




## How Should We Be Praying?

**Psalms 40:8: (KJV) *I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.***



For many religions, prayer is a mainstay and a staple of ritual and lifestyle. Whatever the religion, prayer is a lifeline to a higher power, a calming factor in individual experiences and a connector to others who share the same faith. Prayer can and should permeate the life of a Christian. So, if this is the case, then the question is, do we know how we should be praying, why we should be praying and for what we should be praying? Stay with us as we explore some of the many teachings on prayer from Jesus!

Today we will discuss two parables of Jesus to give us some practical groundwork on prayer. Our basic query is how, why and for what should we pray?

 **Introduction, [Why Pray? 24/7 Prayer, YouTube.com](#)**

- *Have you ever wondered why so many people pray? Well, Albert Einstein said that there's really only two ways to live: as if nothing is a miracle or as if everything is a miracle. Either life's a fluke and we're just a bunch of highly evolved animals on a big rock lost in space or there's a Creator behind creation; a God behind goodness, and if so, connecting with Him in prayer is pretty much the most mind blowing thing you can do.*

**Luke 18:1-8:** (NASB) <sup>1</sup>Now he was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, <sup>2</sup>saying, In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. <sup>3</sup>There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, Give me legal protection from my opponent. <sup>4</sup>For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, <sup>5</sup>yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out. <sup>6</sup>And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge said; <sup>7</sup>now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? <sup>8</sup>I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?

### **There was a two-fold reason for the story:**

**Luke 18:1:** (NASB) Now he was telling them a parable to show that **at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart...**

### **Why the first lesson of praying at all times?**

**Luke 17:25-27:** (NASB) <sup>25</sup>But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. <sup>26</sup>And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: <sup>27</sup>they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.

**Luke 17** is all about the conditions that would develop before and at the time of Jesus' return. The lesson was simple - the trouble that surrounds you will be such that an instinctive prayer life should be in place.



Romans 12:12: (NASB) *rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer...*

1 Thessalonians 5:17: (NASB) *pray without ceasing;*



**HOW** should we pray?

**WHY** should we pray?

**FOR WHAT** should we pray?

So, we haven't even discussed the parable and we already have a few answers:

The world brings a level of trouble that we cannot cope with on our own.  
The trouble is bigger than we are!

**HOW** should we pray?

As we go through our experiences, we do not necessarily need an *outward* posture of prayer but need to be always in the mode of an *inner* posture of prayer. While being on our knees is certainly appropriate, it is not required. No one even needs to know we are always praying.

**So we should pray always,  
but why the second lesson of praying to not lose heart?**

When we lose heart in anything we do, we lose focus, determination, strength and inevitably the battle. We have to have the internal drive that pushes us through the experiences of life.

Psalms 43:5: (NRSV) *Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.*

Our personal experiences can drain us emotionally unless we continually refill ourselves *spiritually*.

Ephesians 6:18: (KJV) *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;*

The brotherhood's experiences can drain us emotionally unless we continually refill *spiritually*.

So, we haven't even discussed the parable and we already have another answer:

**FOR WHAT** should we pray?

The sustaining, refilling and balancing of our hearts! It is not all about "how you feel." It is about what you are capable of doing under the conditions no matter what you feel. Prayer can level us out even if we do not feel like fighting the battle.



*"In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart." — John Bunyan*

We do not want to save our prayer time only for before we are about to go to sleep. It is too easy to fall asleep and not provide God with our best.

**Now the parable:**

Luke 18:2-3: (NASB) <sup>2</sup>saying, *In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. <sup>3</sup>There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, Give me legal protection from my opponent.*



**Observations:**

- The judge had no reverence for God and no respect for man. He was a grumbling kind of judge who did not care.
- A widow from his jurisdiction brought him a matter of legal protection.

**The Jewish Law was very particular about protecting those who could not protect themselves:**

Isaiah 1:17: (KJV) *Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.*

Jeremiah 22:3: (KJV) *Thus saith the LORD; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.*

Luke 18:4-5: (NASB) <sup>4</sup>For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, *Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, <sup>5</sup>yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.*

- Having no reverence or respect - he refused again and again.
- The widow persisted relentlessly, perhaps day after day after day.
- The judge granted justice - he did the right thing for the wrong reason.

