

OUR PRAYERS **(Luke 11:1-4)**

I. Characteristics of our prayers.

- A. How do we approach God in our prayers?
 - 1. Do we do it with haughtiness or humbleness?
 - 2. Do we do it with confidence or arrogance?
 - 3. What should be the characteristics of a prayer to God?
- B. There should be extreme humility when we come before God.
 - 1. We need to remember that is an inferior approaching a superior - the lesser going to the greater.
 - 2. We should have the attitude of the publican (Luke 18:9-14).
 - 3. We are going before the Creator and Sustainer of life.
 - 4. If we were to go before the president or some king, would we not do so with humility?
 - 5. How much more so to God?
- C. We are to have confidence in God when we approach Him.
 - 1. James says we are to ask God with nothing wavering (James 1:5-8).
 - 2. We are to approach Him with confidence (Hebrews 4:16).
 - 3. This does not mean arrogantly with demands for God.
 - 4. Rather, we are to humbly approach Him with confidence that He will give us what we need (Matthew 7:11).
- D. We are to pray in accordance with the will of God (1 John 5:14).
 - 1. Prayer is not a period of selfish requests.
 - 2. It is a time to ask God for things that are in accordance with His will.
 - 3. If we have a request, which we all do, we need to make sure we understand that in order to receive it must be in line with the will of God.
 - 4. Barnes said of 1 John 5:14 - "No man could hope for good who should esteem his own wishes to be a better guide than the will of God."
- E. These should all be characteristics of our prayers.

II. The content of our prayers.

- A. In August 2005 there was a poll that asked Americans about what they believe and how they practice their faith.
 - 1. One question was: What do you think is the most important purpose of prayer?
 - 2. 27% said to seek God's guidance, 23% said to thank God, 19% to be close to God, 13% said to help others, 4% said other reasons and 5% did not know.
- B. What should be the content of our prayers?
- C. The letters of the word "acts" will give us an easy way to remember what our prayers should contain.
- D. "A" stands for adoration.
 - 1. Adoration is defined as "The act of paying homage, to a divine

- being.”
- 2. God is worthy of adoration for His creative work, His redemptive work and all the blessings that He gives us.
- 3. Paul prayed in adoration in Ephesians 3:14-21.
- E. “C” stands for confession.
 - 1. We are to confess our sins to God (1 John 1:7-10).
 - 2. The way we do that is through prayer.
 - 3. Psalm 32 is a prayer of confession.
 - 4. The publican confessed himself to be a sinner in Luke 18:13.
- F. “T” stands for thanksgiving.
 - 1. We are to be thankful to God for all the blessings of life (Philippians 4:6).
 - 2. We are to continue in prayer with thanksgiving (Colossians 4:2).
 - 3. Jesus set this example for us (John 6:11; 11:41).
- G. “S” stands for supplication.
 - 1. This is defined as “To ask for humbly or earnestly as by praying.”
 - 2. The things we ask God for are our supplications.
 - 3. In the prayer taught to the disciples of Jesus in Luke 11, there are requests made.
 - a. We all need things and we are to ask for them from God.
 - b. After asking we are to do our part.
 - c. For instance, we ask God for our daily bread and then we go to work to earn money for that bread.
 - d. Our job and the pay are blessings from God.
- H. If we will remember the word “acts” when we pray the content of our prayers will be right with God.

III. The closing of our prayers.

- A. How do we end our prayers?
 - 1. I have heard people simply say amen.
 - 2. I have heard people end in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, amen.
 - 3. There are other endings that people use as well.
- B. This is how Paul taught the Ephesians to pray (5:20).
- C. This shows that Jesus is the only avenue of approaching God (John 14:6).
- D. He is our High Priest that intercedes for us (Hebrews 7:24-25).
- E. We should close our prayers in some way that acknowledges we are praying through Jesus to God.

IV. The consistency of our prayers.

- A. Jesus gave a parable about a widow asking an unjust judge to avenge her, which is recorded in Luke 18.
 - 1. The reason for the parable is in verse 1.
 - 2. We should pray and not give up, or faint.
 - 3. We need to continue in prayer.
- B. We need to be people who pray at any time (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
- C. There is no excuse for being haphazard in our prayer life.
- D. Too many wait to pray until they are in the middle of a storm.

1. While it is never too late to pray, we need to be praying about dealing with storms before they appear.
 2. We must always be seeking, asking and knocking.
- E. Our Lord taught persistence just as soon as He taught the disciples to pray (Luke 11:5-8).
- F. Paul taught us to be persistent in prayer (Romans 12:12).
- G. The early Christians were persistent in prayer (Acts 2:42).
- H. We need to realize that this does not guarantee that we receive that for which we ask.
1. Jesus asked three times for the cup of suffering to pass.
 2. Paul asked multiple times for his thorn to be removed.
- I. But without prayer, and that persistently, we won't get that which we need: grace and strength to help in need.