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Rice Memorial Missionary Baptist Church

Apostle Walter F. Camp, Presiding Senior Pastor
Pastor David K. Baker III, 2nd Presiding
802 W. 15th, Little Rock, AR 72202, 501-416-5894
www.RiceMemorialBaptistChurch.org

A Model for Prayer

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
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or Roget's Thesaurus - **January 4, 2015**

Luke 11:1-13

Introduction: Prayer is universal. Every religion practices prayer in some form. Much of it is meaningless repetition (cf. Matt. 6:7). Some of it is empty meditation.

Even within Christendom, "many ideas concerning prayer exist. For some, it is recitation of religious platitudes or exercises. For others, it is a mysterious technique for extracting benevolences from the Almighty in desperate need. It is considered by still others as a psychological exercise restoring poise and peace of mind to troubled souls" (French, *The Principles and Practice of Prayer*, Great commission Prayer League).

While anyone who believes in God is naturally inclined to pray, the many divergent ideas about demonstrate how important it is to learn what is and how we are to pray. Most people learn to pray by observing others in their families and churches. But if we are to learn the distinctive qualities of **Christian prayer**, we must look first to Jesus Christ.

(Source: *The Bible Expositor and Illuminator*, Union Press Publication-Christian Life Series)

Luke 11:1, *And it came to pass, that, as he was PRAYING in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, **teach us to pray (supplicate [petition with earnestness and submission])**, as **John** also taught his disciples.*

NOTE: The following directions concerning prayer, though they agree with those in (Matthew 6:9) &c. yet were delivered at **another time**, and in **another place**, and upon **another occasion**: Christ was then in Galilee, now in Judea: he gave the former directions unasked for, these at the request of one of his disciples; the other were given as he was preaching, these immediately after he had been praying; as soon as he had done a work he was often employed in, as man and mediator, on account of himself, his disciples, cause, and interest: and this was done **in a certain place**; perhaps in the Mount of Olives, which was not far from Bethany, where we hear of him last, since this was a place where he used to abide in the night, and pray, (Luke 21:37).

(Source: biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/)

NOTE: As to this inquiry, we may consider these things: **I.** It is said of the disciples of John, *They fast often, and make prayers*, Luke 5:33: where, upon many accounts, I could persuade myself that *prayers* ought to be taken here in its most proper sense for **supplications**. To let other things pass, let us weigh these **two**:

1. That the Jews' daily and common prayers, ordinary and occasional, consisted chiefly of benedictions and doxologies, which the title of that Talmudic tract, which treats of their prayers, sufficiently testifies, being called [*Beracoth*] *benedictions*, as also that *tephillah*, the general nomenclature for *prayer*, signifies no other than **praising**, i.e. **benediction** or **doxology**. To illustrate this matter, we have a passage or two not unworthy our transcribing: "*Perhaps, a man begs for necessities for himself, and afterward*

prayeth. This is that which is spoken by Solomon, when he saith, *To the prayer, and to the supplication.*" I omit the version, because the Gemarists interpret it themselves; *rinna* is *tephillah*, and *tephillah* is *bakkashah*. Their meaning is this: The first word of Solomon's **rinnah**, signifies *prayer* (as the Gloss hath it, i.e. *prayer with praise, or doxology*) the latter word, **tephillah**, signifies **petition, or supplication**; Gloss, *begging for things necessary*. It cannot be denied but that they had their petitionary or supplicatory prayers; but then, the **benedictory** or **doxological** prayers were more in number, and more large and copious (lengthy): especially those which were poured out occasionally or upon present emergency.

2. It may be reasonably supposed that the **Baptist** taught his disciples a form of prayer different from what the Jewish forms were. It stands with reason, that he that was to bring in a new doctrine, (I mean *new* in respect to that of the Jewish) should bring in a **new way of prayer** too; that is, a form of prayer that consisted more in petition and supplication than the Jewish forms had done; nay, and another sort of petitions than what those forms which were petitionary had hitherto contained. For the disciples of John had been instructed in the points of **regeneration, justifying faith**, particular adoption, and **sanctification** by the Spirit, and other doctrines of the gospel, which were altogether unknown in the schools or synagogues of the Jews. And who would imagine, therefore, that John Baptist should not teach his disciples to pray for these things?