Is this parable telling us to wear God out so He will finally listen to us? Of course not! The example is one of persistence.

Prayer is the subject of deep respect. We go before God Almighty sometimes with a sense of helplessness and hopelessness.



**"Take Me to the King," (Verse 1) Tamela Mann**

*Truth is I'm tired  
Options are few  
I'm trying to pray  
But where are you?  
I'm all church'd out  
Hurt and abused  
I can't fake  
What's left to do?*

*Truth is I'm weak  
No strength to fight  
No tears to cry  
Even if I tried*

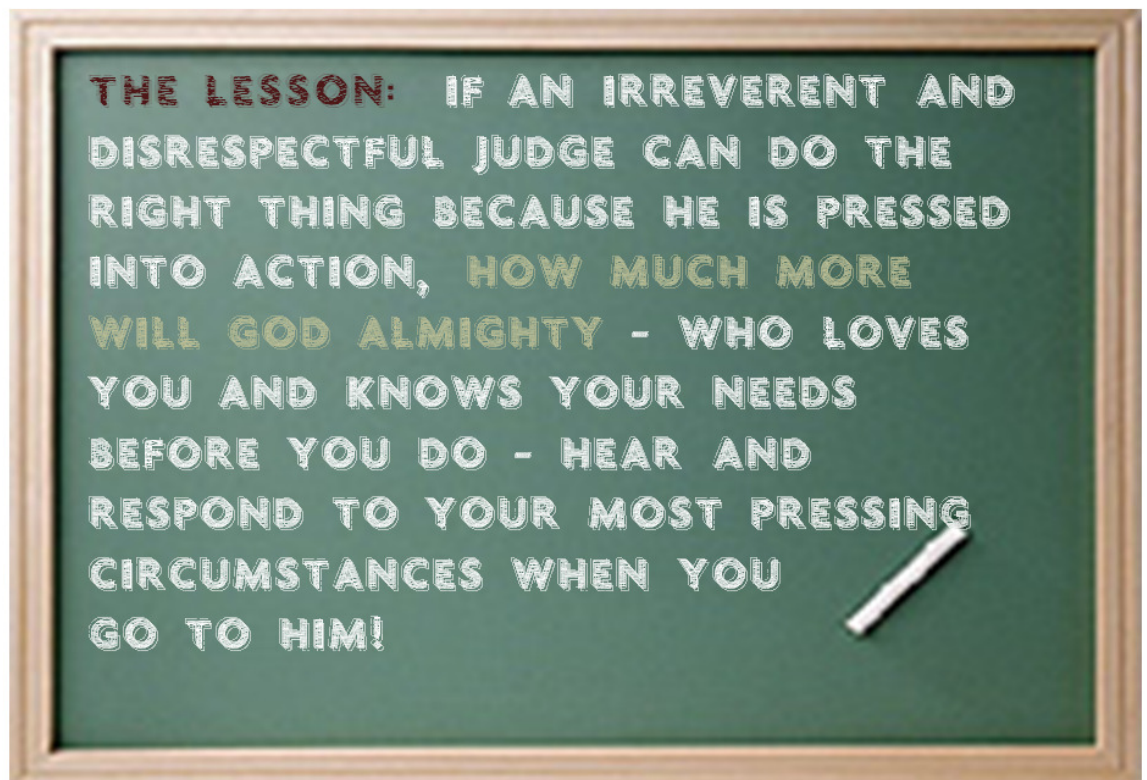


*But still my soul  
Refuses to die  
One touch will change my life  
Take me to the King  
I don't have much to bring*

This song really captures the emotional distress we all go through at different times in our lives. Prayer is not there to build us *emotionally*; it is there to build us up *spiritually* so we can deal with the emotional turmoil in the experiences of our lives.

**What is the main lesson of this parable?**

Luke 18:6-8: (NASB) <sup>6</sup>And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge said; <sup>7</sup>now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? <sup>8</sup>I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly...



