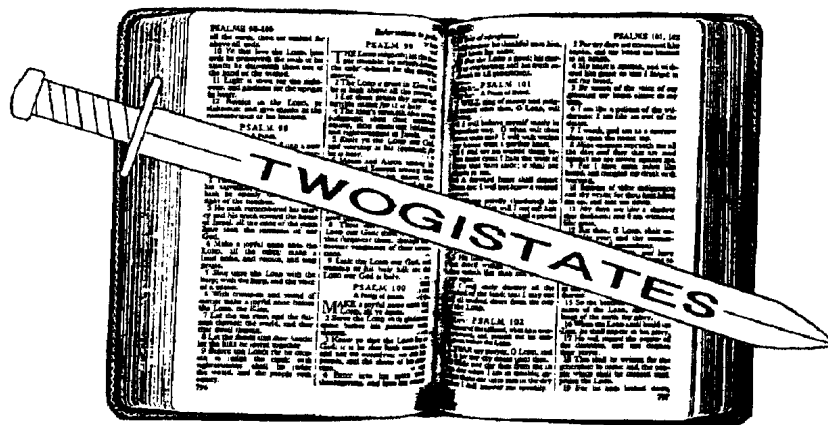
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For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any
twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of
soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a
discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

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THE PRAYERS OF JESUS

In order to understand how we should pray, we must consider the prayer life of the Master, Jesus Christ Himself. A study of Jesus' prayers in the Scripture will show that there are at least 10 basic elements that complement and enhance communication with God. It behooves each Christian to learn and apply the spiritual lessons behind these basic elements to his/her life, and in doing so, a life that is pleasing to God is secured.

TEN BASIC ELEMENTS OF PRAYER

First, and foremost, we must have a pure heart. By this, it is meant that we must be trying with all our being to please God. If we are not trying to please God, then we're praying selfish prayers. God does not listen to self centered and selfish prayers.

Second, we must be seeking God's will in whatever we are praying about. Even if there is personal disaster approaching, we must be willing to accept it if God can use us in some way to further His kingdom.

Third, we must get all sin out of our lives by confessing to God. God demands that we acknowledge our sins, for all sin is against Him, and we must remove this obstacle to communicate with Him.

Fourth, we must be ready to pray. God demands our undivided attention when we address Him. We must get all distractions out of our minds to let our thoughts and words get to God without the intervention of worldly concerns.

Fifth, we must have faith in God that He will answer prayer. Perhaps this is the hardest part. We often times say we have faith in God, but then falter when we perceive that He is slow or not responsive. We must accept that God is who He claims to be, and we can depend on Him to do what He says He'll do.

Sixth, we must accept God's answer. We often think of getting exactly what we want as being the answer; anything else is usually not satisfactory. God answers all the prayers of His children, but it has to be in His way, and in His time. We have to learn to pray to God, turn it all over to Him, and let Him make the decisions about what He is going to do about our requests. If He says "no" we must accept that.

Seventh, a consistent prayerful attitude must be exhibited in the way we live our daily lives. In other words, prayer should be as natural as breathing. We should start our day with prayer, take prayer breaks throughout the day, pray with our friends when the situation arises, set special times aside so we can be alone with God, and be sure to end our day with prayer.

Eighth, take all things to God in prayer. Nothing is too small, or too great for God to be interested in. He wants us to bring our problems to Him. He wants us to bring our successes to Him. He wants us to bring our failures to Him. But most of all, He wants us to communicate with Him and acknowledge that He is our God.

Ninth, take all things to God in the name of Jesus. He alone has paid the price that God demanded for the human race. He is our Savior, and He stands before God as our advocate. God will acknowledge all things we ask in Jesus' name.

Tenth, never take prayer lightly. It is the business of God, and in being so, it must be taken seriously. We should never misuse the concept of prayer by telling people we'll pray for them as if it is a way of making small talk. Prayer is communicating with God, and this is privileged communication. It must be mentioned with reverence and respect in the same way Jesus did as He talked to God.