(Source: *John Lightfoot Commentary on the Gospels* classic.studylight.org/com/jlc/)

Luke 11:2-4, *And he said unto them, When ye pray (supplicate [petition with earnestness and submission]), say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom (royalty [kingly office; sovereignty]) come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.*

NOTE: *And when ye pray, say ...* According to Geldenhuys, this means that prayer should be used "as nearly as possible in the **form** in which he taught it"; but the more accurate exegesis is that "Christ did not design that we should be tied up to these very words, for then there would have been no variation" from the account given in Matthew. **Father ...** Harrison commented that: (Here) Jesus uses a child's word for Father, which appears also in Rom. 8:15. It is used by modern Hebrews within the family circle, and implies familiarity based on love. **Hallowed be thy name ...** The first concern in every prayer should be the **honor** and **glory** of God. The third commandment in the Decalogue forbade taking God's name in vain (Exodus 20:7); and the Christian also is instructed to hold the name of God in highest **reverence** and **awe**. **Thy kingdom come ...** Later in this same chapter, Jesus said, "Then is the kingdom of God come upon you" (Luke 11:20); and from this it is mandatory to see a double meaning in "come." There was a sense in which the kingdom had already "come upon" the people of that day; and yet this petition has respect to something future. Anthony Lee Ash noted that: There is a sense in which the kingdom is to come in any age, since not all have owned the **sovereignty** (supreme (highest) power) of God ... Even after the kingdom came at Pentecost (Acts 1:5-8; 2:1-4), the prayer remained a valid one for Christians. If it were not, Luke would not have preserved it in a gospel written for post-Pentecost disciples. And if it were a valid prayer for them, it remains so for Christians of any age.

In connection with this, the Greek word translated "**kingdom**" in this prayer is rendered "**kingly power**" or "**royal sovereignty**" by practically all recognized expositors of recent times, and not by "kingdom" in a spatial sense. For further thoughts on praying for the kingdom to come, see my Commentary on Matthew, Matt. 6:9-13.

Our daily bread ... This indicates that basic necessities alone are proper objects of petition from the Father. This prayer shows that the Christian should be content with a simple life-style.

(Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament* classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

NOTE: For we also **forgive**, &c. This is somewhat different from the expression in Matthew, though the sense is the same. The idea is that **unless we forgive** others, God **will not forgive us**; and unless we come to him *really* forgiving all others, we cannot expect pardon. It does not mean that by forgiving others we deserve forgiveness ourselves, or *merit it*, but that this is a disposition or state of **mind** without which God cannot consistently pardon us.

Everyone that is indebted to us. Every one that has *injured* us. This does not refer to pecuniary (Relating to money) transactions, but to **offences** similar to those which we have committed against God, and for which we ask forgiveness. Besides the variations in the *expressions* in this prayer, Luke has omitted the doxology, or close, altogether; and this shows that Jesus did not intend that we should always use just this *form*, but that it was a **general direction HOW to pray**; or, rather, that we were to pray for these *things*, though not always using the same words.

(Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

NOTE: It is probable, therefore, that when this disciple requested our Saviour that he would teach his disciples *as John* had done, he had respect to such kind of prayers as these; because we find Christ so far condescending to him, that he delivers him a form of prayer merely **petitionary**, as may appear both from the whole structure of the prayer, as also in that the last close of all the doxology, "**For thine is the kingdom**," &c. is here left wholly out; he took care to deliver [a form] that was merely supplicatory. This is confirmed by what follows concerning the man requesting some loaves of his neighbor...

...probably this disciple was not ignorant that Christ had already delivered to them a petitionary form in that Sermon of his upon the Mount: and therefore what need had he to desire, and for what reason did he **importune** (request with urgency) another?

Answer. It is likely he did know it; and as likely he did not expect the **repetition** of the same again: but being very intent upon what John had done for his disciples, did hope for a form more full and copious (lengthy, wordy), that might more largely and particularly express what they were to ask for, according to what he had observed probably in the form that had been prescribed by John: but the **divine wisdom** of our Saviour knew, however, that all was sufficiently comprehended in what he had given them. And as the Jews had their **short summary** of those **eighteen prayers** epitomized, so would he have this form of his a short summary of ALL that we ought to ASK for.

(Source: John Lightfoot Commentary on the Gospels classic.studylight.org/com/jlc)

Thought 1. When Christians pray, we are actually coming to the "Throne of Grace."

Hebrews 4:15-16, For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come **boldly (assurance, confidence)** unto the **throne of grace**, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to **help** in time of **NEED**.

Luke 11:5-7, And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a **friend**, and shall go unto him at **midnight**, and say unto him, **Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?** And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me **in bed**; I cannot **RISE** and **GIVE** thee.