In our distress, we sometimes forget that we have a faithful God!

**HOW** should we pray?

With intensity and focus.

**WHY** should we pray?

We are as helpless as widows and cannot overcome without help.

**FOR WHAT** should we pray?

Not anything that our heart desires, but first things first - just protection from our enemies.





A caller from New York suggests: I can relate to the Tamela Mann song. I am a Christian...maybe like the Apostle Paul who prayed for a thorn in the flesh to be removed and God said "no," I have to endure something.

Sometimes the answer from God is simply, "Wait. I'm not done with your experience yet." A lot of times the real answer for prayer is in not only our persistence but in our patience to see how God might open a door. He might be opening a window when we are looking for Him to open a door!

It got to a point where I was self-destructive, so I can relate to having to wait. It is hard mentally and spiritually to be faithful when nothing seems to happen.

Being a Christian is being a footstep follower of Jesus. Jesus' life was not easy...ever...at any time. But he walked through each experience because he was doing the will of God and not his own will. We, too, must follow in Jesus' footsteps and it is not easy. God wants us to be crystallized to the character of Jesus and that is why we have these difficult trials and tribulations.

Sometimes we think God is like Santa Claus and we can just write out a list of what we want. Treating God like this is not a real approach either. He is not a personal genie to grant our wishes. That is not what prayer is for.

*"Any concern too small to be turned into a prayer is too small to be made into a burden."  
— Corrie ten Boom*

#### **Next, the verses (that are often ignored) that precede the Lord's Prayer:**

**Matthew 6:5-8:** (NASB) <sup>5</sup>When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. <sup>6</sup>But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you. <sup>7</sup>And when you are praying, **do not use meaningless repetition** as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. <sup>8</sup>So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

**Do not use meaningless repetition:** The Lord's Prayer was not given to us as a prayer to recite over and over again as our prayer life. When we repeat rote prayers, they lose their meaning.

Prayer is a changing experience for our lives. There is more to prayer than just an emotional outlet.

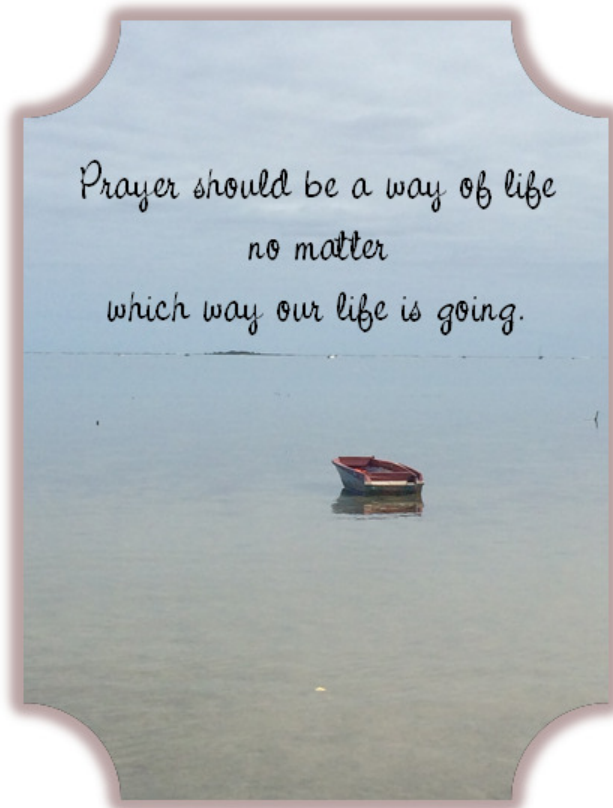
...**Luke 18:8:** *However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?*

This is an important question. Remember the parable was given so we do not lose heart. There is a direct application of this parable to our time here and now.



Perhaps these lessons on prayer were given not only to establish each follower of Christ in their own personal walk of sacrifice, but to establish a culture of prayer for the body of Christ that could be passed down through time until the time of the end in which we now live. So this is about our responsibility to learn how to pray, why to pray and what to pray for and then to pass that incredibly important knowledge and understanding to others.

