

God Centered Prayer

Lesson Five: Let Your Requests be Made Known to God.

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Introduction: “Why Ask God for Anything Since He Already Knows What I Need?”

A. Our Heavenly Father knows what we need even before we ask Him!

“Therefore do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need, before you ask Him.” - Matthew 6:8

“For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.” - Mat. 6:32b; cf. Lk. 12:30

1. All of our needs, desires, sighing or longings are before God (**Ps. 38:9**).
2. God, who is all-knowing, understands *perfectly* what our needs are (**Ps. 139:1-6**).

B. Why then should we even bother to ask God for anything?

1. Isn't it just a matter of having enough trust and faith in God to take care of us and do what is needed for everyone?
2. Why is it so important for us to make requests of God when nothing we could ask of God is anything He didn't already know ahead of time?

I. God Commands Us to Ask.

A. We are commanded: *“Let your requests be made known to God”* (**Phil. 4:6b**).

1. The fact that God *commands* us to ask means it is our duty!
2. It is not about informing God of anything He didn't already know, but about presenting our requests in fulfillment of His will for us.
3. Not only will we please our Heavenly Father when we ask, but we will be greatly blessed as a result!

B. We must ask in order to receive.

1. Too often, we seek what we desire in the wrong ways through worldly means and fail to pray to God for what we need (**James 4:1-2**).
2. How can we expect to receive if we do not ask? *“You do not have because you do not ask.”* (**James 4:2b**).
3. God is ready, willing, and able to help us if we will only ask!

“Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. – Matthew 7:7

C. The Lord commands us to ask so we may learn to put our trust in Him.

1. Asking God for help is a demonstration of our faith in Him to *always* do what is best for us no matter what (**Mt. 7:7-11 Lk. 11:9-13; cf. Heb 11:6**).
2. God does not always give us what we ask for; Instead, God, who is a *perfect* Father to us, will give us what we truly need, for our ultimate good.
3. By our persistent asking, seeking, and knocking, we learn to trust in God and depend on Him more and more throughout life.

II. The Spiritual Necessity of Presenting Our Requests to God.

A. So we are not anxious or troubled with the cares of life (**Phil. 4:6**).

1. The divine remedy to free us of all our anxiety is prayer!

- a. *“Be anxious for **nothing**”* – There is no concern that will trouble us when we take it to the Lord in prayer and put our trust in Him.

“Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.” - Psalm 62:8

2. Every worry we have, “*everything* by prayer and supplication” ought to be brought to God in prayer with an attitude of thanksgiving (**Phil. 4:6**).
 - a. There is no care too small or too big to mention to God!
 3. Our cares will overcome us when we do not pray as we should: When your heart is overwhelmed, don’t forget to pray! (**Ps. 61:1-3; 94:13**).
 4. Bring all your complaints, troubles, and cares and lay it at the “feet” of the Father who cares very much for you! (**Ps. 142:1-3; 55:22; 1 Pet. 5:7**).
- B. So we can have true peace in life.
1. As a result of presenting our requests in prayer with trust in the Lord, the peace of God will “guard our hearts” from anxiety and fear (**Phil. 4:7**).
 2. Thus, even during the severest of trials our hearts are not troubled, but confident, for the peace we have *comes from God* (**John 14:1; 16:33**).
 3. Only God can give us true peace “*which surpasses all understanding*” in the midst of the difficulties of life (**Phil. 4:7; cf. Rom 15:13**).
 4. To have true peace, we must not only pray, but also devote ourselves to the meditation of God’s word and do our best to obey it (**Phil. 4:8-9**).

III. What Requests Should We Make Known to God in Prayer?

- A. All our requests should be made with respect to God’s will (**1 John 5:14-15**).
1. Knowing what requests are appropriate without asking for foolish things requires we understand what the will of the Lord is (**Eph. 5:17**).
- B. Physical concerns
1. Even though we are not to be unduly concerned about physical matters (**Mat. 6:25-34**), we still need to pray about such things.

Examples: Daily bread (**Mt. 6:11**); deliverance from suffering (**Jas. 5:13**) or evil doers (**2 Thes. 3:1-2**); rain (**Jas. 5:18**); the health of others (**3 Jn. 2**); to lessen the severity of circumstances (**Mt. 24:20**); safety (**Ac 12:5**); for all men and rulers (**1 Tim. 2:1-2**); etc.

C. Spiritual concerns

1. Our focus should be first and foremost on spiritual matters and this is reflected by the kinds of requests we make of God in prayer (**Mat. 6:33**).

Examples: Mercy and forgiveness (**Luke 18:13; Mt. 6:12**); strength to do what is right (**Phil. 4:13; cf. Col. 1:11**); deliverance from temptation (**Mt. 6:13; 26:41**); spiritual growth for yourself and your brethren (**2 Cor. 13:9; Col. 4:12 / Col. 1:9-11; Eph. 1:18**); for healing and victory over sin (**Jas. 5:16**); wisdom (**Jas. 1:5**); boldness in preaching the gospel (**Eph. 6:19; cf. Acts 4:31**); for the increase of our love (**Phil. 1:9**); etc.

D. Ask God for that which the Lord has revealed in His word.

1. The servants of God commonly quoted Scripture when they made requests of God (e.g., **Gen. 32:11-12; 2 Sam. 7:25-29; Neh. 1:8-9**).
2. We should not be timid to quote Scripture (by memory or reading straight from our Bibles); it is a demonstration of our faith in His word!
3. Confidence in what we pray for is found in the revealed will of God.

IV. When We Don’t Know What to Ask, the Holy Spirit Intercedes on Our Behalf.

- A. Sometimes we lack the knowledge to pray “*as we ought*” and we “groan,” unable to adequately put into words our yearnings and needs (**Rom. 8:26**).
- B. The Spirit intercedes for Christians, helping us pray as we ought, assisting us to express to the Father what our needs are with respect to His will (**Rom. 8:27**).

Conclusion: Confidently Present Your Requests before God Who Cares for You!