

5. Speaking with God

When you became a Christian

You entered into a relationship with your Creator

Like any relationship, communication plays a significant role

God speaks to us in the Bible and we listen

God also listens to us as we speak to him in prayer

“Prayer”: talking with God about anything and everything

Joyous — privilege — natural

As a new Christian, you may be asking, “How do I pray?”

Jesus’ disciples asked him the same question

“Lord’s Prayer” (Matt 6:9-13)

6:9a — “Pray like this”

Not intended to be mindlessly repeat it like some magical incantation

Basic structure / content

Room for flexibility

“Our Father in heaven”

Prayer starts with a proper view of God

Who he is

“Father”

“Abba”

Not a Swedish pop group

Family term for the father

Teaches us to approach God with familiarity

He cares for us as a father cares for his children

“In heaven”

Never forget that “Our Father” is also the God who created/sustains all things

Merely spoke, and galaxies came into existence

Teaches us to approach God with astonishment, trembling, reverence, awe

Pray with this mix of familiarity and reverence

First half — Prayer focuses, first and foremost, on God

Not clear in translations — three imperatives calling on God to act

Not for our benefit but for his — *his* glory — he is praised/honored

1. "Hallowed be your name" — May your name be hallowed

"Hallowed" means "holy" — sinless

God is holy — calling on God to act in such a way that the world *sees* he is holy — sinlessness, perfection

In all I (don't) say and do — you be held up so all can see your holiness — name be revered

2. "Your kingdom come" — May your kingdom come

Not earthly realm (Pontius) — but a kingly *rule* in the lives of his disciples

Calling on God to exercise his kingly rule in me — expand throughout the world

Exactly what will happen eventually — Jesus return — Every knee will bow ...

3. "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"

God's will — purposes; desires — are always done, perfectly, in heaven

Pray with Jesus — "Not my will but yours be done"

No surprise — being a Christian means it is no longer all about me

"I have been crucified with Christ ..."

"Deny yourself ..."

Biblical prayer begins with God - putting him first

As we pray "our Father in heaven," we fade into the background

Become consumed with God and his glory — praised for who he is ...

Prayer begins with worship

2. Our opportunity to express total dependence on God for everything

Self-reliance is not a Christian virtue — sin

God does not help those who help themselves — helps those who turn to him

4th imperative — dependence for physical needs—“Give us this day our daily bread”

Yes, God is concerned about the details of our lives — mundane, boring

What kind of friend would he be, if he were not interested

Point is not that we pray for food and nothing else

Dependence on God for physical needs — clothing, shelter

Matt 6:25, 32-33a

Notice — wants to give us our *needs*, not our *greeds*

Daily bread, not yearly bread — no trust

5. Dependence for spiritual needs — “Forgive us our debts ...”

Jesus is thinking of sin as a debt we owe to God

Payment for that debt (“forgiveness”) comes only from God

“Forgive us our trespasses ...”

Note the relationship between God forgiving us, and us forgiving others

Point is so important it is elaborated on after the prayer — vv 14-15

You will be sinned against — friend, coworker; pastor; elder; people in church

Temptation: cross arms — in pride — “I’m right; they hurt me”

Not forgive — they’re not sorry

Only person we really hurt is ourselves — if we do not forgive; God ≠ us

Eph 4:32 — no one nailed me to the cross — I nailed; “Father forgive”

Sign of my true repentance

Matt 18:21-35

Not an easy thing, but a necessary thing

Sixth/final imperative—“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”

God does not tempt anyone with sin (James 1:13)

We are dependent on God to resist the power of sin and evil (One)

“We wrestle not against flesh and blood ...”

Cry out to God for protection

Leave you with two practical suggestions

1. “Speaking *with* God” — healthy communication is always a dialogue

Mind wandered; guilty — Tozier

Start by reading

Listen for promptings of God’s Spirit — encourage; convict

Stop and pray — talk; ask

Quiet — listen — I am a little hard of hearing spiritually

End in a focus, extended time of prayer

2. Memorize it

Not to mindlessly repeat

Times when you just can’t find the right words

Pray the structure — paraphrase — adding the specifics of your life

Close with reciting the Lord’s prayer, then I will show you what I mean