

A Model Prayer

¹ One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

² He said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.

³ Give us each day our daily bread.

⁴ Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.[']"

⁵ Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread;

⁶ a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.'

⁷ And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.'

⁸ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.

⁹ "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

¹¹ "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead?

¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

¹³ If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Good Morning First Baptist Members, Friends and Guest. Happy New Year! I can't think of a better place to be on the 1st Sunday of a brand new then in the house of the Lord. Before I begin to preach this morning I want to thank you for the Christmas gifts that were given to my family and I. I am well aware that you do not have to give us anything, so whatever and whenever you give we are blessed to receive.

This morning we are being challenged to look at the prayer Jesus taught His disciples as recorded by Luke. We are most familiar with the prayer from the gospel of Matthew, but Luke gives us another insight. Like Matthew, Luke tells us that Jesus teaches the prayer in response to a request from the disciples to be taught to pray like John had taught his disciples. But Luke goes on to provide a parable to clarify the purpose of prayer and then several sayings about prayer.

As a congregation we know a lot about prayer. We spent an entire year seeking to be transformed by prayer. We had a workshop on prayer, we read books about prayer, we wrote prayers and most importantly we prayed. Probably each person in this room has their own working definition of prayer. I often think of prayer as a wish sent heavenward. M. L. King Jr. said: "To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing."¹ Howard Thurman said "Prayer is a form of communication between God and man and man and God"² So here we are on the first Sunday of a brand new year looking at the prayer Jesus taught His disciples.

I wonder if any of you have given any thought to the fact that in all of scripture the only thing the disciples ask Jesus to teach them was how to pray. They did not ask to be taught how to cast out demons, or raise the dead, or turn water into wine. The only thing they asked Jesus to teach them was how to pray. From that simple request and the response I have to conclude that prayer is important in the life of a disciple, a believer, a follower of Christ. Yet this simple request and response can get turned around and used in ways that I believe were not part of the original intent.

Prosperity gospel and other "name it and claim it" teachings have focused on verse

⁹ "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

This verse has been treated as if it were a magic formula **and** when the asking, seeking and finding have not resulted in the desired outcome, many have been told that they did not pray "right" and then we enter that vicious cycle of studying how to pray in order to get **our desired outcome**.

¹ http://www.searchquotes.com/Martin_Luther_King_Jr/Prayer/quotes/

²<http://izquotes.com/quote/272973>

But I think the focus as presented by Luke is not on our getting our desired outcome, but rather **our getting God's desired outcome**. Look at verse

² He said to them, "When you pray, say: "'Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.

The parable immediately following this is not a parable about us in isolation but rather a parable about us in community.

Listen again as I paraphrase – it is late and a friend stops by unannounced and you want to show your friend hospitality and we know that all hospitality includes a meal, but we don't have any food – so we go to another friend and wake that friend and ask for help so that we might show hospitality to our friend who has come to visit. Jesus says that the friend does not help because of friendship, but rather because of the shameless audacity we had in asking.

Perhaps we are called to have the same kind of relationship with God. Perhaps we are called to ask God for what we need with the same kind of shameless audacity.

Would you join me in prayer as I wrestle with this question?

In 2015 Can I Pray with Shameless Audacity?

SHALL WE PRAY!

God of heaven and earth we your children are seeking a new and better relationship with you in 2015. We believe a new and improved relationship will not only help us individually, but it will help us corporately as a church and as a light in this community. Father, we ask that you teach us to pray and pray with the shameless audacity that is needed for there to be a change. Abba, I ask that you use me, as weak and as tired as I am, to bring this message and this hope to these people this morning. Please allow the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart to be acceptable to you for you are my source of strength. Amen and Amen.

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I think it is safe to say that most of us do not like to ask for help. Our **pride** gets in the way of speaking up and saying what we need. If we need a ride to the grocery store we often will begin our request in a round about way. Something like this...

Hi, how are things? Heard from your grandkids? What are your plans for the day? I was wondering, if you are not too busy, if you could possibly give me a ride to the grocery store. You know I hate to ask, but I really don't have anyone else to call.

Our need to appear **independent** gets in the way...

I was wondering if I could borrow \$8 until my check comes.

What will \$8 do in this economy?

Our desire to keep our **business to ourselves** gets in the way...

I got some stuff going on right now and I don't want to get into the details, but if you could help me out a little I will give it back to you as soon as I get straight. I don't want to burden you with my stuff, and you know I am not in the habit of making my stuff public but if you could see your way clear to help a sister out it would really help.

Those same desires and needs get in the way of our relationship with God in prayer. **Our pride, our desire for independence and our need to get our business to ourselves keeps us from telling God what we need and want and desire.**

Let's call all of that failure to **honestly communicate.**

The next area where we fail in prayer is **spending time.** If we are parents or in a parental relationship we know that spending time together is important. We can't help a child become an adult if we do not know the child. We need to spend time, quality time, with a child and learn about their skills, values and interests if we are going to help them, guide them and direct them. The same concept applies to our time with God.

If as parents we are insulted and angry when our attempts at conversation are answered with "yeah", "okay", "why" and a return to their games, ear buds, texting and tweeting can you imagine how God feels when we squeeze Him in during the commercials of our lives.

How will God guide you, help you and direct you if you don't spend time with Him. To paraphrase a sign I saw recently "thank you for this food is not a prayer."

Finally I want to suggest that we don't **spend the time, honestly communicate** because we are **afraid** to find out who God really is and what God can really do.

When Jesus teaches the disciples to pray, as recorded by the gospel of Luke he says: **Father** – this defines the relationship – He is Father – the giver and sustainer of life. He is Father – the protector and provider. He is Father from everlasting to everlasting.

Hallowed by your name – His name is precious, His name is Holy, at the sound of his name every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord.

Your kingdom come - The word kingdom here means reign. The petition is the expression of a wish that God may reign everywhere; that his laws may be obeyed; and especially that the gospel of Christ may be advanced everywhere, till the world shall be filled with his glory. ³

These first words are three separate petitions and they should be included in every prayer we pray. Not those emergency prayers that occur when we are driving or falling or worried about our health or our kids. But those prayers where we are sincerely trying to push the world back and let God have his space and time.

You are Father, you are Holy, I want your kingdom to come. When we are done with acknowledging who and what God is then we are called to be in relationship with Him and with others.

The next petition is for daily bread. Then and now bread was important – bread representing food and nourishment. Bread something that involves others – a farmer, a harvester, a baker, a driver to make deliveries, a stock person to get it to the shelves, a cashier/bagger... I think you see the point. We cannot even get bread without some one else.

The next petition is three fold and again involves community while it is possible to sin against our selves – most of us sin against each other. And when we sin, not if we sin, we need to ask God to forgive us and also we are called to forgive those who we have sin against. Jesus knew this would not be easy, so He taught us to ask the Father to help us.

⁴ Forgive us our sins,
for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.
And lead us not into temptation.¹”

And finally, lead us not into temptation.

Lets put it all together.

³ http://www.lords-prayer-words.com/commentary/thy_kingdom_come.html

Jesus taught His disciples then and now that true relationship with the Father is based on time, communication and letting go of our pride and our fears.

What can we expect if we do these things?

2 Chronicles 7:14 (NIV)

¹⁴if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

What can we expect if we do these things?

1 John 5:14-15

¹⁴This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. ¹⁵And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

What can we expect if we do these things?

John 15:16

¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

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