THE PRAYERS OF JESUS

A study of the prayers of Jesus and His related comments, which are the basis for the preceding elements, will give us much insight into the importance of prayer. It further presents us with how the Master prayed, and to emulate Him must be the ultimate goal of all Christians.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Matthew 11:25-26

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Prayer of Blessing and Thanksgiving

Matthew 15:36

36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

Matthew 26:26-27

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

Mark 6:41

41 And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

Private Prayer

Matthew 14:23

23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

Matthew 26:36

36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

Mark 1:35

35 In the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

Luke 5:16

16 And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

Luke 6:12

12 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

Luke 9:18

18 And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

Prayer for Children

Matthew 19:13

13 Then were there brought unto Him little children, that He should put His hands on them, and pray:

Prayer of Petition

Matthew 26:39

39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Matthew 26:42

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

Matthew 26:44

44 And He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

Luke 22:41-44

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Prayer in the Hour of Distress

Matthew 27:46

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Prayer at Baptism

Luke 3:21

21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

Prayer of Confirmation

Luke 9:28-29

28 And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

29 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening.

Teaching Others to Pray

Luke 11:1

1 And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

Prayer to Sustain Faith of Others

Luke 22:32

32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

Prayer for His Enemies

Luke 23:34

34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

Prayer Committing His Soul to God

Luke 23:46

46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

Miracle Accompanied by Prayer

John 11:41-42

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

Prayer Committing Himself to the Will of God

John 12:27-28

27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

Jesus' Prayer for All Christians

John 17:1-26

1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

Jesus Accepted God's answer to Prayer

Hebrews 5:6-8

6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.

SIGNIFICANT TEACHINGS OF JESUS ON PRAYER

We are to worship God in Spirit.

John 4:24

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

We are to pray to God with a humble heart.

Matthew 6:5

5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

Luke 18:10-14

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

We are to have frequent private prayer.

Matthew 6:6-8

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

We are to ask God for our needs.

Matthew 7:7-11

7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If 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?

We are to follow our Lord's model 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.

We are to pray together.

Matthew 18:19-22

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

We are to pray in faith.

Mark 11:24

24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

We are to ask in the name of Jesus.

John 14:13-14

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

Joy is related to asking in the name of Jesus.

John 16:23-24

23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

Prayer is answered if we abide in Jesus.

John 15:7

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Prayer is to be importunate (resolute).

Luke 11:5-13

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Luke 18:1-8

1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

We are to pray to avoid temptation.

Mark 14:38

38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

Matthew 26:41

41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temp-tation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Luke 22:40

40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

Luke 22:46

46 Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

* * * * *

The following interpretation of the Lord's Prayer by an anonymous writer expresses well how our lives must be lived and hearts must be conditioned if we expect God to hear our prayers.

I cannot say "our" if I live only for myself.

I cannot say "Father" if I do not endeavor each day to act like His child.

I cannot say "who art in heaven" if I am laying up no treasure there.

I cannot say "hallowed be Thy name" if I am not striving for holiness.

I cannot say "Thy kingdom come" if I am not doing all in my power to hasten that wonderful event.

I cannot say "Thy will be done" if I am disobedient to His Word.

I cannot say, "in earth as it is in heaven" if I'll not serve Him here and now.

I cannot say, "give us this day our daily bread" if I am dishonest or seeking things by subterfuge.

I cannot say, "forgive us our debts" if I harbor a grudge against anyone.

I cannot say, "lead us not into temptation" if I deliberately place myself in its path.

I cannot say, "deliver us from evil" if I do not put on a whole armor of God.

I cannot say, "Thine is the kingdom" if I do not give the King the loyalty due Him from a faithful subject.

I cannot attribute to Him the power if I fear what men may do.

I cannot ascribe to Him the glory if I'm seeking honor only for myself, and I cannot say "forever" if the horizon of my life is bounded completely by time.

* * * * *

"PRAYER is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the heart or soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Holy Spirit, for such things as God hath promised according to the Word for the good of the Church, with submission, in faith, to the Will of God."

John Bunyan
Author of Pilgrim's Progress

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