

BIBLICAL PRAYER (25)

Type #3 - There is what is simply called prayer . **I Timothy 2:1b**

The particular Greek word translated “pray” or “prayer” (προσευχη from the verb προσευχομαι). The word literally comes from two Greek words pros (προς) which means to move in a direction toward God (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 382) and euxomai (ευχομαι) which means to pray (*Ibid*, p. 191). **Combining these two Greek words together to form one word means that this word prayer means to move to God or toward God by praying.**

When you pray you actually move toward God. That is exactly what this word communicates. This particular word is one that is used in a variety of ways. It is always used of prayer movement toward God and it seems to cover the entire sphere of prayers made to God. It seems to be more comprehensive and general in nature rather than a specific entreaty. **But this word prayer is a very sacred term and the general nature of prayer should never be taken lightly.** This would be the word we would use when talking about our Wednesday night “prayer meeting” or our Friday morning “prayer breakfast.” A few passages will suffice to establish this point:

- 1) **Matthew 6:5-7, 9** - The general nature of prayer is clearly seen in Christ’s instruction.
- 2) **Matthew 14:23** - The general nature of prayer is clearly seen in Christ’s prayer time.
- 3) **Matthew 19:13** - People knew that, generally speaking, Jesus was One who prayed.
- 4) **Matthew 26:36, 39, 41, 44** - We clearly see here how sacred general prayer is.
- 5) **Luke 1:10** - Carefully notice the general prayer of the people (προσευχομαι) versus Zacharias’ specific prayer (δεησις). **Luke 1:13**
- 6) **Luke 3:21** - Jesus was again generally praying and we do not know the specifics.
- 7) **Luke 5:16** - This was the word used for times Jesus would go somewhere to pray.
- 8) **Luke 6:12** - Jesus spent the whole night in prayer.
- 9) **I Thessalonians 5:17** - This is the word Paul uses in challenging the church to pray.
- 10) **I Timothy 2:8** - After Paul uses a variety of prayer terms in **2:1**, he comes back to this word to challenge us to pray.

There are many other passages where this word is used, but these show us that this word prayer is more of a general term. But keep in mind whenever you pray, you move toward God.

BIBLICAL PRAYER (26)

Type #4 - There is the prayer of intercession. **I Timothy 2:1c**

This is a completely different word used for prayer. The Greek noun “intercession” (εντευξις) comes from a Greek verb (εντυγχανω). There are three ideas communicated by this word - to meet with someone, to converse with someone and to petition or make a request to someone. We could define the specific meaning of this word as meaning to go to meet with someone for the specific purpose of making some verbal petition or request (*Ibid.*, pp. 156-157).

When we track the use of this word through Scripture, this word does have to do with praying to God concerning others rather than ourselves. Intercession is the idea of meeting with God for the purpose of conversing with Him in order to make a request or petition concerning someone else’s needs rather than ourselves or our own needs.

Now this word is only used seven times in the New Testament:

- 1) **Acts 25:24** - The Jews were “appealing” to Festus concerning Paul.
- 2) **Romans 8:27** - The Holy Spirit intercedes for us to God knowing God’s will.
- 3) **Romans 8:34** - Jesus Christ intercedes for us to God the Father.
- 4) **Romans 11:2** - Elijah interceded to God about Israel and him being the only faithful one left.
- 5) **I Timothy 2:1** - Paul specifically uses this word in the context of praying for others.
- 6) **I Timothy 4:5** - The word is used in regard to sanctified praying that frees from legalism.
- 7) **Hebrews 7:25** - The word is used pertaining to Jesus Christ’s prayers concerning our security.

Even though the specific word may not be used often, the Bible does make it clear that the idea of intercessory petitions has always been important to the people of God (**I Samuel 12:19**). **Great Biblical people have always been great intercessors in behalf of others.**

In the O.T., such leaders as Abraham (**Genesis 20:17-18**); Isaac (**Genesis 25:21**); Moses (**Deuteronomy 9:20, 26-29**); Samuel - who actually believed that not interceding as a leader was sin (**I Samuel 12:23**) all saw the importance of intercession.

In the N.T., intercessory prayer was important to the early church (**Acts 12:5**); Paul (**Ephesians 1:16; Philippians 1:4; Colossians 1:9**); and James, who promoted this very kind of prayer (**James 5:16**).

But undoubtedly, the greatest example of the need for intercessory prayer is Jesus Christ, who continually prayed for others. He prayed for Peter (**Luke 22:32**); He prayed for His immediate disciples (**John 17:9-19**); He prayed for His future family of believers (**John 17:20-26**) and He is still interceding (**Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25**).

J. Oswald Sanders writes: “The Lord Jesus is still praying ... thirty years of living; thirty years of serving; one tremendous act of dying; nineteen hundred years of prayer. What an emphasis on prayer” (*Prayer Power Unlimited*, p. 49).