

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mr. Brown, Mr. Dowling, Mr. Garner, Mr. Hadley, Ms. Donna Law, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Owens, Ms. Ward, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

Oak Grove Church of Christ Bulletin
2922 NW 76th Terrace, Jennings, FL 32053

March 13, 2022

Acts of Worship - Part 4

By Derek Long

Prayer is a means by which we can express to God our heart's desire, requests, thanksgiving, and praise to God (Romans 10:1; Philippians 4:6-7; Hebrews 13:15). Prayer is something Christians are encouraged to consistently be engaged in (Romans 12:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:17). Faithful people in the Old Testament made it a practice to pray multiple times a day. Daniel 6:10 describes for us Daniel's practice as it says, "he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days" (NKJV). Psalm 55, a psalm attributed to David, makes the following statement, "As for me, I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me. Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice" (vs. 16-17, NKJV). While prayer is something an individual can do all by himself (Matthew 6:5-6), prayer is also an activity early Christians did together. Acts 12 tells how when Peter was in prison, "constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church" (vs. 5, NKJV). Acts 12:12 tells how, "many were gathered together praying," at Mary's house. In the early days of the church, their activities are described in the following manner, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doc-

trine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42, NKJV). Prayer is one part of the collective worship God expects from His people today.

Many of the instructions relating to prayer would apply to private as well as public prayers. If one wants to learn how to pray or things to pray for, it would be good to examine Jesus’ instructions on how to pray. He taught His disciples to pray in the following manner, “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one” (Luke 11:1-4, NKJV). From this model prayer, there are several things we can learn about how to pray. Prayer is addressed to God. Prayer is an opportunity to praise God for who He is and His greatness. Prayer is a time where we make our requests known to God but our ultimate desire needs to be for God’s will to be carried out. Prayer is the means by which Christians can approach God for forgiveness of sins and ask for help in overcoming temptation. These and other things we can learn from other passages are things we can pray about.

The quality of a prayer is not measured by its length. Jesus warned against using long prayers as a means of seeking to impress people with our righteousness (Matthew 6:7-8; 23:14). Nehemiah no doubt offered a short prayer which was effectual (Nehemiah 2:4). Let’s not fall into the trap of thinking a longer prayer is always a better prayer.

When leading a public prayer, there are a few things a person should be aware of though. A public prayer needs to take into consideration you are leading the thoughts of a large

group of people. As a result, it is best to avoid using pronouns like, “I,” “me,” etc. It is also best to avoid making personal requests in a public prayer. If you are praying for “your wife,” it would probably be better to use her name so all can pray along with you. These are just a few thoughts relating to leading a congregation in prayer.

Prayer has something in common with singing. 1 Corinthians 14:15-16 says, “What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding. Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say ‘Amen’ at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say?” (NKJV). 1 Corinthians 14 is dealing with the use of spiritual gifts like speaking with tongues in an assembly. While we no longer have the gift of speaking in tongues today (1 Corinthians 13:8-13), the principles taught in these passages should continue to guide us in our worship toward God. 1 Corinthians 14:15-16 is addressing what might happen in an assembly where a prayer was being offered in a different language from the language spoken by the worshippers. If a prayer is offered and others do not understand what was said, the prayer did not accomplish its purpose. While we all might speak the same language, if a prayer is spoken too quietly or uses phrases or terms which people do not understand, it does not accomplish its purpose either.

Hopefully these thoughts will help us as we worship God together in prayer!