*"You pray in your distress and in your need; would that you might pray also in the fullness of your joy and in your days of abundance." – Khalil Gibran, The Prophet*



**HOW** should we pray?

**WHY** should we pray?

**FOR WHAT** should we pray?

**Another parable of Jesus that illustrates these three points:**

**Luke 18:9-14:** (NASB) <sup>9</sup>And he also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: <sup>10</sup>Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup>The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup>I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get. <sup>13</sup>But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me, the sinner! <sup>14</sup>I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.



**This parable is addressed to a very different audience than our first parable:**

**Luke 18:9:** (NASB) *And he also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt:*

**Who were these people?**

**Luke 16:15:** (NASB) *And he said to them, You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.*

**Luke 18:10:** (NASB) *Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.*

Both parties went to the Temple indicating they knew where to seek God. So, they were in the right place and doing the right thing, but the results would not both come out right because of attitude.

(Source: Bible Commentary by John Gill) The one a Pharisee; one of those that trusted in themselves, as righteous, and despised all others, especially publicans and sinners; of these see Gill on "Mt 3:7". This was the strictest sect among the Jews; they were men that prayed, and fasted much, and were great sticklers for the ceremonies of the law, and the traditions of the elders, and did all they did to be seen of men: ...and the other a publican; a gatherer of the Roman tax, though by nation a Jew; and therefore such were had in great contempt by the Jews in general; nor would they eat and drink and converse with them...

Here we had the complete opposites of Jewish society: The Pharisee who was supposed to be the most righteous and the tax collector whom nobody liked.

**Luke 15:1-3:** (NASB) *<sup>1</sup>Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near him to listen to him. <sup>2</sup>Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, This man receives sinners and eats with them. <sup>3</sup>So he told them this parable, saying... (Jesus goes on to give the Parable of the Lost Sheep, the Parable of the Lost Coin, the Prodigal Son, the Unjust Steward, etc.)*

These people were dirty in the eyes of the Pharisees and Scribes but not in the eyes of Jesus.



A caller from Connecticut suggests: Prayer is needed most now for God's kingdom to resolve all of the world's issues. Prayer is seeking God and not giving Him instructions!

**Luke 18:11:** (NASB) *The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself...*

This actually is the meaning of the phrase - to pray to - or towards. So he was praying towards himself about himself for the benefit of himself. Nothing else mattered.

**This was not at all new for Israel:**

**Isaiah 65:2-5:** (NASB) *<sup>2</sup>I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in the way which is not good, following their own thoughts, <sup>3</sup>A people who continually provoke Me to My face, offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on bricks; <sup>4</sup>Who sit among graves and spend the night in secret places; Who eat swine's flesh, and the broth of unclean meat is in their pots. <sup>5</sup>Who say, Keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am holier than you! These are smoke in My nostrils, a fire that burns all the day.*

(More on this verse in the Bonus Material!)



**Our prayers should be thankful!**  
**Does that include thanking God that we are better than others?**

**Continuing the parable - here we learn how not to pray:**

**Luke 18:11-12:** (NASB) ...*God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup>I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.*

So, what does this “prayer” consist of? Thankfulness! Too bad it was about thankfulness for self-proclamation and ego!

**1 Corinthians 4:7-8:** (NASB) *<sup>7</sup>For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? <sup>8</sup>You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have become kings without us; and indeed, I wish that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you.*



A caller from Tennessee suggests: You can't pull one over on God Almighty. He knows what you are going to pray and what is in your heart. To the first caller from New York, God has already answered your prayer. Ask Him to take your hand and lead you through to the other side because He will.



A caller from Connecticut suggests: **Psalms 37:7:** *Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him.* How many times do we pray and listen to the worry in our own minds instead of knowing the love of God in our own lives? **1 Peter 5:7:** *Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.* In a situation there is action to be taken, but the most important action is trust in God. We ask before God but we also must be quiet before God to allow ourselves to be present with Him. **Ephesians 3:16:** *I pray that you may be strengthened in your inner being through His spirit, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith as you are grounded in love.*

We have to make sure we are focused on the right things with prayer.

