

Prayer Exercise #4—January 24-30

The Shema and The Lord's Prayer

- Recommended that you pray the **Shema** (NT version, p. 6) and **The Lord's Prayer** everyday. Morning & evening are the suggested times. Use the structure of these two prayers to shape the focus and tone of your personal, spontaneous prayer.

Here are some suggestions on how to structure your praying, but please don't be limited to these.

The Shema:

Loving God & Loving Your Neighbor

- Devotion, Faithfulness, Obedience
- Passion, Focus, Priorities, Pure heart
- Eyes to see the harvest
- Ears to hear the leading of the Spirit
- Submission to Father's will and the Spirit's lead
- To be filled with the Spirit
- Mercy & Grace
- Wisdom to make right choices

The Lord's Prayer:

- Father's Name
- Father's Kingdom
- Father's Will
- Total dependence on Father for provision, forgiveness, direction, wisdom and deliverance.
- Specific personal needs, needs of the Church, needs of our surrounding community, needs of our world.

The Amidah:

- Recommended that you pray this at least once this week.

Bible Lessons:

- Complete the three Bible Lessons for this week.

Bible Lesson #4: Positions in Prayer

The position of our body in prayer can also be an act of worship before God. After all, we are to make our bodies a living sacrifice. Here are some of the prayer positions found in the Scriptures (NKJV).

Write down the prayer position given in each of these.

1. **Luke 22:41, Acts 20:36, Acts 21:5** _____
2. **1 Kings 8:54** _____
3. **Exodus 4:31, Exodus 34:8, Psalm 95:6,
2 Chronicles 20:18** _____
4. **1 Chronicles 17:16** _____
5. **Nehemiah 9:5, Mark 11:25** _____
6. **Exodus 3:5** _____
7. **Joshua 7:6** _____
8. **Psalm 63:4, 1 Timothy 2:8** _____
9. **Genesis 17:3, Matthew 26:39** _____

Make these expressions of worship a part of your life of prayer. Remember, prayer needs to take place everywhere, all the time. The most important position is that of your heart.

Funny: As a telephone repairman was working to repair a phone system, three ministers were arguing about the most effective position to assume while praying. The first said he always pressed his hands together and pointed them heavenward. The second believed that only on one's knees could real prayer be accomplished. And the third insisted that to be stretched out flat on one's face was the only proper way to pray. Finally, the telephone repairman interrupted, "I found the most powerful prayer I ever prayed was when I was dangling upside down by my heels from a power pole, suspended forty feet above the ground."

(James S. Hewett, Illustrations Unlimited, p.418-419)

Bible Lesson #5: ‘Us and Ours’ or ‘Me and Mine’

In The Lord’s Prayer, notice the words “our” and “us”. When the Lord Jesus teaches us to pray, He wants us to be aware of others and our connection to them. It’s a community, family focus instead of a self-centered one. It’s certainly not wrong to pray for your personal needs or to pray in the first person, but the bulk of our praying should be done with a wider perspective in mind.

In Jesus’ day, community was one of the most important things to a person. A person’s standing and contribution to the community was taken with honor and seriousness. Some of this can be seen in how they are named in the Scriptures, i.e.—Jesus of Nazareth, Simon the Zealot. Contrast this with the individualism of our day. Overall, decisions are made from the viewpoint— “what’s in it for me.” In our society, we have the mentality of a consumer instead of a contributor. We choose most everything based on how it will benefit us individually—even the Church we attend. Jesus knows that life cannot be lived to the fullest with a self-centered focus. So, He teaches us to pray and live with “us” in mind. Be more aware of this in your praying. Change the “me and mine” to “us and ours.”

Read these Scriptures. Meditate on them. Turn them into prayers.

Matthew 5:14-16 - Pray it.

- the “you” in this passage is plural.
- Notice the illustration of a city. This is a community of believers living and working together.

Acts 2:42 - Pray it.

- List the 4 things that were characteristic of the early New Testament Church. _____

Hebrews 10:24-25 - Pray it.

- What’s the results produced when we are considerate of others more than ourselves and we faithfully gather with other believers?

1 Corinthians 12 - Pray it.

- Paul’s focus is on the life of the Spirit and how He flows through the entire Body of Christ. Resist the temptation to just focus in on your personal spiritual gift. The Body and each individual part only function as they are properly related to one another. Disjointed believers need to be realigned. Self-centered believers need to be reminded of the Body. All of us together express the life of the Spirit.

Bible Lesson #6: The Harvest

Jesus gives us something very specific to pray about in **Matthew 9:35-38**. What is it?

Take some time to pray about this & make it a regular practice.

More About the Harvest

Read John 4:1-42 - The story of Jesus and the woman at the well.

- Moses, Isaac and Jacob met their wives at a well. Jesus meets His bride at a well, also. Look at what she is....a Samaritan (perceived enemy), an outcast, sinner, broken, a failure, can't seem to get it right. Sound familiar? She is representative of us. Her salvation is ours—Jesus. Her response needs to be ours—tell everybody. Thank You, Jesus!
- Notice, the disciples would have most likely just walked right by her and never given it a second thought. Or worst, they would have avoided going in that direction because of their feelings of superiority against her and people of her kind. Where men look on the outside, Jesus hears the Spirit and sees a person in need of ministry and salvation. May we have Jesus' ears and Jesus' eyes!
 - Read **1 Samuel 16:6-7**. This is from the story of Samuel anointing David to be King of Israel. **Turn this passage into a prayer and a way of life.**
- **Write down some of the things Jesus tells us about the harvest and our response (John 4:34-38).**
