

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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October 20, 2024

“What We Express In Prayer” Pt. 1

By Brian Meade

Prayer is such a common part of our life as a Christian, that we may not think about all that goes into everything we do in praying to God. There are elements of expression in prayer that we do so frequently, that we may not be aware of all that takes place until we sit down and contemplate what our prayers mean to God.

Our Father wants and expects us to pray to Him (Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:8), and how we pray says something about us. What we pray for and what we are concerned about in our prayers speaks volumes to God about our spiritual life. If we are growing in the faith or not can be determined by what we express or do not express in our prayers.

I. Prayer Expresses Our Faith & Belief In God.

When we pray to our heavenly Father, we are expressing the very fact that we believe in Him to hear our prayers. No one can rightly pray without having someone to answer the other side of prayer— as prayer is a two-way street. There is the petitioner, and the God who answers the petitions. This is why atheists, who do not believe in our Creator, mockingly refuse to pray at all.

But acceptable prayer to God must be done in faith. Jesus said to His disciples in Matthew 21:22, *“And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”* So simple, yet so powerful is the expression of people of faith to pray in faith to a Father in heaven we cannot see. It may be that the frequency, which is how often we pray, may be less when our faith is diminished. But the opposite is true when we our faith is strong. We pray more often and with more fervency when the level of our faith is increased.

James tells us, that if we ask for wisdom from God (James 1:5), we must believe that God will grant our request, *“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;”* (James 1:6-7).

As one preacher has rightly said, “If we are going to pray for rain, we better bring us an umbrella for when it rains!” To do otherwise, would show a lack of real faith in what we ask of God for in the first place.

But that illustration reminds us of what James says about prayer later on in the fifth chapter concerning Elijah’s prayer. *“Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.”* (James 5:18-19)

James had just spoke of the power of our prayers in verse 17, *“.....The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”*

Elijah was not a supernatural, super-righteous person that had an advantage on everyone because of something we can never attain today. But yet, what James points to for us to imitate is his genuine faith in God in answering his prayer. He prayed earnestly, and so should we!

II. Prayer Expresses Our Trust & Dependence In God.

Prayer is also an expression of our trust—a true element of faith itself. How much we trust or do not trust in God can be expressed by our prayers as well.

The people of God in Hebrews 11, showed their faith by trusting in the promises of God. *“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”* (Hebrews 11:13)

The examples of men like Noah, who trusted in God to save his family, and all in the ark from the flood on the earth (Hebrews 11:7), like Abraham, who trusted in God to lead him to leave his home and journeyed in the promised land (Hebrews 11:8-10), and even Abraham with Sarah trusted in God for a son in their old age (Hebrews 11:11-12), and Joseph trusted in God’s promise of the land of Canaan for Abraham and his descendants so much, that he gave instructions to bring his bones from Egypt when they would return to Canaan (Hebrews 11:22). It would prove to be over 400 years until that promise would be fulfilled!

Do we trust God like these people of faith did? Is it reflected in our prayer life that we trust Him? If not, we need to learn to trust Him!

Jesus spoke of this need to trust and depend on God in Matthew 6:28-33, *“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”*

This level of dependance and trust can only come when we fully allow God to be first priority in our life! (Verse 33). This is the opposite of the fretting and anxious worrying that only hurts our faith or trust in God to supply all our needs. True dependance on God is knowing that God not only wants us to have what we need, but is ready to give us what is beneficial to us.

Jesus had already said in Matthew 7:7-11, *“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!”*

Jesus was speaking to our prayers in asking, seeking, and knocking for things to be opened for us. Our prayers will open doors and make things possible that would otherwise be impossible for us to do without God’s help. As Paul would say, *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”* (Philippians 4:13).

God will be there for us, like a father who cares for his children, and the children who are depending solely on the father’s provision of their needs. Jesus said that’s what a good father will do for the children he loves. Our heavenly Father is no different!



Speaker: **Mitchell Dalrymple**

Location: **Meeks Street Church of Christ**

Date: **October 20th -- 23rd 2024**

Starting Time: **7:00 PM Nightly (Except Sunday)**

Those Who Need Our Prayers & Encouragement:

Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Robbie, Sheila, & Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Jamie Jones, Mary Ann Holley, LuAnne Parrish, Billy Grisham, Burt Ward, Wesley Trimble, Anita Harris, Fred Johnson, Bill Hall, George Hutto, Nathan Cox, Angela Warren (Lisa Busby's friend who has cancer), B.J. Graves, Danny Cottrell, Chandler McCain (Cancer), Randall Oliver (Lynlie's Dad), Michelle Hopper (Dan Cottrell's sister) has been diagnosed with cancer, Anita Harris is recovering from her procedure.

Our Gospel Meeting with Mitchell Dalrymple begins today!

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer:	Tim Harris Jr
Preaching:	Mitchell Dalrymple
Sermon #1:	<i>"Don't Wear Out"</i>

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Lesson:	Mitchell Dalrymple
	<i>"Who Are You Becoming?"</i>

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements:	Paul Johnson
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:	Brian Meade
Scripture Reading:	<i>Philippians 4:8</i>
Song Leader:	Tim Harris Sr.
Lord's Supper:	Paul Busby
Assisting:	— —
Preaching	Mitchell Dalrymple
Sermon #2:	<i>"Social Networking And Christianity"</i>
Closing Prayer:	Danny Sheffield

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

October 23, 2024

Announcements:	Brian Meade
Gospel Meeting Preaching:	Mitchell Dalrymple
Sermon:	<i>"Plan A Versus Plan B"</i>
Song Leader:	Paul Busby
Closing Prayer:	Russell Briggs

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