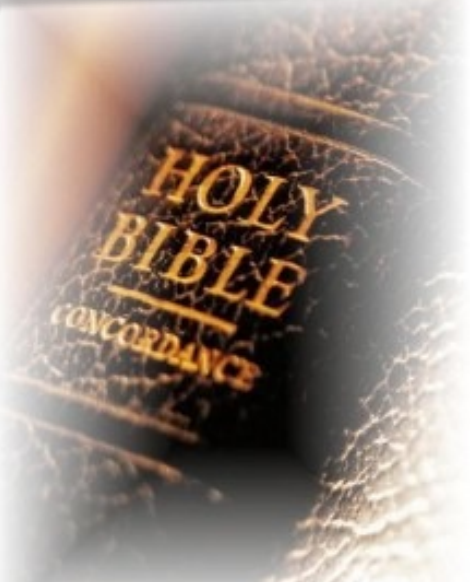


The Reminder

The weekly newsletter of the church of Christ in Bellaire, TX

“An Analysis of Prayer”



"Pray then in this way..." (Matt. 6:9). It seems, from several passages, that the disciples were impressed with Jesus' reliance on communication with God: and rightfully so. He found much strength and guidance, and so can we as we learn from the Master. The "Lord's prayer" is provided as a formula, but it is supplemented in other places, or perhaps expounded on, as we look at Paul's instructions to Timothy or the prophets in the Old Testament. We sometimes use the acronym, "ACTS", to analyze many of the prayers we find uttered in calmer circumstances.

"A" - Adoration. "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name". This address or many like it make known to us to whom we are speaking. While God is our Abba Father, a term of endearment, His dwelling place is in a realm inhabited by spirit beings. Angels, archangel, cherubim, seraphim, and others bow before His majesty and might. When He speaks worlds are created or destroyed. Satan will be consigned to hell at a word spoken by God, Rev. 20:9-10. We approach Him thru the blood of Jesus, and no other way. Speak words that express your respect.

"C" - Confession. Confess everything to him, not just sins: our faith, our weaknesses, and our dependence. Do this with confidence as we realize we "cast our cares on Him because he cares for us" (1 Peter 5:7). To "pray in faith, nothing doubting" takes years of spiritual growth and observation. Developing faith as big as a mustard seed isn't easy, but we continue steadfast in prayer trusting His wisdom is superior to ours. He cares for my earthly well being, but getting us to heaven is the first consideration.

"Thanksgiving" - "Of all human emotions, gratitude has the shortest life". What a sad statement, but often true. When we count our blessings, big ones, small ones, physical, spiritual, the list is endless. He provides all we are and all we have. Stop and meditate on that thought. We get in too much of a hurry to finish our prayer or get to more important areas. Take the time to look around you and give thanks for all He has done.

"Supplication" - God has asked us to make our requests known to Him. Earnest prayers for governmental leaders, rulers closer to home, our daily plans, spiritual health and growth, physical health for self and loved ones, prayers even for our enemies. As with thanksgiving, so with supplication, the list is endless. And remember, we're talking to the heavenly Father who wants communication with us. He won't tell you to come back later when He is less busy.

There are other prayers that may not follow a particular formula. I wonder what Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego thought as they approached the furnace, or what Jesus was experiencing in the Garden just before his arrest, trial and crucifixion? These prayers would be intense (drops of sweat like blood) and focused. There is no wrong way to pour out your heart to God as long as it's done reverently. It's Paul saying to us to be "instant in prayer" (Rom. 12:12). Any time day or night we can breathe a, "God help me". Nehemiah did just before he asked the king for a huge favor. It may be us before a car crash, or surgery, HELP. God will listen.

Sometimes the format of prayer is determined by circumstances. But only for those who have built a relationship with Him. Don't wait till the last moment.
Jack

**SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 6, 2015**

BELLAIRE
church of Christ
8001 South Rice Ave
P.O. Box 1029
Bellaire, Texas 77402
www.bellairechurchofchrist.org

Schedule of Services
Sunday:
9:30 AM Worship
11:00 AM Bible Study

WEDNESDAY:
7:30 PM Bible Study

GOSPEL MEETING:
November 13, 14, 15
- Fall Singing
- Jeff Wilson - Lessons from Isaiah.

