
DAY OF FASTING AND PRAYER ~ 26-JAN-22

Welcome to “the cowboy church’s” day of fasting and prayer. I trust that as you engage with the LORD in this way that you will grow deeper in your relationship with Him. *If you are new to our “fasting and prayer” day, there is some introductory material included on the last page that you may find helpful.*

2022 – PRAYERS FROM THE BIBLE

As we journey through 2022, I want us to take the opportunity of pondering various prayers found in our Bible. Over the course of the year, I will include prayers from both, the Old and the New Testaments. Some of these may be “traditional” prayers while others may be poetry or even actual conversations with God. It is my hope that by taking time to ponder and use these examples of communication with the Lord that our own prayer lives will be enriched and strengthened.

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

Where better to start this journey through prayers in the Bible than with “The Lord’s Prayer”. I have included the text from the NASB-95 below with the traditional ending. (Matthew 6:9-13)

Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#)

Matthew 6:5-15 is the larger context that we find this prayer in. Matthew includes it in what we call “The Sermon on the Mount”. Jesus, in verses 5-8, gives us two pieces of instruction before He gets to the prayer itself and then verse 14-15 close on a bit of a cautionary note. We will interact with the introductory instructions and the prayer itself.

Matthew 6:5-6

- In these two verses we are warned about making a show of our prayers. In other words, praying to be heard by those around us instead of communicating with the Lord.
 - On a personal level, what does it mean to you to “pray in secret” as opposed to “pray for show”?

Matthew 6:7-8

- Jesus instructs us to make sure we are not just babbling words or phrases. It isn’t the quantity of the words that gets us heard. The warning also refers to falling into a situation where your mind slowly turns off and you continue to repeat the same phrase over and over and still think that you are praying. Prayer should engage our intellect and not just our vocal cords and emotions.
 - “Meaningless repetition.” Where and how do you come across this as a temptation or pattern in your own prayer life?
 - How can you combat this temptation in prayer?

Matthew 6:9-13

- I would like to encourage you to go through this prayer phrase by phrase and ponder the words, their meanings and significance, and what is actually being said. For example, what is the significance of Jesus using the words “Our Father...” to begin the prayer? Or, what is meant by the words “debt” and “debtor” – do they actually refer to our financial condition or is there a much broader meaning? (hint, sometimes using a few good

[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#)

translations of the Bible can help us get a deeper understanding. Some good translations would include but not be limited to NIV, NASB, ESV, NLT, KJV, etc. These are easily available online at sites like <https://www.biblegateway.com> or phone apps.) Spend some time slowly making your way through the prayer itself and allowing God to open your heart to some of the issues on God's heart that this prayer gets at. If you would like to discuss this on a more personal level, I'd be more than happy to interact with you on it.

PRAYER CONCERNS

I want to do something different for the prayer focus for this month. Instead of listing a variety of prayer starters/ideas for each section we usually pray for, I am suggesting that you pray the Lord's prayer thoughtfully for each geographical section. If some specific thoughts or requests come to mind, ponder them in light of the Lord's prayer. How do they fit in and how can they be a part of this prayer Jesus taught? The spheres or sections we usually pray for are 1-International, 2-National, 3-Provincial, 4-Local, and 5-Personal. Here again is the text of "The Lord's Prayer" this time from the New Living Translation (NLT).

Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.

May your Kingdom come soon.

May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today the food we need,

And forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

And don't let us yield to temptation but rescue us from the evil one.

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen

May God richly bless you as you spend time with Him in this prayer that He gave to us.

Pastor Orban

[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#)

THOUGHTS AND TIPS CONCERNING FASTING

Often, we approach fasting as a way of showing God how serious we are about the things we are asking from Him. We think that because we are giving up food, time, etc. that He will pay closer attention to us and our requests. Not True. Fasting is not a means of manipulating God to give us what we ask for. Really, it isn't even about asking for things in prayer. It is about sitting with God, in His divine presence, and allowing Him to lead and guide our time. It is a time for praise and worship, for scripture meditation and for prayer according to His desires and His will. Through the time of fasting, our prayer focus should be one of aligning ourselves with the will of God and deepening our relationship with Him. In this way, He can lead us into His thoughts, attitudes, and possible action plans in our daily and community (church) life.

Here are a couple of articles that may give added information along with some practical tips for fasting. I may not agree with everything on these sites but there is a wealth of practical information that can be helpful when you add fasting to your life regularly.

<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/fasting/personal-guide-to-fasting.html>

<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/fasting/7-steps-to-fasting.2.html>

[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#)