NOTE: A friend ... at midnight ... Alas, how utterly hopeless would be the state of mortal man, if in the darkness of human wretchedness and sin there was no friend to whom he might go for help and relief. It is precisely the thesis of infidelity that mankind has no friend beyond the veil, no one to whom he might go to solicit aid, no higher power to supplement his weakness, and no Person to understand his woes. How glorious is the Christian teaching that in the blackness of whatever **midnight** may engulf him, there is **a Friend** who will rise up and bless him.

Let it be particularly noted that the supplicant **did not set out to seek a friend**; (he already had one!) "The answer to prayer is, therefore, only certain in cases where one who prays stands in a relation of **friendship to God**, and loves and serves him."

Children are with me in bed ... As Boles observed, "The Greek word for bed applied to any room or place used for sleeping, as well as to a bed or couch." The mention of such details as the shut door, the midnight hour, the sleeping children, etc. was to emphasize the reluctance of the friend to respond to the borrower. (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

Luke 11:8, I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his **friend**, yet because of his **IMPORTUNITY** he will rise and **give** him as many as he needeth.

Importunity defined 335, importunity [pertinacious [determined, unwavering] solicitation; urgent request], **impudence** (audacity, the quality or state of being **IMPUDENT**). Impudent, shameless, BOLD [not timid: fearful; shy] with disregard, unblushingly forward

NOTE: ...several things in Jesus' culture would have emboldened someone to do this. First, hospitality was considered **essential**. To be a **good** host, one **had to provide a meal** for the traveler, no matter how late the **hour**. To do **less** was a blot on one's **reputation**. So, the man in Jesus' story had the choice of waking up his **neighbor** or being a **bad** host. The **embarrassment** of the first choice was minor compared to the embarrassment of the second. (Source: *The Bible Expositor and Illuminator*)

Thought 1. Knowing the culture of the times, explains the pressure that was on the man **DESIRING** the loaves. And at his initial request, the answer was "trouble me not, etc.." Now, from what Jesus said, we have to agree that this man had to make his bold, determined request to his friend at least one, or two more times before he complied and gave him the loaves.

We also have to agree that his friend understood the pressure, which compelled him to come at that time of the night asking for loaves. This same understanding of his friend's mind, coupled with his boldness, was pressure on him to get up and to give the loaves.

Though this was the mind of the friend in the house, this is NOT our heavenly Father's mind toward us. In order to make this clear, it's necessary to jump to the end of his teaching where Jesus compares earthly fathers to our heavenly Father.

Luke 18:1-8, And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a **judge**, which feared-not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, **Avenge me** of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I **fear not God**, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she **weary me**. And the Lord said, Hear what the **unjust judge** saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them **speedily (quickly)**.

Thought 2. The widow went to an "UNJUST Judge." And it was necessary to be persistent in asking for justice. On the other hand, our Father is "JUST." That means he will avenge his elect as "quickly" as his wisdom dictates. And even IF God was not just, because he is God, no one can weary him to act as did the widow to a "human." Most of all, continuing to ask God is NOT faith.

Luke 11:9-10, And I say unto you, **Ask (require, crave)**, and it shall be given you; **seek**, and ye shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened unto you. For **every one** that **ASKETH** **receiveth**; and he that seeketh **findeth**; and to him that knocketh it shall be **opened**.

Thought 1. Remember, in verse 8, Jesus said “because of his IMPORTUNITY he will rise and give him as many as he needeth”. When we consider what we’ve just learned, and look at verses 9 and 10, we see that they are in the context of that friend: IMPERFECT people, that are NOT like our Father. He answers the first time we ask him in faith, and don’t doubt. But, we have to know this in order to have faith (assurance, certainty) in him.

James 1:5-6, If any of you lack **wisdom**, let him **ASK** of God, that **giveth** to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ASK in **FAITH** (**assurance** [CERTAINTY].), nothing **wavering**.

Daniel 10:12, Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the **FIRST DAY** that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, **thy words** were **HEARD**, and I am come for **thy words**.

Matthew 6:7-8, But when ye **pray**, use NOT **vain repetitions**, as the **heathen** do: for they think that they shall be **HEARD** for their MUCH SPEAKING. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, **before** ye **ASK** him.

Mark 11:22-24, And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have **faith in God** (*Yahweh*). For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not **doubt** in his heart, but shall **believe** that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever **YE desire (crave)**, when ye **pray**, **BELIEVE** that ye **receive** them, and ye shall **HAVE** them.

