

## Gary Allen Henecke on Prayer

Matthew 6:5-15

When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; they love to say their prayers standing in the synagogues and in public places for everyone to see them. Truly I tell you, they have their reward already. But you, when you pray, go into an inner room by yourself, shut the door, and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in private will reward you (openly). In your prayers do not go on babbling in meaningless repetition like heathen do, who imagine that they are more likely to be heard for the lengthy use of words. Do not imitate them! Your Father knows your needs before you ask him.

Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father in heaven, your name be held holy; your kingdom come; your will be done on earth - as it is in heaven. Give us today our needed bread. Forgive us our indebtedness, as we have forgiven those in debt to us. Do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. Amen. For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. For if you do not forgive others for their wrongs, then your Father will not forgive the wrongs you have done.'

**I am attempting to address prayer as Christ taught it.** I refer to the **Christian understanding of prayer**. Nothing has raised more discussion, disagreement, or pressure in Christian circles than the talk of prayer. The vast majority of believers in Christ are better just talking about prayer or attending seminars on prayer than in actually being engaged in the warfare of a prayerful life. Whenever the subject of individual prayer is raised, it brings silent conviction within Christian hearts because very few of our Lord's saints feel that they have an adequate prayer life. I would like to give you what I believe, as a result of my studies/journey, and are 9 basic rules for **praying in Jesus' way**. They come at the conclusion of more than fifty years of attempting to understand prayer through the eyes of the Master rather than through church tradition or my own personal needs.

**Truth #1: The ministry of Jesus inaugurates a new way of living the human life.** It had been God's plan from the beginning, but we lost this way of living through our departure from God and our turn into ourselves. When we saw Christ, we saw a man whose way of living the spiritual life was difficult to comprehend because we had already defined spirituality different from the way he was living it. Christ used our vocabulary, but with an entirely new meaning.

### **1) Entering The Holy: Living Beyond Ourselves**

- a. Transforming prayer is not panic driven
- b. Take off your shoes (preparation) – stop your walk in this world!!!
- c. The choice is to bring God down or to ascend (Let us go to him)
- d. A Cosmic Concept: We can in this flesh live beyond ourselves.

### **2) The Knowledge About God**

- a. God is beyond the limits of our knowledge and minds
- b. Rediscovery of blasphemy

Deuteronomy 18:20-22 If any prophet presumes to speak anything in my name that I have not authorized him to speak, or speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet must die. Now if you say to yourselves, How can we tell that a message is not from the LORD?— whenever a prophet speaks in my name and the prediction is not fulfilled, then I have not spoken it; the prophet has presumed to speak it, so you need not fear him."

- c. If Jesus is God ... then ... be careful quoting him

**Truth #2:** This principle could be stated in many ways. I am to pray in Jesus' name, in his person or nature, or I could say while abiding in Christ. Those who are in Christ are the only ones who can pray in the Spirit. I must dwell in him and be remolded by him to be powerful through him. *John 15:5 I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.*

### **3) The Knowledge Of God**

#### **a. Beyond our mental abilities**

Philippians 3:7-14 Whatever gain I had, I now count as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith; that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brethren, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus..

#### **b. Union with the life of God**

### **4) The Sense Of Need**

#### **a. Rethinking the matter of need**

**Truth #3:** Prayer is not bombarding heaven to get what I desire. It is asking God what he wants and bringing my desires into compatibility with his will. In prayer I surrender myself to seek God's will. *1 John 5:14 And this is the boldness we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. Romans 8:27 And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.*

#### **b. The Christian concept of goods and blessing**

### **5) Evil; The Illusion Of Significance**

#### **a. Me**

**Truth #4:** Prayer is not rehearsing to the Lord my goodness or my gratitude for who I am or what I have already achieved. This is a subtle form of self-righteousness. I must always come to God humbly and dependent upon him. It is an honor that God is listening. *Luke 18:11 The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.'*

#### **b. My hour**

#### **c. Religion**

### **6) Spiritual Prayer**

#### **a. The "hour of prayer" is Tanakh**

**Truth #5:** God is always listening. He hears every prayer. I do not need to force him to listen, nor do I need to compel his presence. No act, such as fasting and self-denial, makes my prayers more powerful. Prayer is a time to recognize God as real and personal. *Luke 5:33 Then they said to him, "John's disciples, like the disciples of the Pharisees, frequently fast and pray, but your disciples eat and drink."*

#### **b. Prayer by formula**

**Truth #6:** Prayers are not made more meaningful by the amount of time spent saying them. When I pray sincerely, I need pray only once. God hears my petitions instantly. Repetitious prayer is a sign of shallowness (prayers that are said by form) or lack of faith (it really means

that God hasn't answered quickly enough, and so I am asking him again). Matthew 6:7-8 *When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*

### c. Obedience to what one hears

**Truth #7:** I must pray in obedience. 1 John 3:22 *and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.* If I am not presently in a state of obedience to the light I have in Christ, the only prayer I can pray is the prayer of repentance. James 5:16 *Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.*

### Heaven Is Not The Sweet By And By

**Truth #8:** I must not betray my secret relationship with Christ. When I have asked him privately to be active in my life, I must in faith keep it private. God is a hidden God. He does not like my prayer life to be strutted. God views all this as a betrayal of his romance with me. Real faith trusts God to answer prayer. When I love God with all my heart, I refuse to use my prayers and my power with God to impress others. God who hears me when I talk to him secretly is the One who, when he answers, wants me to honor that secret request by continuing to be confidential. Others will see the changes about me and the actions of God through me and upon me. Because I have kept my prayer life private, it is God who will get the glory. Matthew 6:6 *But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. Into thy closet - (ἔισελθε εἰς τὸ ταμείον σου ~*

**Come into your tameion!** What is a "tameion"? The storehouse of reserved – the cellar. So it is a storehouse, a separate apartment, one's private chamber, closet, or "den" where he can withdraw from the world and shut the world out and commune with God. This word has the meaning of a storm cellar or food storage place. In the ancient world ledgers were kept for each family member. Every person had a right to so much provision. This is telling us that God keeps a storeroom provision for us, awaiting our requests. He will supply all of our needs out of that storeroom, and he invites us to make a withdrawal. **DO NOT STRUT YOUR CHRIST. DO NOT USE HIM TO ADVANCE YOURSELF. NEVER BRAG ABOUT YOUR PRIVATE LIFE IN CHRIST.**

**Truth #9:** Pray under the format of the Lord's Prayer. When he taught us to say:

1. **Our Father - most of us have a one-track mind. Center on God, not on your requests.**
2. **You are holy - be simple - don't try to impress God. He is holy - we need him.**
3. **Your kingdom come - not ours. His kingdom is - your will be done.**
4. **Give us day by day - recognize your dependence on him for daily needs. Everything comes from God, even the ability to get wealth.**
5. **Forgive our debt – living beyond our abilities**
6. **Deliver us from temptation and evil - do not yield to unholy attraction or spirit**
7. **Yours is the kingdom and the resources - remember that all is his, even you.**
8. **Forever and ever - the prayers of the saints are the eternal worship in the universe.**

**Truth #10:** I always close my prayers in adoration. Never leave the presence of God in frustration. God never fails. I leave his presence knowing he has heard me and will answer. The hope we have is not a maybe.