

Faith and Prayer

April 7, 2013

I. Introduction

A. Prayer can be a religious activity void of faith.

Every religion and every religious person practices prayer of some kind.

Mat 6:5-8 hypocritical (showmanship) praying; supposing you will be heard because of your words
"When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words ...

Mat 23:14 pretentious long prayers
... for a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you will receive greater condemnation."
(Mk 12:40; Lk 20:47)

Luke 18:10-11 self-righteous praying

B. God responds to faith (not prayer).

Heb 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

John 6:29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."

C. Prayer is to be an expression of faith.

Mat 21:22 "And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

Mark 11:21-24 And Jesus answered saying to them, "Have faith in God. Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him. Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you.

Luke 11:9-10 "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."

D. Unbelief (doubt) often happens in prayer.

James 1:5-8 ask in faith without doubting

But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, 8 being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Mark 9:23 all things are possible to him who believes (not prays).

And Jesus said to him, "If You can?" All things are possible to him who believes."

Rom 14:23 prayer can be an act of sin.

But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.

II. Purpose of prayer

Definition My definition = Prayer is personal communion with God. The essence of prayer is fellowship and relationship with God.

John 17:3 "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

(John 5:20; 10:14)

Know = "to be involved in an intimate, growing relationship."

Gen 4:1 Adam knew Eve and she bore a son.

Phil 3:8-14 the apostle Paul's personal quest to know the Lord.

III. Bible terms

A. Walk

1. Walk (before the fall God walked with man.)

Gen 3:8-10 They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself."

2. Man walked with God; Walk denotes the most confidential intercourse, the closest communion with the personal God, a walking as it were by the side of God,

Gen 5:22, 24 Enoch walked with God

Gen 6:9 Noah walked with God.

Mal 2:6 True instruction was in his mouth and unrighteousness was not found on his lips; he walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many back from iniquity.

"walk with God" denotes not the piety of the godly Israelites generally, but the conduct of the priests, who stood in a closer relation to Jehovah under the Old Testament than the rest of the faithful, being permitted to enter the Holy Place, and hold direct intercourse with Him there, which the rest of the people could not do. (Keil, Carl Friedrich ; Delitzsch, Franz: Commentary on the Old Testament)

3. Walked before God;

Gen 17:1 Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless.

Gen 24:40 "He said to me, "The Lord, before whom I have walked, will send His angel with you to make your journey successful, and you will take a wife for my son from my relatives and from my father's house;

Gen 48:15 The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,

4. Walking after God;
Deut 13:4 "You shall follow the Lord your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him.

B. Tabernacle

God desired his people to know His presence; from the time of Moses Israel experience God's presence in the tabernacle and temple.

1. The tabernacle of Moses (Ex. 40:34-38).

Ex 40:34-38 Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Throughout all their journeys whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would set out; but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day when it was taken up. For throughout all their journeys, the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel.

2. The tabernacle of David - David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem and set up a tent over it; he appointed the priests to worship to the Lord with songs and musical instruments.

1 Chr 6:31-32 Now these are those whom David appointed over the service of song in the house of the Lord, after the ark rested there. They ministered with song before the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, until Solomon had built the house of the Lord in Jerusalem; and they served in their office according to their order.

(See 2 Sam 6-7; 1 Chr 13 - 17)

Acts 15:16 the pattern of New Testament worship is Davidic

After these things I will return, and I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen, and I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, (Amos 9:11)

Ps 76:1-2 God is known in Judah; His name is great in Israel. His tabernacle is in Salem; His dwelling place also is in Zion.

3. The Temple of Solomon

1 Kings 8:10-11 It happened that when the priests came from the holy place, the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.

4. Jesus Christ

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

"dwelt" means "tabernacled"

5. The church

Eph 2:20-22 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

1 Cor 3:16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

1 Cor 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

6. Our heavenly home will be a place where God's presence is eternally with His people.
Rev 21:22 I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

C. Presence of God

Acts 3:19 repentance leads to times of refreshing from the presence of God.

Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;

(see also Gen 3:8; 4:16; Ps 16:11; 21:6; 42:5; 44:3; 51:11; 95:2; 139:7; 140:13; Isa 3:8; 9:3; Jonah 1:3; 2 Thes 1:9; James 4:10; Jude 24; Rev 20:11)

D. Communion (Greek = Koinonia)

Definition: "a having in common (koinos), partnership, fellowship, communion" (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)

Fellowship with God

1. The Son of God, (1 Cor 1:9; 1 John 1:3,6).
2. With the Father (1 John 1:3, 6).
3. With the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 13:14; Phil 2:1).

IV. Prayer

The word chosen for "prayer" (proseuchomai) is a general one that implies a worshipful approach to God

A. The prayer life of Jesus

Jesus often spent time alone in prayer.

Mat 14:23 After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone. (Mark 6:46)

Mark 1:35 In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.

Luke 3:21 Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened,

Luke 5:16 But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.

Luke 6:12 It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.

Jesus prayed while his disciples were present.

Luke 9:18 And it happened that while He was praying alone, the disciples were with Him, and He questioned them, saying, "Who do the people say that I am?"

Luke 9:28-29 Some eight days after these sayings, He took along Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. 29 And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and His clothing became white and gleaming.

Luke 11:1-2 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples."

Jesus spent the night in prayer in Gethsemane before His crucifixion (Mat 26:36-46; Mk 14:32-42; Lk 22:39-42; Jn 18:1-2).

Jesus taught his disciples to pray.

Mat 6:5 And He said to them, "When you pray, say: ...

(See also Mat 7:7-8; 9:38; 21:22; Jn 16:24; Luke 18:1)

B. The church

1 Thes 5:17 pray without ceasing;

Eph 6:18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

Jude 20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

1 Tim 2:8 Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension.

Rom 8:26 In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;

(See also Phil 1:9; Col 1:3, 9; 4:3; 2 Thes 1:11; 3:1; Heb 13:18; James 5:13-14, 17-18)