

Scripture: Matthew 6:1-18
Singing: 261:1-3 – 75:1-6 – 19:1-5 – 446:1-2

LD 45.118-119

Thought on Prayer:

A. Prayer is privilege of approaching God to speak with Him from heart to heart

B. Prayer is a holy art only God can teach us (Luke 11:1; Prov. 15:8)

C. Prayer is to be governed by God's guidelines or principles on prayer (Matt. 6:5; Matt. 15:21-28; Heb. 4:16; Ps. 81:10; 1 Cor. 14:15)

Prayer (4)

I. Why? II. How? III. What?

III. The 'What' of Christian prayer

A. What are the *things necessary for soul and body* we are to pray for?

1. Lord's Prayer is the *model* of what to pray for (Matt. 6:19)

B. What are the lines of truth Jesus gives us in this model of prayer?

1. It is the prayer for (of) His disciples – Christian: Matt 6; Luke 11

a. The petitions reflect the *language of the redeemed*

b. The opening and closing words are *confessional*

c. Does that mean we should not use the Lord's Prayer unless saved?

2. It is a prayer characterized by simplicity and brevity (briefness)

a. Jesus warned about needless repetition: Matt. 6:7-8

b. Jesus' brevity does not mean it is the limit of prayer

3. It is a prayer that prioritizes God's glory about our needs
 - a. 1st half of prayer is *devoted to God and His Cause in our world*
 - Is. 42:8, 12; 43:7; 48:11; Jer. 9:24
 - b. 2nd half prayer devoted to *our earthly and spiritual needs*
4. It is a prayer that covers all the essentials for living and dying
5. It is a prayer that is *communal* instead of *individual*
 - a. Jesus taught His disciples to use plural pronouns
 - b. Does that mean I may never pray with I – me?
 - c. What does this mean about Matthew 6:14-15?

Reflection: Frans Bakker's little gem "Facets of Prayer" begins with these lines
"At the bottom of man's existence is a deep sense of loneliness. When we honestly search our hearts, we must admit with the poet of Ps. 25, "I am a desolate." Our deepest loneliness stems from the fact that we are without God in this world. Ever since the gates of Paradise closed behind us, we have our lonely way. We are alone in this life and are certainly alone in death. In our deepest afflictions we have no refuge. We cannot even help when the great enemy, death strikes. Yet by grace, there is also another kind of aloneness. The aloneness or solitude of the closet, where God's child experiences secret communion with God in prayer. This solitude is to be preferred above all the friendship of the world. Even if in the closet we experience how miserable we are in God's sight, it still is the best place that man can find on earth."