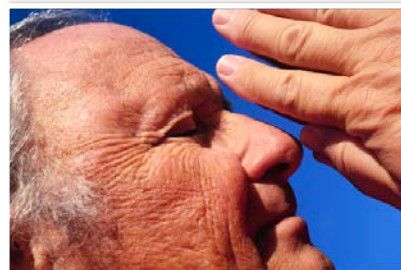


# PREPARING TO SERVE

1. How would you define prayer?

2. Why you believe that prayer is or is not important.



3. Does prayer come naturally from a life dedicated to God or must we learn how to pray? (Explain your answer)

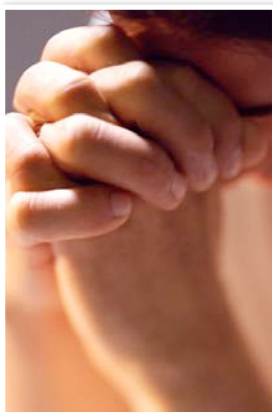
In Luke 11:1, Jesus is asked by one of his disciples, ***“Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.”*** It seems clear that these men who followed Jesus, lived with Jesus, and daily observed Jesus were impressed with his life of prayer. Certainly they would have known the value of prayer, but somehow they were not able to practice the same kind of dedication to prayer as Jesus.

One will quickly note a few differences in this prayer and the Lord’s prayer as found in Matthew 6. The major difference is that Matthew’s prayer is longer. The phrases are also a little different. In Matthew Jesus asks “give us this day our daily bread” stressing the need for God to help immediately. In Luke Jesus asks “give us each day our daily bread” stressing an ongoing need for God to provide. In Luke the forgiving of our debtors is present/future tense while in Matthew it is past tense.

While these small differences cause some to say that Luke copied, edited, and rearranged Matthew’s material; however a better explanation is that Jesus was not giving a word for word command as to how to pray, but was giving some key guidelines. Jesus may have taught how to pray on a number of occasions and his instruction may have varied slightly each time.

4. What lessons do we learn in Luke 11:5-13 from the man who asks for bread and the son who asks for a fish?

5. What lessons do we learn in Luke 11:5-13 from the friend and the father?



In Luke 11:1-4, Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray. In Luke 11:5-13, he instructs them to engage in prayer. It is not enough simply to know how to pray.

Mark Moore writes that “there are several lessons in verse 1. Written or memorized prayers, and especially the Lord’s prayer, should still be practiced alongside of extemporaneous prayer.”<sup>1</sup>

6. Take a few moments to write out a prayer in your own words. Consider the example of Jesus.

One well known method of keeping on track in our prayers is the ACTS method. In this method of praying each letter stands for one aspect of prayer.

**Adoration** — We praise or adore God because He deserves it (Psalm 96:8; 71:5-6; 13-14; 150; Revelation 19:6). To help you praise God consider his attributes and adore Him for these attributes.

**Confession** — In the Parable of the Prodigal Son, the son realizes his sin and determines to go home to confess his sin to the Father (Luke 15:18-19). 1 John 1:9 tells Christian people to confess their sins to God. We confess our sins because God requires it (Matthew 6:14-15) and confession relieves the pressure of guilt and fear (Psalm 32:1-4).

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Moore, Mark E. *The Chronological Life of Christ*. Joplin Missouri: College Press, 2007.

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**Thanksgiving** — God expects us to express our thanks to Him (Psalm 136:1-3; Luke 17:17-18). Thanksgiving reminds us of Who our God is and how He treats us (Psalm 103:1-5). Thanksgiving and adoration are closely related (Psalm 116:1, 12, 17. Thanksgiving can also be expressed in singing (Psalm 95:1-2).

**Supplication** — We come to God petitioning Him for help because we know that He is able to help and He wants to help (Isaiah 43:11-13; Philippians 4:6-7; Matthew 7:7-11). A part of supplication is intercession for others. Intercession is petitioning God on behalf of someone else (1 Timothy 2:1-3; Matthew 9:37-38, 5:44-45; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12).

7. Which of these four aspects of prayer do you think are most important and why?
8. Which of these four aspects of prayer is easiest to remember in prayer?
9. Which of these four aspects of prayer is hardest to remember in prayer?

### **The Role of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in Prayer**

**God the Father** — We are to address our prayers to God the Father and not to anyone else (Matthew 6:9-10; Hebrews 9:8-12, 10:19-20; Ephesians 3:20-21; 1 Peter 5:6-7).

**Jesus the Son** — Jesus is the mediator of our prayers (1 Timothy 2:5-6; John 16:23-24; Hebrews 7:25). Jesus is our intercessor at the throne of God (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 4:14-16).

**The Holy Spirit** — The Holy Spirit assists us in prayer (Romans 8:26). The Holy Spirit also helps us know how to pray. We understand God's Will as we read and learn the scriptures as they have been inspired by the Holy Spirit. He helps to form us into a more Christ-like person as we develop the "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23).

## Digging Deeper



1. In the coming weeks, write out one prayer per week. Make this thoughtful and meaningful.
2. **Memorise** a Scripture of your choice once a week over the next month.
3. Practice on three Scripture passages of your choice and determine the following:
  - a. Who
  - b. What
  - c. When
  - d. Where
  - e. Why
  - f. How