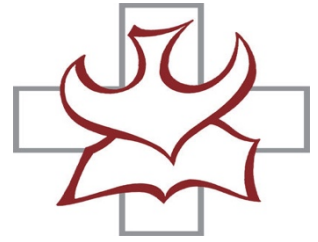


The Humility of Prayer

Psalm 130 Heb 2:14-16 Phil 4:4-9 Luke 17:11-19

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Throughout this Lenten season, we have been taking a look at the idea of **humility**.

- † Jesus defined humility as denying yourself and trusting only in Him and His mercy for salvation; and then each day, picking up your cross as you live a holy life following Jesus, even if it means facing persecution.
- † We also learned that Humility is a constant awareness that you belong to the Lord and that you are dependent on Him for all things . . . like a branch to a vine.
- † Humility is seeing yourself as a fragile “Jar of Clay”; and anything good that you do is the power of God at work within you.
- † Humility is placing yourself under the authority and power of the Word of God: and then trusting it, obeying it, and confessing it!
- † Humility is loving service to others that is motivated by Christ and His love for you. Just as Jesus “*washed your feet*”, so too you are to “*wash other people’s feet*”.

Humility is **a continual awareness and dependence on the Lord God Himself**.

One place where that **continual awareness and dependence** is seen is in your prayer life. Prayer is a humble act; prayer is a sign of humility. *In prayer we turn to God for all good things; and we look to Him in times of trouble.* Prayer is a **continual awareness and dependence** on the Lord as you converse with Him throughout each day.

Prayer is the way that you speak with God; prayer is one expression of active faith. Prayer is not the place for you to boast about yourself; nor about your good works. Prayer is humble; as a child speaks with their father. Prayer is not the place for you to claim to be a “prayer warrior” or some “prayer giant” or some other proud, self-aggrandizing idea. In prayer, we are **humble**; **we fold our hands**, **we bow our heads**, **we close our eyes**, --- you may even **fall on your knees**. In prayer, **we ask for help**.

**Prayer is a humble act; prayer is a sign of humility.
In prayer we turn to God for all good things;
and we look to Him in times of trouble.**

We are all like those **10 lepers on the side of the road** that we heard about in the Gospel lesson for today. We are sick with sin; we will die in guilt. All we can do is stand at a distance and cry out for help. Jesus is the only One who can help us. We can't cure ourselves. We have nothing to offer. We are empty-handed. We desperately need help. “**Lord have mercy**” is the heartfelt prayer of our emptiness. “**Lord have mercy**” are the words of humble prayer.

Like with those 10 Lepers, Jesus hears and answers your prayer. **In fact the power of your prayer lies in Jesus who answers prayer; the power of prayer is NOT in you, NOR your eloquence.**

**That is the most basic truth about prayer!
The power of prayer lies in Jesus who answers prayer,
and NOT in yourself.**

Jesus is the One who suffered and died so that you can **directly approach God** in the Heavenly Holy of Holies. You are not standing at a distance like those 10 lepers; **prayer brings you close to God**. Remember when Jesus died, the curtain in the Jerusalem Temple was torn in two, indicating that you now have **direct access** to God the Father because of the death of Jesus on the cross. Your sins are covered over, they have been paid for; and now God considers you holy, and you can approach Him without fear.

Let us then **approach** the throne of grace **with confidence**, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:16

This is why we always pray “**in Jesus Name**”; because God the Father listens to our prayer because of Jesus His Son. You have **direct access** to God the Father because of the death of Jesus on the cross.

The word picture of prayer in the Bible is that Jesus, the Great High Priest, Who sacrificed Himself for you on the cross, takes you into the Heavenly Holy of Holies, into the very presence of God, so that you can pray directly to God the Father! With confidence, you pray for mercy, grace, and help for yourself, for your family and for other people.

Prayer is a humble act; prayer is a sign of humility.
In prayer we turn to God for all good things;
and we look to Him in times of trouble.

Another way to say this is that Prayer is all about **Access**. **You have access to God the Father in Heaven through faith in His Son Jesus Christ.** This access to the Father comes **only** by Spirit-generated faith in Jesus -- *only those who trust in Christ can approach God the Father, and truly pray to Him.*

In prayer, **you have access to God**, and you **thank and praise** Him for Who He is and what He has done for you. You remember that He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit --- and you rejoice in His love, grace and mercy and care to you.

I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; His greatness no one can fathom. Psalm 145:1,3

In prayer, you are drawn to God, and you **thank and praise** Him for Who He is and what He has done for you.

In prayer, **you have access to God**, and you look to Him for **all good things**. We know, believe, and confess that all good gifts come down to us from the Father above – Everything you are and everything you have is a gift from God the Father’s good hand!

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights James 1:17

In prayer, **you have access to God**, and you look to Him for **all good things** as you pray for yourself, your family and for others.

In prayer, **you have access to God**, and you turn to him in **times of trouble**. God promises that you will receive mercy, and find help in times of trouble.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, **present your requests to God**. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7

In prayer, **you have access to God**, and you turn to him in **times of trouble**. **With confidence**, you pray for mercy, grace, and help for yourself, for your family and for other people.

Prayer is a humble act; prayer is a sign of humility.
In prayer we turn to God for all good things;
and we look to Him in times of trouble.

In prayer, you use **your access with the Father in Heaven** to **pray for others**. You intercede for others as if their needs are your own needs. You ask the Father to help others in their time of need and shower them with all good things.

Therefore confess your sins to each other and **pray for each other** so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:17

In prayer, you use **your access with the Father in Heaven** to **pray for others** as if their needs are your own needs!

Humble prayer believes that you have access to God the Father through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. The Risen and Ascended Jesus takes you into the Heavenly Holy of Holies so that you can speak to God the Father personally!

- In prayer you **thank and praise** God for Who He is and what he has done for you;
- in prayer, you **look to him for all good things** and **turn to him in times of trouble**, and
- in prayer, you **intercede for others** as if their needs are your needs.

The word picture of prayer in the Bible is that Jesus, the Great High Priest, Who sacrificed Himself for you on the cross, takes you into the Holy of Holies, so that you can pray directly to God the Father! With confidence, use your access to God, to pray for mercy, grace, and help for yourself, your family and for other people.

That is humbling!

Prayer is a humble act;
Prayer is a sign of humility.

Today, may you humble yourself in prayer, firmly believing, and not doubting, that God hears your prayer for Jesus' sake and in His Name, Amen!