

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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“What We Express to God in Prayer”

By Brian Meade

Our “prayer life” is a way of expressing what we do on a daily and regular basis in talking to God. It is the communication of our thoughts, desires, aims, and concerns to our heavenly Father (1 Samuel 1:15; 1 Peter 5:7). These moments we spend in prayer bring us closer to God, who may seem so far away from us geographically— but is only just a prayer away.

The verb form of the word “express” tells us that it means: “To convey what you are thinking and feeling, either verbally or otherwise.” It is through prayer that Christians express a variety of different nuances or meanings, not only to God, but also to those around us. Prayer is an expression of:

(1) Our Faith And Belief In God.

Prayer is all about the faith that we have in the God whom we serve. We believe we are praying to our heavenly Father, who hears and answers our prayers of faith (Acts 10:4; 1 Peter 3:12).

James tells us, in James 1:6-8, *“But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.”* (NKJB)

James is teaching us that it takes a kind of faith that doesn’t doubt to receive what we ask from the Lord. As someone once said, “If you’re going to prayer for rain, you better bring an umbrella with you.”

Jesus said to His disciples, *“And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”* (Matthew 21:22) Faith in God and our Lord Jesus Christ is a necessity if we want our prayers to be effective.

(2) We Express Trust & Dependence In God.

Because we believe in God and His ability to provide all needs for His children (as a benevolent father), we rightfully give God our heart’s trust and dependence in Him. Prayer plays a part in expressing all of this to God—as we pray, in true faith, that He will supply all our needs. (Psalm 37:25; Phil. 4:19)

Notice Jesus’ discourse on the relation (or lack of relation) of faith, trust, doubt, and worry in Matthew 6:28-33, *“And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. “But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! “Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ “For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all*



these things. *“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. “So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”*

Jesus is teaching us that a lack of trust in God leads to doubt & worry, which is not proper or beneficial to us. And Jesus teaches us that there is a certain level of trust that we need to demonstrate: (1) By putting God first. (2) Praying for our needs. (3) And then, pursuing those needs, as we should.

(3) We Express The Desires Of Our Heart.

God’s word tells us in Psalm 37:4, *“Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart.”*

How do we express our desires that we have to the God of all the universe? I do believe that prayer is under consideration, even though not specifically mentioned. One reason we know this is— because prayer is the only means God has told us (in His word) that we are to express or ask for our desires.

Paul spoke of one of his desires, that we are certain that he prayed often about, when he said, *“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.”* (Romans 10:1) That we would desire family members, friends, or co-workers to be saved is a great desire to ask of God. We should desire and also pray to God that those in false religion would see the truth clearly and forsake every false way (Psalm 119:104; 2 Timothy 2:25-26).

Young men, who are seeking a wife, may have a proper desire to petition God for such a noble request (Proverbs 18:22). The same is equally true for young ladies petitioning the Lord for a good husband (Proverbs 20:6).

(4) We Express An Understanding Of Our Needs.

God’s word also teaches us that, *“...your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.”* (Matthew 6:8; see also 6:32)

Some have wrongly reasoned that, “If God already knows what I need before I ask Him, then shouldn’t He just go ahead and give me what I need?” This idea even causes some to undervalue the need to pray as we should.

But maybe some have never considered the thought, that God may want us to have an understanding of what we have, and also of what we lack. As we have already stated, God knows our needs— but do we know our needs? This requires honest self-examination/self inventory on our part to even know what we should pray for. It is an obvious conclusion that if we don’t know or understand what we need, we will not be petitioning God for it.

Let’s use for an example, the need of wisdom that James speaks of in James 1:5, *“But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”* God is telling us— that if we see our lack of wisdom in our lives— go to Him in prayer for that specific need. For some, it may be a lack of patience or a lack of self-control or a lack of moral courage that they need to pray about.

(5) We Express That We Care About Others.

Paul told young Timothy, *“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,”* (1 Timothy 2:1). Also consider Philippians 2:4, *“do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.”*

God wants us to pray for the needs of others, and not just merely for ourselves. Prayer is an expression of our love and concern for all men, especially for our brothers and sisters in Christ. When we get on our knees (or whatever the posture of our prayers), our thoughts should be: “Is anyone sick in the congregation or out in the world?” “Is anyone troubled by problems or persecutions or loss?” “Is anyone in need of salvation by obeying the gospel?” “Is anyone in any need that I can intercede before the throne of grace on their behalf? (Hebrews 4:16)



Praying for others requires the kind of unselfish love demonstrated. It says that, “You are important to me and important to God.”

And when people ask us to pray for them, we need to take that seriously and remember them in our prayers. To fail to do so is to fail to care. But the Christian, who loves all men as he should, will regularly pray for others for their good.

GOSPEL MEETING

Allen Shepherd
Sunday April 21st
Monday-Friday
22nd-26th
7:00 PM Nightly

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Clois Wright, Debbie Keplinger, Gaddy Hall, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Tammy Kilgore (Jerry's niece), Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Pam Zeanah, Katie Ward Cobern
Mary Bynum is in the St. Vincents Hospital in Birmingham, Al.
Jackie Woodruff (Robbie Doles' 1st Cousin) passed away last week.
Bill Mann (Kathryn Callahan's great uncle) passed away last Monday night.
Kelcy Whittemore, CarliBeth Meade, and others have been sick this cold & flu season.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer:

Russell Briggs

Preaching:

Brian Meade

Sermon #1:

"The Reality of Falling From Grace"

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Paul Johnson

The Book of John (Mike Willis)

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Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements:

Jerry Kennemur

Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:

Nathan Meade

John 10:27-29

Song Leader:

Chris Callahan

Lord's Table:

Fred Johnson

Assisting:

Lee Busby & Brian Meade

Preaching:

Brian Meade

Sermon #2:

"The Security of the Believer"

Closing Prayer:

Tim Harris Sr.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

February 20th:

Auditorium Bible Class:

Paul Busby

1 & 2 Chronicles (Mike Willis)

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Invitation:

Brian Meade

Song Leader:

Adam Harris

Closing Prayer:

Tim Harris Jr.