

THE OAKWOOD ROAD

CONTENDER

“...exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith...”

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Lord Teach Us (1)

"And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." Luke 11:1.

In this request of the disciple we note two confessions which if made by man today would lead to a greater effort on his part to be what God desires. First the disciple acknowledged Jesus as one of power and authority when he addressed Him as Lord. Until we recognize Jesus as having all authority, Matt. 28:18, as being head of the church, Col. 1:18; and as having a name above every name, Phil. 2:9; we will never see our need for his teaching or the necessity of obedience to his will.

The second acknowledgment by the disciple was of his need for instruction. He realized his need for teaching on the subject of prayer and as Christ is Lord, where could he receive better instruction? No man is to be pitied more than the man who recognizes no need

for teaching. How many Christians are failing in their life because they fail to recognize their need "to study to show thyself approved unto God."

Many of God's people today need to say, "Lord, teach us to pray." There are many to whom James says, "Ye ask, and receive not because YE ASK AMISS, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." James 4:3. Many who have been baptized into Christ have had prayers unanswered because they have not learned God's requirements for acceptable prayer. John states, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, he heareth us." I John 5:14. Surely we ought to say, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Here is some additional New Testament teaching on the subject of prayer. First of all we must ask in faith. James 1:6, "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." See also Mark 11:24. Our prayer should be directed to the Father in heaven. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thv door, pray TO

THY FATHER which is in secret; . . ." Matt. 6:6. Prayers should not be addressed to saints or angels nor filled with repeated vain expressions which have been put to memory. Matt. 6:7.

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." I John 3:22. Acceptable prayer must be coupled with obedience upon the part of the one who prays. In John 15:7, Our Lord said, "if ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." No one abides in Christ who, does not obey his teaching. I John 2:23; 2 John 9. "And whatsoever ye shall ask IN MY NAME, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." John 14:13, 14. To ask in the name of Christ means we must ask by his authority or as he has authorized us to pray. The New Testament teaches there are some things for which we should not pray. - James 4:3; 1 John

5:16. No request which is contrary to his divine revelation will be heard. We have already observed from I John 5 :14 that prayer must be according to His will.

In addition, our attitude in praying will determine whether or not the prayer will be heard. We must approach God's throne of grace with a spirit of humility. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." James 4:6. We must likewise pray with a forgiving spirit toward those who have sinned against us. "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matt. 6:15.

Although only one disciple is mentioned making the request, he spoke of the need of all by saying teach US to pray." Likewise, many of us need to be taught the word of God in regard to prayer. If we are to follow the example of our Lord who prayed oft, Mat. 14:23 ; 26:36, and if we are to obey Paul's admonition to "Pray without ceasing," I Thess. 5:17, we must learn and practice these things of God.

"Lord, teach us to pray.

-Bill Echols

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DAILY BIBLE READING

February 19	Numbers 32-35
February 20	Deut. 1-2
February 21	Deut. 3-4
February 22	Deut. 5-7
February 23	Deut. 8-10
February 24	Deut. 11-13
February 25	Deut. 14-16

NEWS AND NOTES

Beginning today a series of lessons about why we are members of the church of Christ. Be thinking of the answer to this question and see what changes at the end of the series.

Encourage those who are having health difficulties.

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