**HOW should we NOT pray?**

Don't pray thankfully as one who proudly stands above the crowd.

We live in a world of great mockery, especially when it comes to Christianity, unfortunately. It has become commonplace to mock what we as Christians believe to be important. This prayer was given as an opening to the Lake Worth, FL, city commission meeting - by an atheist. The mere act of asking an atheist to pray is an act of mockery. This teaches us the necessity for true, honest prayer on behalf of those who actually have faith.

- *(Atheist prayer praying to “Mother Earth” and various mythical gods.)*

Prayer is such a deeply important part of our lives. What should we do in these cases? Should we fight with them or demonstrate against them? Jesus says we should pray for them. This reminds us of the meaningless prayer of the Pharisee with no redeeming value.





## WHY should we NOT pray?

To justify oneself by focusing on the sins around you... (In fact, the Pharisees were committing these very sins they were focusing on, but on a spiritual level!)



A caller from Indiana suggests: We are to put off the "old man." In this sinful world when we take our eyes away from the spirit of God, when we don't see the light...there is an awful lot of pain that goes along with sin. We are given the choice to turn away from sin. The pride of man elevates themselves to God's status but there is nothing under them. I find with myself a prayer of repentance is a good one to start with. Anything outside the law of God is sin.

## HOW should we NOT pray?

Do not pray in brazen self-assurance that your station on earth is equivalent to your standing before God!

The Pharisee had a station on earth that was truly privileged and important. They were the spiritual teachers of Israel. But let us not think for one second that because we have a privileged position here on earth that we automatically are privileged before God. What do we do *with* that privileged position?

## FOR WHAT should we NOT pray?

Acceptance to God based upon the things we do. The pride of man puts himself in the place of God.

### So, how do we become more like this tax collector?

Luke 18:13-14: (NASB) <sup>13</sup>But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me, the sinner! <sup>14</sup>I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.

The elements of this prayer are external humility, outwardly expressing gratitude and need with deep personal and public reverence.

Psalms 40:11-12: (NASB) <sup>11</sup>You, O LORD, will not withhold Your compassion from me; Your lovingkindness and Your truth will continually preserve me. <sup>12</sup>For evils beyond number have surrounded me; My iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to see; They are more numerous than the hairs of my head, and my heart has failed me.

## HOW should we pray?

Clothed in humility so that it can be perceived from the outside as well as the inside.



### True prayer, *The Skinny on Prayer, The Skit Guys*

- *God, I have a lot of needs and I have a lot of wants and sometimes I get those things confused. Help me to just trust you to meet my needs and to be thankful when You just give me those other things that I just want. God, I have blown it so many times today, and I'm sorry. Thank you for Your forgiveness. I don't take it for granted. And God, as I start this day out, I'm just reminded that this world is filled with so many spiritual potholes. Please help me to walk in such a way where I won't stumble so much. And as I'm*



*going through this day, God, help me to live in such a way that would bring You glory and honor. May the life that I live be a life of worship to You.*

Our lives should be a living worship of God.

**That is what the tax collector was actually looking for:**

**Luke 18:15:** (NASB) *...but was beating his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me, the sinner!*

The elements of this prayer include inward humility, the passionate acknowledgment of who we are, how far short we fall and the plea for God's unearned mercy. We do not deserve anything! We have the ability and privilege to seek God's mercy because Jesus died for us.

**Hebrews 4:14-16:** (NASB) <sup>14</sup>*Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.* <sup>15</sup>*For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.* <sup>16</sup>*Therefore let us draw near with confidence (Not confidence in ourselves, or with arrogance or ego) to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

### **FOR WHAT** should we pray?

For God to see us as we are through the eyes of His mercy. The pathway to His mercy is through the blood of Jesus' sacrifice.

**"Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men." — Reverend Phillips Brooks**

**The Apostle Paul thought he could serve the Lord better if he did not have a physical deficiency (thought to be his eyesight):**

**2 Corinthians 12:7-10:** (NASB) <sup>7</sup>*Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!* <sup>8</sup>*Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me.*

Paul was already strong in the Lord, yet undergoing hardship, so he prayed. But the answer was NO!

