

## Practical Prayer

We have closely examined prayer from Jesus' perspective, example and the model for prayer He gave us and His disciples. Let's take a look at some practical aspects about prayer as outlined in a number of Scripture passages.

### Posture

You can certainly pray anytime, anywhere and in any position. However, as we recognize that we are approaching not only our Heavenly Father, but the Almighty God, our postures may help in reflecting our attitudes:

- Kneeling – Luke 22:41, Acts 20:36
- Bowing – Psalm 95:6
- Face down (prostrate) – Matthew 26:39, I Chronicles 21:16
- Standing – Mark 11:25
- Hands lifted – I Timothy 2:8, Psalm 28:2

### Place (private and public)

As we indicated above, you can certainly pray anywhere and at anytime. God is able to hear us no matter what. However, are we able to focus on Him? Two things that threaten our ability to focus on our prayer time are distraction and interruption (two of Satan's favorite tools). Jesus understood this and taught in Matthew 6:6 –

*“But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”*

Jesus often prayed in a solitary place - Luke 5:16 tells us, *“But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.”*

In spite of our busy, hectic, demanding lives, we need to find time to be alone with God.

But, there are times when public prayer is needed, acceptable and valuable. But we must remember that when we pray publicly, we are still praying to honor God and not ourselves (Matthew 6:5). - <sup>5</sup> *“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.”*

### Pattern

We all have certain prayers that we repeat or teach our children. There is nothing inherently wrong with this as it teaches the importance of prayer and helps establish a habit or practice of praying. But these “recited” prayers should not be the entire make up of our prayer life, and should not become so repetitive so as to lose their sincerity.

Matthew 6:7 – *“And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.”*(NIV), *“And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.”* (NKJV)

I Timothy 2:1 gives us some insight into the pattern and recommended parts of a full, effective prayer. – “*Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men*” (NIV).

I think we have all seen different formulas and patterns recommended for prayer. One of the more popular ones identifies five (5) components (with which I happen to agree):

**1. Adoration (praise/worship)** - the act of worship, profound love or regard. This is number one. Above all things, adoration should be practiced in our prayers. God wants to be loved just as the rest of us. The Lord will look at the heart, he won't have to hear our words. Words are nothing if they don't come from the heart. Adoration will help you get in that heart felt praying zone that makes prayer time amazing.

**2. Supplication (petition)** - to ask humbly by praying. This is why Jesus taught not to pray as hypocrites in the synagogues, and not to use vain repetitions. We are to pray humbly, and not praying to be seen. Prayer should be an intimate relationship between you and God.

**3. Thanksgiving** - Expression of gratitude. In Philippians 4:6, Paul taught us to worry about nothing, *pray about anything*, and be *thankful* for all things. I feel that it is very important to be thankful of all the good blessings that God has granted us.

**4. Intercession** – petition on behalf of another. Jesus prayed for us in John 17:14-21. So we should take our Savior's lead and pray for one another. It is important to lift our brothers and sisters up in prayer, building a wall of prayer can be vital to defeating the enemy.

**5. Confession (repentance)** - the act of confessing. God forgives us over and over. Of course, we are to try to overcome the stumbling blocks, but God will continue to forgive us. Why? Because he is God.

Taken from <http://chadlavender.blogspot.com/2006/06/five-parts-of-prayer.html>

### Postscript (ending)

When the Lord taught us to pray, he did not mention to pray in His Name. However, later on he instructs His disciples (and us) to ask in His name –

*“I have spoken of these matters in figures of speech, but soon I will stop speaking figuratively and will tell you plainly all about the Father.”* <sup>26</sup> **Then you will ask in My name.** *I’m not saying I will ask the Father on your behalf,* <sup>27</sup> *for the Father himself loves you dearly because you love me and believe that I came from God.”* - John 16:25-27 and *“And I will do whatever **you ask in My name**, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

Now, this is not a promise to give us everything we want just because we ask for it in Jesus’ name. This helps us close our prayer with the realization that we are offering our prayer to God, through the power of the Holy Spirit and Name of Jesus, and that we want the answers to be in accordance with His will and for His glory.