

## A Biblical Prayer Pattern for Disciples

Matthew 6:1, 5-14; Luke 11:1-4

January 8, 2012

1. **A challenge to genuine, personal prayer from D. A. Carson**  
*Spiritual Reformation*, p. 17: “What is our delight in praying? Where is our sense that we are meeting with the living God, that we are doing business with God, that we are interceding with genuine unction before the throne of Grace? When is the last time we came away from a period of intercession feeling that, like Jacob and Moses, we had prevailed with God? How much of our praying is largely formulaic, liberally larded with clichés that remind us, uncomfortably, of the hypocrites Jesus excoriated? I do not write these things to manipulate you or to be engendering guilt feelings. But what shall we *do*? Have not many of us tried at one point or another to improve our praying, and floundered so badly that we are more discouraged than we ever were? Do you not sense with me, the severity of the problem? . . . What is wrong? Is not this sad state of affairs some sort of index of our knowledge of God? Shall we not agree with J. I. Packer when he writes, ‘I believe that prayer is the measure of a man, spiritually, in a way that nothing else is, so that how we pray is as important a question as we can ever face.’ Can we profitably meet the other challenges that confront the Western church if prayer is ignored as much as it has been?”
2. **How do disciples biblically pray to their Heavenly Father?**
  - Luke 11:1-4
  - There are 3 ingredients to biblical prayer from this passage
    - a. *Observation (examples)* – “as He was praying in a certain place,” [*implication is that the disciples were watching*]
    - b. *Desire (personal interest)* – “when He ceased, one of His disciples said” [*His prayer life was powerfully attractive*]
    - c. *Instruction (clear explanation)* – “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples to pray” [*Key: “taught”*]
3. **Jesus’ 4fold instruction: A biblical prayer pattern (a Model)**
  - Matthew 6:1, 5-15
  - (1) Prayer *is anticipated by Jesus of a true disciple*
    - (6:1) “A righteous act”

- Titus 3:5-8 – acts/works of righteousness do not save us, but define us (see: Matthew 5:16)
- The NT begins and ends with this idea: Matthew 6:1 with Revelation 19:8

### So, what does prayer look like? (see #2, #3, and #4)

- (2) Prayer *involves some things to beware of* (6:5-8)
    - Disciples can do right things the wrong way, and Christ says this is not acceptable, nor will He reward this
      - a. Vv 5-6 – Beware of an improper personal motive
      - b. Vv 7-8 – Beware of an improper view of the Father (Matt 26:36-46 – 3xs Jesus prays the same prayer)
        - Note v 8b–Prayer is neither informing or lobbying God (see Daniel 6:10 and his prayer in difficulty)
  - (3) A biblical prayer pattern *needs a plan to follow* (6:9-13)
    - a. Vv 9-10,13b – **Name** (“Your . . . name, kingdom, will”)
    - b. Vv 11-12 – **Needs** (Body needs and Heart needs)
    - c. V 13a – **No sin** (Reveals our total helplessness against Satan and his vile testing and temptations)
  - (4) A biblical prayer pattern *is keenly aware of “the family”* (6:14-15)
    - The plural pronouns of vv 9-13 are now understood in light of vv 14-15 [*An invitation to share in the full Body*]
      - a. v 9 – “our” Father
      - b. v 11 – give “us” this day “our” daily bread
      - c. v 12 – forgive “us” as “we” forgive “our” debtors
      - d. v 13 – lead “us” not into temptation but deliver “us” from evil
    - Clearly, God responds to disciples who look like His Son (Luke 23:34 and Luke 23:43 with Matthew 27:44)
4. **Now it is YOUR TURN to answer three ‘prayer questions’**
- Question #1: When is your time of prayer?
- Question #2: What does your prayer pattern look like?
- Question #3: Have you forgiven every member of “the family”?