<sup>9</sup>*And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness. Was Paul crushed? No - rather he was made stronger! Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.* <sup>10</sup>*Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak (physically), then I am strong. (spiritually)*



**"Take Me to the King," (final chorus) Tamela Mann**

*Take me to the King  
I don't have much to bring  
My heart's torn to pieces  
It's my offering*

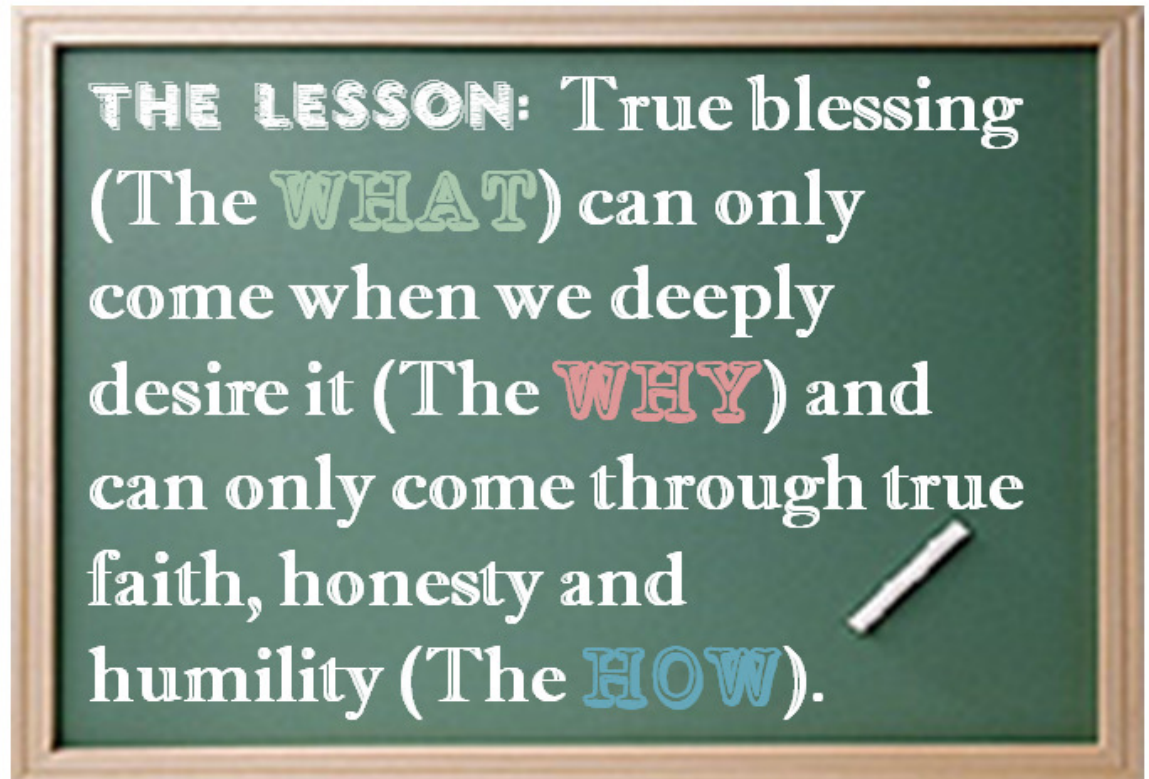
*Lay me at the throne  
Leave me there alone  
To gaze upon Your glory  
And sing to You this song*