Thought 2. What Jesus said is we should **BELIEVE** we receive when we prayed. That means we should then give him thanks for what we just received by faith. After that, when a thought comes about our request, we can continue to pray a prayer of thanksgiving: praising him for it, because we believe we received it.

John 15:7, If ye abide in me, and **my WORDS** abide in you, ye shall **ask** what ye **will**, and it shall be **done** unto you.

Philippians 4:6-7, Be **careful (be anxious about)** for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and **supplication (petition)** with **thanksgiving** let your **requests** be made known unto God (*Yahweh*). And the PEACE of God, which passeth all understanding, shall **keep (protect)** your **hearts** and **minds** through Christ Jesus.

Thought 3. When Jesus prayed, he asked just one time in faith, which means his request was based on God’s word, which he knew and understood. When he was in Gethsemane, he wasn’t asking in prayer, he was committing his will to his Father’s.

Matthew 26:42, He (*Jesus*) went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, **IF (forasmuch as** [SINCE]) this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, **thy will** be done.

Luke 22:41-43, And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be **willing**, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an **angel** unto him from heaven, **strengthening** him.

John 16:23-24, And in that day ye shall **ask ME** nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall **ask** the **Father** in my **name (authority)**, **HE** will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: **ASK**, and ye shall **RECEIVE**, that your **joy** may be **full**.

1 John 5:14-15, And this is the **confidence** that we have in him, that, if we **ASK** any thing according to **his WILL**, he heareth us: And if we **KNOW** that he hear us, whatsoever we **ask**, we KNOW that we **HAVE** the **petitions** that we **desired** of him.

Thought 4. God's words: written or spoken reveal his will for us. So, wisdom says ask for and receive the word pertaining to the problem, and ask in agreement with it! As you can see, once we ask, and believe we received when we asked. Then we use prayers of thanksgiving for the things God gave when we asked. They were given in the spiritual realm, so, it may a little while before we see them in our physical hands. But, since God heard and answered our prayer, we just continue to thank him, over and over for them, as they come to mind.

Some Christians may be as I was many years ago, when I went to him in prayer to remind him of what he said he was going to do, which I didn't yet have in my hands. He said, "**I'm going to bless you, but you can't rush me.**" I learned he has a time set for them to show up. So, we have to understand that it's through faith and patience we inherit the promises. (Heb. 6:12) But, every need is met on time.

Luke 11:11-12, If a **son** shall **ASK (CRAVE, desire)** bread of ANY of you that is a **father**, will he GIVE him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a **fish** give him a **serpent**? Or if he shall ask an **egg**, will he offer him a **scorpion**?

Thought 1. Of those that are fathers, the Lord asked questions which some folk would feel don't even deserve answers. But if they'll follow his train of thought, they'll learn something about God that they didn't know. And since he's taking the time to teach it, that tells us that they aren't aware of what he's about to teach.

Luke 11:13, If ye then, being **evil (morally culpable [faulty])**, **know** how to **give good gifts** unto your children: how much MORE shall your heavenly Father **GIVE** the Holy Spirit to **them** that **ASK (CRAVE, desire)** him?

Thought 1. The point is that when people hunger and thirst (CRAVE) God's Holy Spirit, and hear the gospel about Jesus, they will, by FAITH, receive the Spirit everytime! This is being born again. (John 7:37-39) Now, you understand why in verse thirteen, "ask" is not defined as "requesting".

We also have to remember that the Holy Spirit came to the earth on the day of Pentecost when Peter and the others were in the upper room. (Acts 2:1-4) So, there is no need to ask over and over, or to tarry, which is to wait, for him anymore! This is seen in Acts 10.

Acts 10:34-47, Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons... ..While Peter **yet** spake these WORDS, the Holy Ghost **fell on** all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the **gift** of the **Holy Ghost**. For they heard them **speak** with **tongues**, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have **received** the **Holy Ghost** as well as we?

Thought 2. Cornelius, and those listening to Peter's short sermon, believed on Jesus as the Christ, were first born again by receiving the Holy Spirit, and were then filled in the next split second. Evidence of this was that they heard them speaking in tongues during the message! Nobody prayed to get them born again, and nobody prayed for them to be filled after they were born again; as did Peter and John in Acts 8:6-17. These things took place because of their reverence for God, which produced a burning DESIRE to obey him, and receive his GIFTS.

1 John 5:1, Whosoever **believeth (have faith in, entrust (especially one's spiritual well-being to Christ))** that Jesus is the Christ is **born** of God...