

## Some Instruction on Prayer

- I. Scripture has much to say about *discretion* (ability to discern or distinguish what is right, befitting or advisable, esp. as regards one's own conduct or action; the quality of being discreet; discernment; prudence, sagacity, circumspection, sound judgment).
  - A. The word of God is designed to give knowledge AND discretion. **PRO 1:4.**
  - B. Discretion has a preserving quality. **PRO 2:11.**
  - C. Discretion tempers one's response to offenses. **PRO 19:11.**
  - D. Discretion regulates one's distributions. **PSA 112:5.**
  - E. "...a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment" (**ECC 8:5**).
  - F. Instruction is needed in the area of prayer to facilitate discretion. **LUK 11:1.**
    - 1. "...we know not what we should pray for as we ought..." (**ROM 8:26**).
    - 2. Christ's disciples *knew not* what they asked for. **MAT 20:22.**
    - 3. We may "...ask amiss..." (**JAM 4:3**).
    - 4. We may errantly pray for the benefit of those for whom no such prayer should be made. **JER 7:16; 14:11; 1JO 5:16.**
    - 5. We should examine our ways in prayer as would examine our ways in other things. **LAM 3:40-41 c/w 1TI 2:8.**
    - 6. For the lack of discretion, one may be praying "against the grain" of God's will for oneself and for His kingdom in general.
    - 7. For the lack of discretion, one may be assuming false burdens in prayer.
- II. Consider in overview the model of prayer Jesus Christ gave for disciples. **MAT 6:9-13.**
  - A. This instruction immediately followed instruction in how NOT to pray. **vs. 5-8.**
  - B. This prayer is succinct.
  - C. This prayer is simple.
  - D. This prayer magnifies God and His government.
  - E. This prayer treats of our fundamental needs for food, mercy and deliverance from evil.
  - F. In this prayer we do not find a compulsory, specific mention of every detail of concern nor of every person everywhere.
- III. In **MAT 6:9-13**, Christ set forth an appropriate *manner* of prayer.
  - A. manner: The way in which something is done or takes place; method of action; mode of procedure.
    - 1. Christ is not teaching that this is an exclusive requisite scripted prayer.
    - 2. Christ prayed differently than this at times and advised His disciples of other prayers. **MAT 9:38; 24:20.**
    - 3. Christ even altered this prayer's form in **LUK 11:2-4.**
    - 4. This manner of prayer juxtaposes the unacceptable manners of prayer in **vs. 5-8.**
      - a. Two things are condemned in **vs. 5-8**: vain-glory and vain repetition.
      - b. Hypocrites pray for show and for men's approval.  
c/w **MAT 23:5; JOH 12:43.**
      - c. Hypocrites and heathen think quantity and formula superior to sincerity.  
c/w **1KI 18:26; MAT 23:14.**
      - d. This does not condemn all repetition or lengthy prayer.
        - (1) Christ repeated His words of prayer in the garden. **MAT 26:44.**
        - (2) Christ once prayed all night. **LUK 6:12.**
        - (3) It is *vain* repetition that presumes to move deity by monotony and

it is *prodigious* length that are condemned.

- B. “...Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name” (v. 9).
1. God is the Father of all things in a creative sense (**1CO 8:5-6; ACT 17:28**) but rabbits and reprobates cannot make acceptable prayer.
  2. Christ was here teaching His *disciples* (**MAT 5:1-2**) which implies a spiritual relationship to God by grace and covenant which is not shared by all men.  
**EPH 1:3-6 ct/w JOH 8:44.**
    - a. His elect cry unto Him. **LUK 18:7.**
    - b. By *the spirit of adoption* we cry, “Abba, Father.” **ROM 8:15; GAL 4:6.**
  3. God deals with His elect in a special fatherly sense. **2CO 6:17-18.**
    - a. As a Father, He is concerned with our needs (**MAT 6:31-32**) and gives good gifts to those who approach Him on His terms. **MAT 7:7-11; HEB 11:6.**
    - b. As a Father, He chastens us as needed. **HEB 12:6-7.**
    - c. As a Father, He pities us. **PSA 103:13-14.**
    - d. As a Father, He spares His faithful children. **MAL 3:16-17.**
    - e. He is to believers much more than a Creator and fearful Judge!
  4. He is in heaven.
    - a. We pray to Him there without concern to a “father” in Rome or any other place in this world. **MAT 23:9.**
    - b. That He is our heavenly father admits to His sovereignty over all things, including ourselves and our wills. **PSA 115:3; PHIL 2:12-13.**
    - c. That He is in heaven reinforces Christ's warnings against prodigious, long prayers. **ECC 5:1-2.**
  5. “Hallowed (sanctified, blessed) be thy name” is an expression of desire and worship.
    - a. In our prayers we ought to seek the glory of the Father's name as did Christ. **JOH 12:28.**
    - b. It is His name that is blessed and revered (**PSA 111:9**) and should never be taken in vain. **EXO 20:7.**
    - c. Those who call upon His name should make mention that his name is exalted. **ISA 12:4.**
- C. “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (v. 10).
1. “Thy kingdom come” is the imperative voice, subjunctive mood (an idiomatic supplication expressing a state of desirability or necessity).
    - a. kingdom: Kingly function, authority, or power; sovereignty, supreme rule; the position or rank of a king, kingship.
    - b. We should desire and pray for the kingdom of God.
      - (1) Pray for the church which is His kingdom in this world. **MAT 16:18-19.**
      - (2) Seek His kingdom and its character above all else. **ROM 14:17 c/w MAT 6:33.**
      - (3) Pray for the eternal, heavenly kingdom's arrival. **2PE 1:11; 3:13.**
  2. “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”
    - a. God's will in heaven is absolute. **DAN 4:35.**
    - b. The angels worship Him and do His bidding, even warring against evil spirits. **PSA 103:19-21; DAN 10:20.**
    - c. The redeemed worship Him also and are told to rest. **REV 7:9-10; 6:11.**
    - d. These are core elements of the submitted believer's life now in the church:

- worship, obedience, warfare, rest. These we ought to desire from God.
- e. Above all else, God's will is to be desired above our own, as Christ showed us (**MAT 26:39**) and we should be satisfied with His management. **2CO 12:7-10.**
- D. "Give us this day our daily bread" (v. 11).
1. This plea admits that all belongs to God and we are beholdng to Him for supply. **1CH 29:11-12.**
  2. "...THIS day..." shows us that we should not fret about future needs, especially to the neglect of spiritual values. **MAT 6:31-34.**
  3. "...our daily bread" reminds us that simple fare is sufficient; we need not *fare sumptuously every day* (**LUK 16:19**). Remember **PRO 30:8-9; 15:17; 17:1.**
  4. "We ask for *our* bread; that teaches us honesty and industry: we do not ask for the bread out of other people's mouths, not the *bread of deceit* (Pro 20:17), not the *bread of idleness* (Pro 31:27), but the bread honestly gotten." (Matthew Henry)
- E. "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (v. 12).
1. The debt here is a debt owed to the law of God for sin. c/w **LUK 11:4.**
  2. God's fatherly, temporal forgiveness of our sins is affected by our treatment of others who sin against us and repent. **MAT 6:14-15; 18:21-35; JAM 2:13.**
  3. Christ's mercy in forgiving us is our incentive and pattern. **EPH 4:32.**
- F. "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen" (v. 13).