

## Rhythms of Grace: Dependent in Prayer

### I. Types of prayer (and types of Psalms) - The Lord's prayer

*Matthew 6:9-15*

*“Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. ‘Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. ‘Give us this day our daily bread. ‘And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ‘And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]’ For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.”*

#### A. Adoration

Praise God for who He is. God's glory is the sum total of His character qualities put on magnificent display. God's name is His character as His reputation. God deserves for His name and glory to be magnified globally, this is the end goal of creation. As believers we should be those who worship God as a way of life and our mission is to bring others into that worship.

*1 Corinthians 10:31*

*Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

*Matthew 5:16*

*Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

*Ephesians 1:12*

*...to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.*

*2 Corinthians 4:15*

*For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God.*

#### B. Confession

The Christian life is one of constant repentance. Just like believing in faith is not a one time act only done at the moment of conversion, so too repentance is the lifelong stance of the believer. We continually want to grow to be more like Christ. Confession is good for us.

*1 John 1:9*

*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

*James 5:16*

*Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.*

#### C. Thanksgiving

God is good and He is active in our lives. We need to recognize this about God and thank Him for all the ways He intervenes and provides for us. Even when what He brings into our lives is painful and can seem bad, God is for us and doing what is best for us. Thanksgiving is at the heart of Christian living.

*Colossians 3:15-17*

*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.*

D. Supplication (request) for help

God knows about and cares about our needs. God is a good Father that wants to provide and care for us. He actually knows what is best for us better than we know ourselves! Yet He still wants us to ask for His provision and help as we depend on Him.

*Matthew 6:31-34*

*Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. “So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”*

*Matthew 7:7-11*

*“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!”*

E. Supplication (request) for mission

Our greatest desire as believers is for God’s will to be done, for His name to be glorified. We want to pray that God saves and advances His kingdom and gospel to that end. We need God’s help and God’s intervention for the Great Commission to be fulfilled.

*Matthew 6:10*

*‘Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.*

*Colossians 4:3-4*

*...praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.*

F. Corporate Prayer - Adoring, worshiping and thanking God

## II. Effective prayer

## A. James

The working/active prayer of a righteous man is strong. This kind of prayer is alive and working. It's not passive prayer. And being righteous here doesn't mean being perfect. It means someone who is concerned with what is right, who has integrity and stands for what is right at great personal cost like Elijah. A righteous man is a believer with faith who stands with and for what God stands for. Elijah was a man just like we are, which means that we too can be the sort of people who have prayers answered like he did. If we want prayers answered like his, we need to have the integrity and faith that he did.

*James 5:16-18*

*Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.*

## B. John

The apostle John records many **promises** of answered prayer in Jesus' teaching, and then also elaborates on those promises Jesus gives in his epistle. These are astonishing promises! But each of the promises also has a *condition* on the promise. If we want to have our prayers answered powerfully, we need to meet the conditions. There are 4 or 5 conditions that John lists, that all describe the same basic heart posture.

i. If you ask anything **in my name**

Asking in Jesus' name doesn't simply mean adding the incantation "in Jesus' name" to the end of our prayers. In the Bible, a name represents the character and identity of someone. So to pray in Jesus' name means to pray consistently with Jesus' character and identity.

*John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24*

*Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.*

*You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.*

*In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.*

ii. If you **abide in Me**

For us to abide in God is to rest in God's greatness. Throughout John it means to have a heart attitude of dependence on God, knowing that apart from Him we can do nothing. Abiding in God means letting God's power work through us so that we bear His fruit. It means remembering that God Himself lives inside of us, what else could we possibly need or desire above Him?

iii. and **My words abide in you**

Likewise, letting Jesus' words abide in us means to let the truth of who Jesus says we are control us. His priorities and desires rest and live in us. When God's truth controls us we are living for what He wants and our joy, peace, and love come from what God says is true about us. We rest in our identity as God's children.

*John 15:7*

*If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.*

iv. If you **keep His commandments**

Keeping God's commands doesn't just mean obeying. To keep God's commands means to guard them. It means to be careful to seek to honor what God says. It is about having a heart of watchfulness that is careful to listen to God because we value Him and His direction so much. This is about a heart posture of listening to God and not external conformity to rules.

*1 John 3:22*

*...and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.*

v. If you **ask according to His will**

Asking according to God's will means to ask for what God wants. This is the heart attitude of Jesus as He went to the cross and prayed for the cup to pass, but then added, "yet not my will but yours." Our greatest desire as believers is for God's will to be done.

