

Scripture: Ephesians 3
Singing: 278:1-5 – 248:1-6 – 144:1-4 – 301

CHRISTIAN PRAYER (3)

I. The *why*? II. The *How*? III. The *what*?

II. The *how* of the Christian prayer?

A. How do we *think about God* when we *speak to Him* in prayer?

1. Study the character of God as revealed by Jesus Christ: *Father!*
 - a. He is not the Judge on bench only – King on throne only

- b. He is the **Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**

2. Knowing Him in that character should draw us to prayer (Ps. 81)

C. How do we think about ourselves in prayer?

1. God informs us who He finds a delight to behold: Is. 57:15; 66:2
“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive ...”

“... but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.”

“The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight (Prov. 15:8)

“The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.” Prov. 15:29

2. He also reveals whom He will not hear:

“He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination” Prov 28:9

“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me? ... they are a trouble unto Me; I am wear to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.”
Is. 1:10-15

3. Yet the wicked are commanded to pray: Acts 8:22; Is. 55:7

“Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.”

C. How do you think of Jesus Christ in your prayer?

1. How can a holy God take delight in the prayer of upright when even our best prayers are filthy rags? (Heb. 7:25-26; 11:4)

“Where He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Heb. 7:25-26)

*“And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it **with the prayers of all saints** upon the golden altar which was before the throne.” Rev. 8:3)*

2. Solid ground and access in prayer is *not your **frame, feeling or faith!***
3. Solid ground open access and confidence in prayer is *Jesus Christ*
“In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him.” (Eph. 3:12)
 - a. even if we feel unworthy, we must be fully persuaded that God for Christ’s sake will hear us (Catechism q. 117)
Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. Unto Him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ, throughout all ages, world without end! Eph 3:20-21

III. The ‘What’ of Christian prayer

A. Two general observations on the Lord’s Prayer

1. Our earthly things of daily needs aren’t *first/foremost*
2. That in personal prayer we are to exercise ‘communion of saints’

I can take my telescope and look millions of miles into space. But I can go away to my room and in prayer get nearer to God and heaven than I can when assisted by all the telescopes of the earth. (Isaac Newton)

The strongest knees are those which bend most easily. (M. Wood)

No man is greater than his prayer life. (L. Ravenhill)