



“Giving and Growing to Glorify God”  
Giving Oneself to Prayer  
Lessons III & IV  
- Acceptable Prayer.  
- Components & Types of Prayer

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**Memory Verse**

*I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with  
the understanding also... 1 Cor 14:15*

**Objectives:**

1. The student will understand what constitutes acceptable prayer.
2. The student will learn what the scriptures teach concerning the “sinner’s prayer.”
3. The student will consider who should lead prayer in corporate congregational settings.
4. The student will consider the components of prayer (A-C-T-S)
5. The student will learn some of the several types of prayers.

**I. 7 Must for Acceptable Prayer**

a. Acceptable prayer **must be** offered by those authorized to pray

- **Saints praying.** Prayer is a spiritual privilege for those who are “in Christ” (John 15:7; Eph 1:3). The Creator does not hear those whose lives are in rebellion (Pro 28:9; 1 Pet 3:12). Prayer must be accompanied by a genuine spiritual life. The Lord’s words must abide in you for it is the prayer of the **righteous** that avails much. (Jam 5:16; 1 Tim 2:8; 1 Pet 3:7).
- **Alien sinners praying.** What about the “Sinner’s Prayer?” Several variations exist concerning what man today calls the sinner’s prayer. Here is one of them:
  - *“Heavenly Father, I know that I am a sinner and that I deserve to go to hell. I believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for my sins. I do now receive him as my Lord and personal Savior. I promise to serve you to the best of my ability. Please save me. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

There is a major doctrinal problem with the “sinner’s prayer.” No where can we find any variation of the sinner’s prayer in the bible. A study of the scriptures would lead us to understand, man is in a position to send up **acceptable prayer** only after he or she has obeyed the gospel. The apostle John makes it clear in John 9:31. *“Now we know that God heareth not sinners but he that doeth the will of God, him he heareth.”* John 9:31. Notice also Isa 1:15, Psa 66:18.

Some identify the Gentile Cornelius in Acts 11 as evidence that God hears sinners. We must be mindful of God’s purpose in hearing Cornelius. God extended grace

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unto the Gentiles through Cornelius, Acts 11:15, that all could be saved. Note also the miraculous nature of this account: an angel of the Lord spoke to Cornelius. God does not audibly speak to man today, Heb 1:1-4. While God was responsive to Cornelius prayer, Cornelius still had to obey the gospel the same way all that was saved obeyed in New Testament times. Cornelius had to go see a preacher, Rom 10:14.

- Leading prayers. There is a vast difference between praying and leading prayers. During the course of a worship service EVERYONE should pray when prayers are being offered, 1 Cor 14:15, 1 Thes 5:17. However, when brothers in Christ are present, the male must lead the prayer, 1 Tim 2:8-14. God mandates who takes the lead in spiritual matters.
  - Does this same principle apply during family devotions? Is it unscriptural for a wife or daughter to pray for the food at the table while a male is present? How does this relate to acceptable prayer?

b. Acceptable prayer **must be** offered with reverence and adoration. In the scriptures, one of the words that apply to reverence is fear. Solomon said “Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.” Ecc. 12:9. In approaching God, there must be reverence (godly fear). Notice the approach used in these passages: Matt 6:9. John 17:1, Matt 11:25-26; Acts 4:24.

c. Acceptable prayer **must be** offered with a humble spirit. God requires humility from his children. As we know God resists the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. (1 Pet 5:5). The same applies in prayer. 2 Chron 7:14; 34-27, Jam 4:6. Additionally the parable of the Pharisee and the publican is another example.

d. Acceptable prayer **must be** offered in faith. The Apostle James spoke about asking in faith, and not wavering. Jam 1:5-6. As children of the Most High, we can boldly approach the throne of grace, Heb 4:16; Eph 3:11-12.

e. Acceptable prayer **must be** offered with a thankful spirit. There are several components to prayer. While “thanksgiving” is a component of prayer, the heart must always be in a thankful posture, regardless of what we’re asking for. Luke 17:11-19. Notice how Paul admonishes us to give “thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Eph 5:20; Col 3:17.