*1 John 5:14-15*

*This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.*

C. Peter

Our prayers can even be hindered when we aren't walking with God.

*1 Peter 3:7*

*You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.*

*These conditions are all based on the same foundation. God loves to answer the prayer of His people who are humbly seeking His will and not their own, letting His truth control them, resting in, living in, and delighting in God, and asking for what is consistent with who He is and what He wants.*

D. Corporate Prayer - Confessing sin

III. Spiritual prayer

When Paul prays for believers He prays for what is truly best for them, true spiritual strength used to glorify God. **Paul prays that the saints would...**

A. have their eyes opened to understand the hope, riches, and strength that is theirs in Christ

When believers understand all the spiritual blessings we have in Christ, it fills us up with God Himself. His priorities and values control and motivate us as we love and live for His glory. And being filled with God we will overflow with all God is as we represent Him to the world.

*Ephesians 1:15-21*

*For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.*

B. be strengthened to comprehend the greatness of God's love and be filled with Him

We need true supernatural strength in our inner man, for God to live in us to empower us to comprehend the greatness of God's love for us. That foundation in God's love is what fills us up with the fullness of God Himself. It is as the truth of all we have in Christ fills us that we become like God and full of God to share His love, peace, and joy with others.

*Ephesians 3:14-21*

*For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.*

- C. be filled with God's wisdom to fully please the Lord and be strengthened to endure with joy

We need God's spiritual wisdom to know how to walk in a way that pleases God in every way and bears fruit in every good work. We need God's omnipotent power to strengthen us to endure and be patient with joy, as we give thanks in everything to God for His goodness to us.

*Colossians 1:9-12*

*For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.*

- D. Corporate Prayer - Pleading for God to strengthen His people

IV. Prayer according to God's Word and His character

- A. Moses prays for God's glory not his own

True prayer is completely humble and selfless, not concerned about its own glory but consumed with the glory and reputation of God. True prayer knows and pleads God's character and Word.

*Numbers 14:13-19*

*But Moses said to the Lord, "Then the Egyptians will hear of it, for by Your strength You brought up this people from their midst, and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, O Lord, are in the midst of this people, for You, O Lord, are seen eye to eye, while Your cloud stands over them; and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. Now if You slay this people as one man, then the nations who have heard of Your fame will say, 'Because the Lord could not bring this people into the land which He promised them by oath, therefore He slaughtered them in the wilderness.' But now, I pray, let the power of the Lord be great, just as You have declared, 'The Lord is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generations.' Pardon, I pray, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your lovingkindness, just as You also have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now."*

- B. Daniel prays for God's character and plan to be magnified

- Daniel prays and pleads because He knows God's plan.

*Daniel 9:2*

*...in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.*

- Daniel prays humbly, identifying with his sinful people and confessing.

*Daniel 9:3-5*

*So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed and said, “Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances.”*

- Daniel pleads for God’s mercy to be on display so His reputation is upheld.

*Daniel 9:15-17*

*“And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day— we have sinned, we have been wicked. O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us. So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary.”*

- Daniel prays boldly because He is seeking God’s glory and asking God to do what is consistent with His character and revelation.

*Daniel 9:18-19*

*“O my God, incline Your ear and hear! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”*

## V. Persistent needy prayer in faith

God wants us to cry out to Him in dependent faith! He wants us to be needy. Jesus taught the parables about a friend at midnight reaching out for help and a widow seeking justice to teach all of us to be so desperate for Him that we are shameless and persistent in our requests. This attitude of recognizing that God is our only hope pleases Him!

*Luke 11:5-13*

*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; for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; 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.’ 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. “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. For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. 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? Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? 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?”*

*Luke 18:1-8*

*Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, saying, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me legal protection from my opponent.' For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, 'Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.'" And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge said; now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? 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?"*

VI. The one prayer of Jesus that God didn't answer

God didn't answer one of Jesus' prayers, because as the Father, God knew what was best for Him and indeed for the whole world. Jesus submitted His will to the Father's will.

*Matthew 26:39*

*And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."*

VII. Corporate Prayer - Praying that God would build His kingdom, grow His church, and save sinners for His glory

VIII. Small Groups:

Spend 5 minutes in each the types of prayer: Worship & Thanksgiving, Confession, Petition for help/strength/growth, Petition for mission/boldness/salvation