

Developing Your Prayer Life

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I. Introduction.

- A. Attention to fundamentals is essential in prayer. (2 Peter)
- B. ACTS is a helpful acronym when considering the basics of prayer: adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication.
- C. These four essentials are based off of four aspects of our relationship with God.
 - 1. Creator-creature.
 - 2. Judge-sinners.
 - 3. Redeemer- redeemed.
 - 4. Father-children.

II. In adoration, we view God primarily as our Creator. He is infinite and independent where we are vulnerable and dependent creatures. (Isaiah 40:15-17, 23-24; Revelation 1:14-17)

- A. When we realize and recognize who God is in His majesty, worship is the only appropriate response.
- B. It's a good idea to begin the day with worship. Scripture is a good place to start. (1 Chronicle 29:11-14; Isaiah 40:15-17; Romans 11:33-36; 1 Timothy 6:15-16; Revelation 4:11, 5:9-10)

III. Confession reflects on God's holiness. The recognition of God as a holy judge naturally leads to confession.

- A. We are accountable to God as His people. (Matthew 25; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
- B. We need to acknowledge to God when we fall short of holiness. (1 John 1:8ff)
 - 1. At the moment that we become aware of specific sin, we need to confess it.
 - 2. We need to acknowledge daily that even our good actions often require forgiveness and then ask for it.
- C. Confession means that we agree with God about our sins in all honesty and without excuses. (Psalm 32:5)
- D. The purpose of confession is to acknowledge God's holy law and our rebellion.

IV. Confession naturally leads to thanksgiving as we see God as our Redeemer and Father. (Psalm 32:3-5, 10-11; Psalm 100:4-5 ;Psalm 103:2-5; Psalm 106:1-2,7; Psalm 107: 1, 8, 15, 21, 31)

- A. Every day, we should thank God for His forgiveness and His provision.

B. We should recognize when God answers our prayers and thank Him for blessing us.

C. A lack of worship and thanksgiving to God spirals into sinfulness and immorality. (Romans 1:21, 24, 26, 28)

D. God is aware of when we do or do not thank Him. (Luke 17:11-17)

V. Supplication acknowledges God as sovereign (who can provide) and as our Father (who will provide). (Acts 4:23-24)

A. We must ask if we really believe that God both has the ability and desire to provide for us.

B. Supplication consists of our need and total inability to provide for ourselves. (Luke 11:5-8)

1. We must rely on God completely with no “Plan B.” (Psalm 127:1)

2. What should we pray for?

a) Ourselves, our family, our friends and other Christians and for their spiritual needs and physical needs.

b) The extension of God’s kingdom in the world.

VI. All of these elements of our prayer life should take place in the context of a fellowship relationship with God. (Ecclesiastes 4:9)

Application questions:

1. What aspect of prayer is the easiest for you to practice? Which is the most difficult? How can you make a point to include it more in your prayer life?

2. Challenge yourself to include more thanksgiving in your prayer life by taking time to write down three blessings that happened to you or a loved one each day. Take some time to thank God for those blessings.

3. Try to find some time to research another nation. What is the main religion? How many Christians are there? How many missionaries are there? How can you pray for that nation?
