

What Prayer Is for the Christian (Part 2)

Do we know what is available to us in prayer?

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • November 4, In the year of our Lord, 2012

Scripture Reader and Reading: Wayne Duncan – Revelation 8.1-6

Persuasion:

I. Types of Prayer

A. Praise

1. One of the most healthy things you can do is praise God in prayer.
 - a) Look for things for which to praise Him.
 - b) Let not prayer simply be for getting what you want.
2. Let your prayers be like our songs.
 - a) How many of our songs implore God to do this and to do that?
 - b) A majority of them speak of the wonderful traits of God.
3. What is the Book of Psalms?
 - a) It is a collection of 150 psalms,
 - b) whose heart and core is the praise of God.
 - (1) Read the Psalms and see how the psalmists viewed their existence,
 - (2) that it is wrapped up in God, and
 - (a) the writers invite you to do the same and to be the same.
 - (b) To demonstrate this, I picked Psalm 54, because that is my age.
4. Listen to the psalmist and everything in some way, ties in with God,
 - 1 *Save me, O God, by Your name,
And vindicate me by Your strength.*
 - a) See how although the psalmist was in trouble,
 - b) to him it was all about God?

5. When the psalmist presented the problem, notice why it was a problem,

- 2 Hear my prayer, O God;
Give ear to the words of my mouth.
- 3 For strangers have risen up against me,
And oppressors have sought after my life;
They have not set God before them. Selah

- a) Those who oppress others,
- b) have not set God before them.

6. Whereas, look how the psalmist lives,

- 4 Behold, God is my helper;
The Lord is with those who uphold my life.
- 5 He will repay my enemies for their evil.
Cut them off in Your truth.
- 6 I will freely sacrifice to You;
I will praise Your name, O Lord, for it is good.
- 7 For He has delivered me out of all trouble;
And my eye has seen its desire upon my enemies.
(Psa 54)

7. There are other psalms, such as 148, that do nothing but praise God.

B. Confession

- 3 When I kept silent, my bones grew old
Through my groaning all the day long.
- 4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me;
My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah
- 5 I acknowledged my sin to You,
And my iniquity I have not hidden.
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,"
And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah
(Psa 32.3-5)

C. Thanksgiving

1. Do you want to give to those who are ungrateful?
2. God functions the same way.

18 ...in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you (1Th 5.18).

- a) God wants us to give thanks in everything.
- b) That settles it.
- c) Therefore, do it.

D. Supplication and Petition

1. I hope that I have not frightened you away from making supplications and presenting petitions.
2. God wants to give what we want.

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God (Phi 4.6).

II. Things for Which to Pray

A. For Our Enemies

44 “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you...” (Matt 5.44).

B. For God’s Glory

9 “In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name” (Matt 6.9).

C. For God’s Will to Be Done

10 “Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt

6.10).

D. Daily Needs

11 “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt 6.11).

E. Forgiveness

12 “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (Matt 6.12).

F. Help Against Temptation

13 “And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen” (Matt 6.13).

G. For More Workers for the Harvest

38 “Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Matt 9.38).

H. For Preachers

18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— 19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel (Eph 6.18, 19).

1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you (2Th 3.1).

I. For Civil Leaders

1 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence (2Ti

2.1, 2).

J. For Wisdom

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him (Jam 1.5).

K. For the Sick

14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord (Jam 5.14).

L. For Spiritual Need

39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will" (Matt 26.39).

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Heb 4.16).

M. For Children

27 For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition which I asked of Him (1Sa 1.27).

8 Then Manoah prayed to the Lord, and said, "O my Lord, please let the Man of God whom You sent come to us again and teach us what we shall do for the child who will be born" (Jdg 13.8).

N. For Spiritual Growth

16 do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and

what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places (Eph 1.16–20).

14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,[a] 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph 3.14–19).

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 10 that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God (Phi 1.9–11).

9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; 12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light (Col 1.9–12).

Exhortation:

I. Pray big specific prayers.

A. There may be a place for saying, “God be with...” but

B. how do we know whether God answers such a vague prayer?

II. Remember the reading from Revelation 8, and consider these words,

“The prayers of God’s saints are the capital stock in heaven by which Christ carries on His great work upon the earth. Great throes and mighty convulsions in

the world have come about as a result of these prayers. The earth is changed, revolutionized; angels move on more powerful, more rapid wings; and God's policy is shaped when the prayers of His people are more numerous and more efficient.

"The man who has done the most and the best praying is the most immortal, because prayers do not die. Perhaps the lips that uttered them are closed in death, or the heart that felt them may have ceased to beat, but the prayers live before God, and God's heart is set on them. Prayers outlive the lives of those who uttered them—outlive a generation, outlive an age, outlive a world.

"Prayer is not fitful, short-lived thing. It is no voice crying unheard and unheeded in the silence. It is a voice that goes into God's ear, and it lives as long as God's ear is open to holy pleas, as long as God's heart is alive to holy things.

"The mightiest successes that come to God's cause are created and carried on by prayer in God's day of power. God's conquering days are when the saints have given themselves to mightiest prayer. God shapes the world by prayer" (E. M. Bounds).

- A. So then, for what do you pray?
- B. Is it only for the sick and travelers?

III. Everyone, except atheists and evolutionists, cherishes prayer.

- A. Even people who have no church affiliation
- B. will tell you that they pray regularly, or
 - 1. they might ask you to pray for them,
 - 2. if they know that you are a person of prayer.

IV. However, even people of prayer need prayer from others.

- A. Paul asked people to pray for him,
- B. whereas, we might be tempted to think that he should be praying for us.
 - 1. Do you need prayer?
 - 2. What can we do for you?