*Take me to the King  
Take me to the King  
Take me to the King*

**Jesus concludes the parable:**

**Luke 18:14:** *I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.*



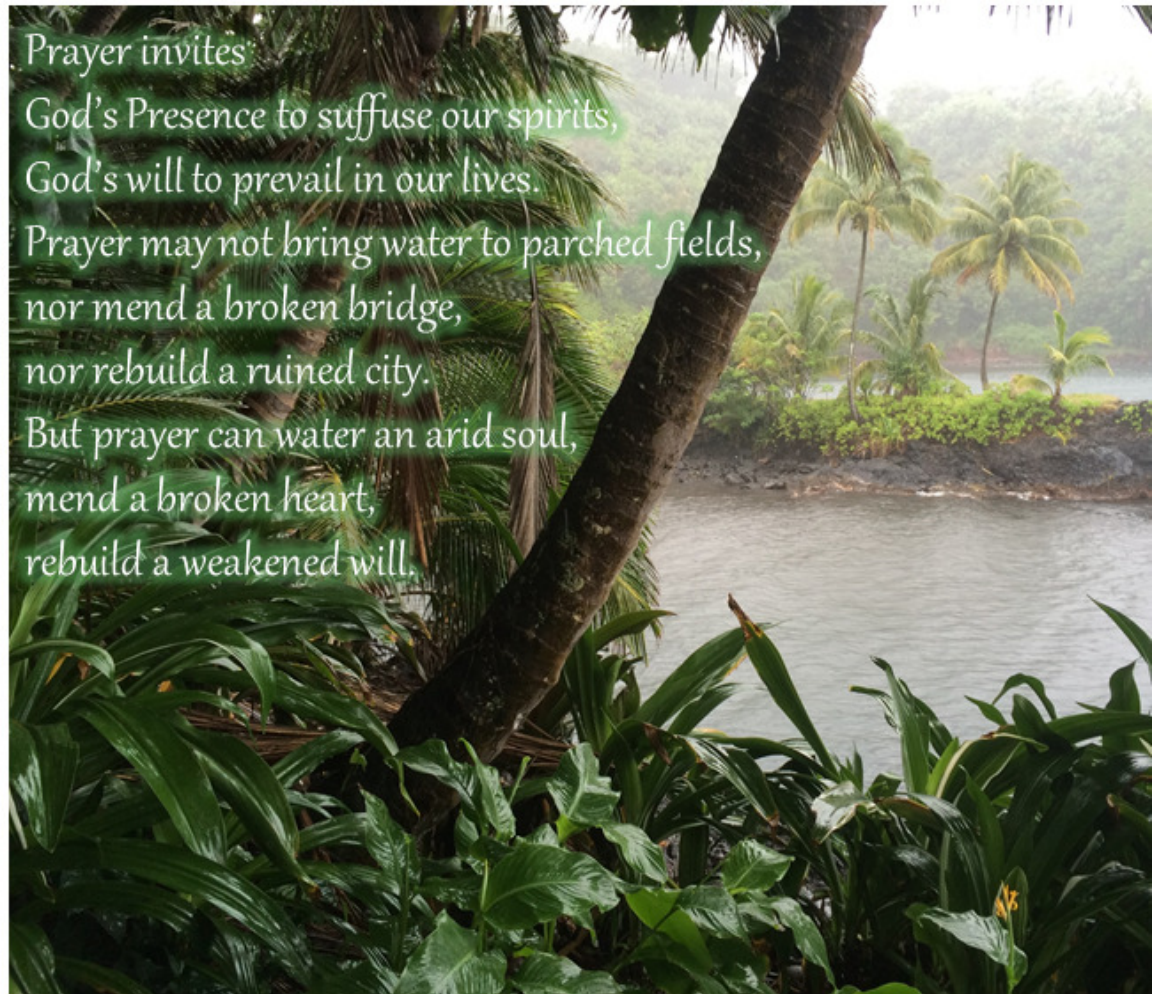
Sometimes emotionally we get disturbed and destroyed by the experiences of our lives and the lives of others. Take heart in the fact that if we feed ourselves spiritually, it will give us strength through the distress to be able to bear the burden God has put upon us for our benefit and perhaps for the benefit of those around us. That is the true power of prayer and bringing things before God with sincerity and humility. We want to find His blessing and do His will and not ours.

*So, how should we be praying?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*



*And now even more to think about...  
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*





The Luke rendering of the Lord's Prayer with a similar parable which follows immediately. This helps us to see not only what the important elements of prayer are, but it reminds us of the necessary passion of our prayer life...

