

Are You Putting Limitations on God?

The ten plagues were designed to display the power of God to current and future generations of Israel. Just before God afflicted the nation of Egypt with swarms of locusts, He told Moses the reason behind these plagues. He said that He was showing these signs *“that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son’s son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I am the Lord”* (Ex. 10.2).

Fast forward to the time when Israel was wandering in the wilderness. In Psalm 78, the writer recounts the history of Israel and reflects back to their forty years of wilderness wanderings. In verse 41, he wrote, *“Yes, again and again they tempted God, And limited the Holy One of Israel.”* How did they tempt and limit God? The writer explains in the next verse that *“They did not remember His power: The day when He redeemed them from the enemy, when He worked His signs in Egypt”* (Ps. 78.42,43).

After the last plague, God led Israel to Mount Sinai and gave them His law. He then brought them to the Canaan border. He promised to defeat the inhabitants and give the land (Num. 13.1). When the spies reported that the land was filled with giants and fortified cities, they did not believe that they could take the land. Instead of trusting in God’s ability, they complained and wanted to return to Egypt (Num. 14.1-4). God responded by saying, *“How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs I have performed among them”* (Num. 14.11).

How many times have you been faced with a difficult circumstance and wondered how you would be able to get through it? How often have you felt hopeless? Do we limit God’s power? We may not say that God is incapable, but we fail to trust that God will always do what is best for us. Do we forget all the amazing works He performed in Bible times? No matter what we go through, God *“is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think”* (Eph. 3.20). The power of God is limitless. Be careful not to put limits on what God can do. CLP

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“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature”
-Mark 16.15

August 4, 2024

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:00 PM

Walking in the Light

The light is the word of God (Ps. 119.105). To walk in the light is to live one’s life by the principles and doctrines of God as revealed in the New Testament (1 John 1.7). The basic purpose of light is to see what we otherwise would not be able to see. In this lies the premise for the phrase, *“walking in the light.”*

Those who do not walk in the light do not know what God requires of them. Through the revelation of God, we can *“understand what the will of the Lord is”* (Eph. 5.17), which comes by reading (Eph. 3.3,4). Without knowledge of His word, the will of God remains a mystery.

Furthermore, those who do not walk in the light are unaware of their sinful condition. There are many who, through a lack of knowledge or from misinformation, carelessly go their way without knowing that their lives are out of favor with God. They have no idea that judgment awaits *“in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God”* (2 Thes. 1.8). They walk the road that is *“broad,”* never realizing that it *“leads to destruction”* (Matt. 7.13). The one who *“walks in darkness...does not know where he is going”* (1 John 2.11).

Sadly, there are those who do not want their deeds to be exposed. They would rather be ruined by praise than saved by criticism. Jesus describes them as those who *“loved darkness rather than light”* (John 3.19). However, we can know with confidence who we are, what we are to do, and where we are going when we walk in the light. CLP

HOW TO PRAY AND WHAT TO SAY

PSALM 5:1,2

INTRODUCTION:

1. We believe in the power of prayer, but we struggle with being consistent in our prayer life. (James 5.16; Rom. 8.26)
2. Prayer is a blessing that can be practiced by anyone at any time and can include any subject. God is interested in your prayers.
3. The Bible helps us how to pray and what to say.

I. HOW TO PRAY

- A. What are we asking God to do when we pray?
 1. We are asking God to listen. (Ps. 5.1; 86.1,6)
 2. We are asking God to understand. (Ps. 5.1; Heb. 4.12,16)
 3. We are asking God to pay attention. (Ps. 5.2; 13.1-3)
- B. To whom are we praying?
 1. We are praying to “*my King*” (Ps. 5.2; 1 Tim. 1.17)
 2. We are praying to “*my God*” (Ps. 5.2)
 3. We are praying to the “LORD” (Ps. 5.3)
- C. When should we pray?
 1. We are to pray in the morning. (Ps. 5.3)
 2. We are to pray all the time. (Dan. 6.11; Ps. 55.17; 86.3)

II. WHAT TO SAY

- A. Pray about feelings.
 1. Express to God how you feel. (Ps. 5.1,2)
 2. Pray with the feeling of God in mind. (Ps. 5.4,7,8)
- B. Pray about what you need.
 1. **1 TIMOTHY 2.1:** “*supplications*” To offer supplications is to beg God for a favor.
 2. Jesus begged God for a favor. (Heb. 5.7)
- C. Pray conversationally.
 1. **1 TIMOTHY 2.1:** “*prayers*” The concept of prayer is to have a conversation with God.
 2. Jesus told God what was on His mind. (Matt. 27.46)
- D. Pray for others.
 1. **1 TIMOTHY 2.1:** “*intercessions*” Intercessions is to pray on behalf of someone else.
 2. Jesus prayed on behalf of others. (John 17.9,20)
- E. Pray with thanksgiving. (1 Tim. 2.1; Phil. 4.6)

CONCLUSION: Christians are blessed with prayer.

How To Pray Like Jesus

We sing, “Have we trials and temptation? Is there trouble everywhere? We should never be discouraged. Take it to the Lord in prayer.” We believe that “*the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much*” (James 5.16). But we struggle with being consistent with prayer. We have certain times when we schedule time to pray. We pray before our meals. We might start our day by saying a prayer. We might close out our day with prayer. But outside of our customary times to pray, how often do we talk to God? Jesus can serve as an example that can help us “*pray without ceasing*” (1 Thess. 5.17).

First, through His example, Jesus teaches us to pray short prayers. Do you feel like you don’t have time to sit down and say a formal prayer several times a day? Seven times, Jesus spoke while He was dying on the cross. Of those seven times, three of those times were prayers. The longest of those prayers was only ten words (Luke 23.43). Jesus did not bow His head and offer a formal and wordy prayer. He simply expressed what was in His heart. When I am suddenly hit with a surge of anxiety or fear, I might pray, “help me.” When I’m on the road and have a near miss, I might pray, “thank you.” Does God hear those prayers? I did not bow my head and say, “Father, hallowed by Thy name.” I didn’t end the prayer by saying, “in Jesus name, Amen.” I don’t always have time to utter a formal prayer. But God hears even short prayers.

Second, through His example, Jesus teaches us to use scripture as the content of our prayers. In Mark 13.35, Jesus prayed, “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*” Those words were quoted from Psalm 22.1. Jesus used scripture to express how He felt. If you ever struggle with what to say, let the word of God give you the words. If you spend time in the book of Psalms, you will find Psalms of prayer. Do you want to express praise to God in prayer? Turn to a passage that will help you with the words to do that. Do you want to express gratitude in prayer? Find a passage where someone is thanking God in prayer and use those words. Turn to the book of Psalms and find the passage that captures how you feel, and let those words help you express your thoughts.

Prayer is one of the most powerful blessings that God has given to His people. Anyone can pray at any time and talk to God about anything. But it is one of the most underutilized blessings. Instead of seeing it as something we have need to do, see it as something we get to do. “What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer.” CLP