

Prayer Models

(adapted from Pastor Keith Collins' 2018 "Prayer Workshop")

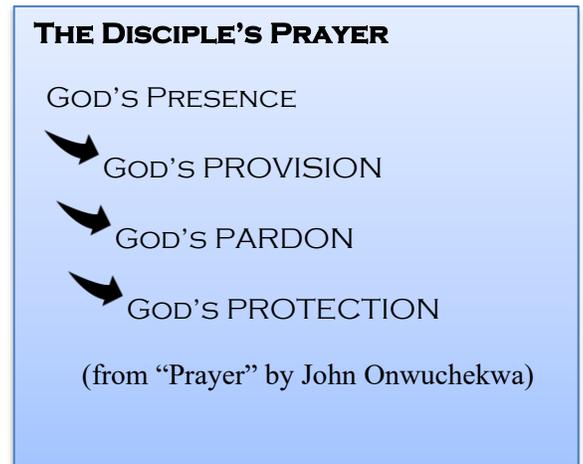
Prayer needs parameters, boundaries, and aim. Prayer is to be joined to the will of God. Prayer is linked to the purpose of God. ...This is needed in an age of "dreams & destiny", "positive energy & faith", that are usually loyal to personal interests.

Prayer needs Spirit enlightenment, Spirit prompting, Spirit direction so that it sits in us as living realities that matter to us!

Prayer needs "Burden" ...Prayer is akin to preaching. It is communication that is filled with earnest desire and holy insistence.

Prayer needs "direction" ...One of the best ways to insure a weak and unattractive prayer life is to develop ruts that become familiar and lack meaningful engagement. This is not usually a problem when you are just starting out, but it can become one soon, if you are praying often and seeking to spend a decent amount of time engaged. A helpful and biblically revealed approach to prayer is to have the help of a prayer model.

✓ **The Disciple's Prayer** ("The Our Father") ...



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- ✓ **Scripture Passages** ...choose passages that provide a bit of an 'outline' of various topics or focal points for prayer

"Christians just setting out on the path of prayer sometimes pray for everything they can think of, glance at their watches, and discover they have been at it for all of three or four minutes. This experience sometimes generates feelings of defeat, discouragement, even despair. A great way to begin to overcome this problem is to pray through various biblical passages." **D.A. Carson** (quoted in "Praying the Bible" by Donald Whitney)

"For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain. ² But though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict. ³ For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive..." 1 **Thessalonians 2:1-3**

Excerpted from Donald Whitney's book, "Praying the Bible" (p. 56-58)

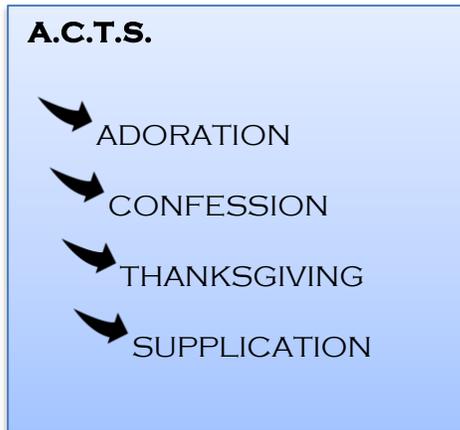
Let's look at how praying through several verses together in a New Testament letter might go. Suppose the passage you choose is 1Thessalonians 2. ... You read verse one: "For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain." Then perhaps you pray: ***"Thank you, Lord, for the one who came to me with your gospel. Thank you for his/her faithfulness to share the words of eternal life in Jesus. Thank you for opening my eyes to my need for your Salvation so that I did not receive your gospel in vain."***

After you say all that comes to mind from verse one, you turn to verse 2: "But though we had already suffered and then shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know..." The words "suffered and been shamefully treated" stand out to you because of the suffering in your own life at present. So you pray about matters related to your suffering and the relief of it. That may lead you to think of people in your family, church, or neighborhood who are suffering, so you pray for them. The words "shamefully treated" may also apply to you personally and prompt prayers about that. Further, they may bring to mind fellow believers near and far who are experiencing persecution for being followers of Jesus, individuals or people groups you've recently heard about at church or in the news.

Following those prayers, you continue reading in verse 2: "...we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict." After word you may find yourself praying along these lines: ***"Oh God, give me the boldness to declare the gospel to that person at work, to that person down the street, despite the conflict in their heart. I pray for the Christians in the Sudan, in India, in China, in the places of persecution I just mentioned. Give them the boldness to declare the gospel despite the conflict they experience due to the government and false religions."***

Once you've said all that comes to mind from verse 2, you look to the next verse: "for our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive." Almost immediately you might think of someone you know whose mind and heart are being clouded by error, a friend or family member who has become enamored with some false teacher. Or perhaps you pray for someone being tempted with impurity—you, your spouse, or your child. Then you pray for anyone you know who is falling prey to deception, possibly a young woman being deceived by a young man, or vice versa.

- ✓ **A.C.T.S.** ...this is a common and very helpful acronym that meaningfully engages several aspects of prayer that should be part of our regular times of prayer.



- **Adoration** ...spend time pondering the greatness, beauty, wonder, worthiness, power, love, mercy, etc. of God. Take note of these, ponder them, appreciate them, allow them to inform your faith and surround your soul. If God is not worthy and attractive and the object of our worship, it will be next to impossible for our prayers to be appropriate.
- **Confession** ...God is holy and our approach to Him should be informed by our creatureliness and an appropriate self-awareness of any sin that we should confess. This is an essential part of how God forms humility in our lives by our having an accurate self-perception.
- **Thanksgiving** ...we are regularly in need of being reminded of the many past, present, and future ways that God has provided for us and blesses us. Our faith is built and our prayers informed by how God has done for us so much that should be inspiring an ongoing attitude of gratitude.
- **Supplication** ...this is often where we start, rather than where we finish our times of prayer. Supplication is the act of bringing our needs, petitions, and requests to God.

- ✓ **John Piper's Prayer**

"O Lord, as you are often accustomed to do, show your great power... Send a remarkable awakening that results in hundreds of people coming to Christ, ...old animosities being removed, ...marriages being reconciled and renewed, ...wayward children coming home, ...long-standing slavery to sin being conquered, ...spiritual dullness being replaced by vibrant joy, ...weak faith being replaced by bold witness, ...disinterest in prayer being replaced by fervent intercession, ...boring Bible reading being replaced by passion for the Word, ...disinterest in global missions being replaced by energy for Christ's name among the nations, ...and lukewarm worship being replaced by zeal for the greatness of God's glory."

...Treat each of these phrases as something to wait on the Holy Spirit to give you direction and burden to pray for in your local church and setting.