**Luke 11:1-13:** (NASB) *<sup>1</sup>It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples. <sup>2</sup>And he said to them, When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. <sup>3</sup>Give us each day our daily bread. <sup>4</sup>And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation. <sup>5</sup>Then he said to them, Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, Friend, lend me three loaves; <sup>6</sup>for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him; <sup>7</sup>and from inside he answers and says, Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything. <sup>8</sup>I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs. <sup>9</sup>So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup>For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. <sup>11</sup>Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? <sup>12</sup>Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? <sup>13</sup>If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?*





### An example of Jesus praying:

**Luke 22:31-34:** (NASB) <sup>31</sup>Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; <sup>32</sup>but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers. <sup>33</sup>But he said to him, Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death! <sup>34</sup>And he said, I say to you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know me.

### More on this verse from the program:

**Isaiah 65:2-5:** (NASB) <sup>2</sup>I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in the way which is not good, following their own thoughts, <sup>3</sup>A people who continually provoke Me to My face, offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on bricks;

(Source: Biblical commentary by Gill) that sacrificeth in gardens; to idols, as the Targum, placed there, as they were under every green tree; or in groves, where idols were worshipped. Fortunatus Scacchus thinks this refers to their having their sepulchres in their gardens, where they consulted the dead; which is favoured by a clause in the next verse:

and burneth incense on altars of brick: or, "upon bricks". Kimchi says, when they made bricks, they put upon them incense for idols; or, "upon tiles"; upon the roofs of their houses, which were covered with tiles; see #Jer 19:13 when incense should only have been burnt upon the golden altar erected for that purpose, #Ex 30:1,3, not that these idolatrous actions were committed by the Jews in the times of Christ and his apostles, the times preceding their last destruction; for, after their return from the Babylonish captivity, they were not guilty of idolatry; but these were the sins of their fathers, which God would recompense into their bosoms, according to #Isa 65:7 they now filling up the measure of their iniquities, #Mt 23:32.

<sup>4</sup>Who sit among graves and spend the night in secret places; Who eat swine's flesh, and the broth of unclean meat is in their pots.

Verse 4. Which remain among the graves, etc.: In order to practice necromancy, to consult the dead, where they imagined demons and departed spirits haunted, and of whom they fancied they might get knowledge of future things:

and lodge in the monuments: whole nights for the same purposes. The Vulgate Latin version is, "that sleep in the temples of idols"; after the manner of the Heathens, who used to sleep there in order to obtain dreams, whereby they might be able to foretell things to come, as they did in the temple of Aesculapius; or, "in desolate places," as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it; where they expected to meet with demons and noxious spirits, to give them knowledge of things to come.

The Targum paraphrases both clauses thus, "who dwell in houses built of the dust of graves, and lodge with the corpse of the children of men;" so corpse, according to Jarchi, are expressed by this word, which signifies "kept," or "preserved" as in #Isa 49:6, because they are put in a strait place, from whence they cannot get out; though some think idols are meant, called so by way of derision, because kept for fear of being stolen, or because they cannot keep themselves, nor their votaries:

which eat swine's flesh: forbidden by the law, #Le 11:7:

and broth of abominable things is in their vessels; or "pots": broth made of swine's flesh, and of other sorts of flesh which were unclean by the law. Our version follows the marginal reading; as do the Targum, Aben Ezra, Jarchi, and Kimchi; but the written text is, "a fragment" or piece, or pieces, of abominable things; both may be retained in the sense of the passage; slices of flesh unclean, and so abominable by the law, were put into their pots and stewed, and made broth of, which they drank. Spencer thinks the milk in which kids (baby goats) were boiled is meant, which the Zabians kept in vessels, and sprinkled on the trees in their gardens, to make them more fruitful; hence mention is made of idolatrous practices in gardens, in the preceding verse.

<sup>5</sup>Who say, Keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am holier than you! These are smoke in My nostrils, a fire that burns all the day.

### One last verse on the needed persistence in prayer:

**Genesis 32:24-26:** (NASB) <sup>24</sup>Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. <sup>25</sup>When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of Jacob's thigh was dislocated while he wrestled with him. <sup>26</sup>Then he said, Let me go, for the dawn is breaking. But he said, I will not let you go unless you bless me.