f. Acceptable prayer **must be** offered in Jesus name. **ALL** prayers must be offered to the Father in the name (*onoma: the name, i.e. for one's rank, authority*) of Jesus Christ. Remember, we are going to the Father, but our access to the Father is through the INTERCESSOR or MEDIATOR, Jesus Christ, for no man goeth to the father but by Jesus, John 14:6. Jesus is our mediator, 1 Tim 2:5 and our High Priest, Heb 4:14-15. Jesus lays it out even clearer in John 15:16: “Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in My name.” John 15:16,

g. Acceptable prayer **must be** offered in submission to God’s will. Jesus tells us to pray that God’s will be done. Matt 6:10. His response is predicated on asking according to His will, 1

John 5:14. Another passage that spells this out for us is Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, Matt 26:39. Faith is again required in this aspect. The father knows what we need. He knows how to give good gifts, Luke 11:11-13. However, his thoughts are not our thoughts, Isa 55:8-9.

**II. Components of Prayer:** Mnemonic device to help us remember the 4 basic components of prayer:

**A - Adoration (Address and praise to God):** The term “adoration” means “the act of paying honor, as to a divine being; worship; reverent homage; fervent and devoted love. One of the elements in prayer is the paying of honor in the way one addresses God. Some of the statements of adoration in the scriptures are: Matt 6:9. John 17:1, Matt 11:25-26; Acts 4:24.

**C - Confession (Of sins and shortcomings):** **In the Greek, the term confession *homologia* means** to say the same thing as another, i.e. to agree with. It takes a degree of humility to sincerely confess our faults to God. We know rather, we confess them or not, he knows what we’ve done. While confession is part of praying, another benefit is the fact that honesty is the most direct and powerful way to resolve the situations in our lives. Consider 1 John 1:5-9.

**T - Thanksgiving (For blessings received):** The term thanksgiving means just as it says to “give thanks.” We can never adequately complete this portion of a prayer, for we have so much to be thankful for. God continues to be merciful to us, and it is important for us to take time to just thank Him. Think of all the things we can thank God for. Spend time in thanksgiving by reviewing I Thessalonians 5:18, Ephesians 5:20, Psalm 108:3, Psalm 50:23.

**S - Supplication (Petition for things needed):** Asking God for his divine help to meet needs, solve problems, work in someone's life, etc. Read Philippians 4:6-7; Psalm 116:1-2. Supplication is simply the asking of our needs. This portion of prayer, we are probably most familiar with. We may recognize the shallowness of some of our desires. We may uncover a deeper need long ago buried. We may discover God has placed in our life new solutions and answers to our prayers.

“**A.C.T.S.**” Can you see how these letters can be used during your prayer time? Can you find 5-10 minutes a day and give them a try?



**Practice:** As you begin, go through the letters, first with A (adoration), pause and consider how great God is. Intentionally look for and remember the goodness and greatness of God. Then after a few moments, move on to C (confession), and do the same. Ponder how God is willing to accept, all you must do is repent of it and confess it. Then move on to T (thanksgiving) and end with S (supplication.) Take the time in the morning, or at lunch or in the car with the music off. You'll be surprised at how powerful God will be in your life with just these few moments, these few letters: ACTS.

### **III. Types of Prayers**

- **Invocation.** The term “invocation” is from the Latin verb *invocare* "to call on, invoke." The invocation is that which is offered at the opening of a worship service or ceremony. The purpose is to ask God to bless, accept and watch over the proceedings.
- **Intercessory.** An intercessory prayer is the act of praying on behalf of another. The very first intercessory prayer we find is found in Gen 20:7, also notice Gen 20:17. Of course today, our mediator is Christ Jesus Himself. "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" 1 Tim 2:5. Paul said in Rom 8:34 "Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us" (Romans 8:34).
- **Specific prayers.** In a worship service, specific prayers are offered during the Lord’s Table as well as during the offering. Those are specific events that require a specific request. In general, specific prayers are limitless; they are kin to personal prayers.
- **Benediction.** The benediction is also known as the closing prayer. A prayer offered at the end of the service.
- **Personal.** This is what we offer most often. We find this throughout the scriptures. Daniel prayed 3 times a day, so did David. These were personal prayers, in that they don’t fit into the above listed prayers which are normally used during a corporate worship service.

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### **Next Lesson**

Lesson 5: Examination of the Lord’s Prayer

### **Homework**

Read Ahead: John 17

Continue in your prayer journals. Connect with your prayer partner

Be prepared to share an experience in class

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