

A BLESSING IN PRAYER

“There is always a blessing...a blessing in prayer.” So are the words to a song that we sometimes sing. Prayer accomplishes much more than so many seem to think, and does some things that no other activity that a Christian may involve himself can do. When we organize, we expect only what organization can give. When we study, we expect only what knowledge can provide. When we teach, we expect just what language can convey. But when we pray, we expect what only God can do. Since it is true what Jesus said, “*with God all things are possible*” (Matthew 19:26), and since Paul told us “*I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me*” (Philippians 4:13), we can conclude that by prayer, God will help us to accomplish His will for us. After we pray, let us go and do (see Philippians 4:6-9).

What would our Lord have us to learn about prayer? We see from the Bible that He prayed before His earthly work, all during it, and just before His death upon the cross. We learn then that we “*ought always to pray, and not to faint*” (Luke 18:1), and that we are to “*pray without ceasing*” (I Thessalonians 5:17). Let us not lose heart in our praying. Paul told the brethren in Thessalonica, “*Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified, even as also it is with you*” and again, “*But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing*” (II Thessalonians 3:1,13).

For what shall we pray? **Guidance:** Acts 1:24; 13:3; 14:23. Why? Because “*O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*” (Jeremiah 10:23). We must pray for **strength and courage**, Acts 4:29,31; 16:25. We must pray for **forgiveness**, I John 1:9; Acts 8:20-24. We ought to pray for **one another**, Acts 12:5; James 5:16...but do not stop there, see also verses 19 and 20.

Finally, let us pray as a **means of praise to God**. About one half of the Psalms are

prayers of praise to God. The first thing Jesus did in His model prayer was praise and extol the glory of God (Matthew 6:9). Our prayers ought to be **regular and in faith**, James 1:6; Acts 2:42; I Thessalonians 5:17 and Hebrews 4:16. Like we sing in the song, there is always a blessing, a blessing in prayer. **Pray without ceasing!**

AFTER THIS MANNER THEREFORE, PRAY YE

A great multitude from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and from beyond the Jordan followed our Lord and his disciples to a certain mountain. There, Jesus sat and taught what we have called the "Sermon On The Mount". In the midst of that sermon, the Master taught his followers about prayer (chapter 6:5-13). For our local purpose, I would like to offer a "refresher".

Prayer is a personal privilege given only to the elect of God. The sinner's "prayer" is an abomination before God, but he delights in his children addressing him (Proverbs 15:8; 28:9). Especially weighty is the obligation of leading the church in prayer as a part of acceptable worship. It is to this application of prayer I wish to address myself.

Let me begin by simply stating "proper preparation prevents poor praying"! For some of us, talking with someone we have only recently met may be a difficult thing, causing some stammering or tongue-tied-itis. That is only natural due, probably, to being nervous. Yet, it is amazing how at ease we can be when talking to Mom and Dad or good friends. So too in prayer, at times, this is the case. Sometimes when we are not quite sure what to say or how to say it, it **may be** due to a lack of familiarity with the One to whom we are praying. If this is the case for you, brother, who may be called upon to lead us in prayer, this is sad. So, let me encourage you to "always pray, and faint not" (Luke 18:1). Get to know your Father better!

Second, please understand that when you are leading the church in prayer, you are still speaking **TO** God, not the brethren. You are not praying **FOR** them (in their place), but merely voicing common concerns, requests, etc. Avoid *consciously* the notion that you are performing before the church, hoping to acquire their approval.

Third, try to avoid "canned" speeches. Although some may think I am judging the motives or the hearts of some, I remind you of what our Lord taught with regard to "vain repetitions" and "wordiness" in prayers (Matthew 6:5-7). Try not to think and pray in clichés. **SPEAK** to the Father.

Fourth, there is no hurry. God is not going some place; he is not in a hurry to keep an appointment. Thus, there is no need to rush through your prayer to the point where others praying with you are not able to understand you.

Fifth, word your prayers appropriate to the occasion or reason for which you have been called upon to lead. I have said in sermons before, and some need this reminder: when we are at the Lord's table and thanks is due for the elements of the Supper, it is not the time to thank God for everything but the bread and fruit of the vine. Sometimes, a brother may even fail to mention the bread. This is not proper thanksgiving for the Supper!

Finally, and this applies to several of our younger brethren, please pray in Jesus' name. Do not be afraid nor ashamed to pronounce both syllables of His honorable name by which we have been called (James 2:7). I doubt there is a single one of us who wants our name slurred, shortened or otherwise pronounced indistinctly. How much less the Master of the Universe? I hope these are helpful reminders to all who lead the church in prayer to the Father in the name of His beloved Son.

RAGER ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

SUNDAY MORNING	BIBLE STUDY	9:30 A.M.
	WORSHIP	10:30 A.M.
SUNDAY EVENING	WORSHIP	6:00 P.M.
WEDNESDAY	BIBLE STUDY	7:30 P.M.
Preachers:	Robin W. Haley	614-751-1082
	James Grayson	614-409-0941

October 11, 2009

Weekly Budget: \$1360.00

Wednesday's Wisdom:

"Use our tongues correctly: praise, prayer, teaching, singing, repentance and confession." James Grayson

Continue to remember in prayer: brother Wiley's sister, sister Lisa's mother in law, brother Steve and his back's recuperation, brother Brian Grayson's travel for training for his work.

Fellowship meal today...followed immediately by our men's business meeting.

Ladies' Gathering: Thursday, October 22 at 7pm here at the building. Please bring a snack or something to drink.