

A Conversation of Prayer

[We] ought always to pray, and not to faint. ~Luke 18:1

Speakers Carol Helland & Faye Radtke

Introduction: The God of *Shalom* (Philippians 4:4-7)

The School of Prayer If you could ask to learn one particular skill from the Lord, what would you ask? *Now it came to pass, as the Lord Jesus was praying in a certain place, when He had ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray'* (Luke 11:1).

The Prayer Life of Jesus The disciples desired the Messiah's prayer life, for they had watched the Son of God talking to God the Father through God the Spirit. They knew that His public life of ministry was the direct result of His private life of prayer.

Prayer and the Holy Spirit I thank the Lord for His indwelling presence, and I ask Him to take control of my prayers and praying.

A Conversation with God In prayer, we do not see God's face. It's a conversation that lacks all the normal cues we rely upon for meaning. We cannot read **body language** or **facial expression** to gauge God's response the way we can when conversing with others. Is it possible for God to communicate with me? The simple answer is "Yes."

Prayer and the Word of God It's important that we know the Word of God to hear His voice. When Scripture is lodged and written in our hearts, it will be an outflow of our prayers: *"If you abide in Me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you* (John 15:7). **Prayer flows from a relationship with Jesus Christ, and a communion with God based upon His love for us.** ~1 John 4:19

The Lord Jesus' Ministry in Heaven And now the Lord Jesus prays for our sake. That is what He is doing in heaven right now. Christ reconciled us to God by His death and resurrection. He represents us before God in His life (Hebrews 7:25).

Does God always answer the believer's prayer? Some prayers have an element of uncertainty to them—but **I do not believe there has ever been an unanswered prayer when we pray according to His will.** ~1 John 5:14-15

The answer will come in one of several ways: **Direct** (It is granted at once.); **Delayed** (The postponement is intentional on God's part as we learn to trust Him.); **Different** (different than what we had hoped or expected). **Don't be afraid of a different answer.** That answer is not dangerous. God is not giving you the wrong thing. When you come praying as a child to your loving Father, He answers.

Prayer is not an attempt to change God's mind but to get me to the place where I can trust His answer. Only God sees whole and therefore only God knows what is good for us in the long run. Don't we have faith in the goodness and love of God? In eternity, we will see that our prayers *were answered* based on God's omniscience and care for us.

How can we learn to pray? Take the knowledge which is available in the Bible and start using it. We learn by doing. Get alone with God, and speak to Him in honesty and simplicity. He longs to have a conversation with you.

The Tour: Jesus' Activities during the Final Week

1. **Sunday:** Triumphal Entry from Bethany to the Mt. Olives, across the Kidron Valley, and up to the Temple mount. Jesus expelled merchants from temple.
2. **Monday – Tuesday :** Jesus taught in temple courts; Widow's Mite; Enemies Plot against Jesus; Anointed at Bethany; Stayed overnight on Mount of Olives
3. **Wednesday:** Apparently a day of rest
4. **Thursday:** Celebrated Passover; Prayed on the way to Gethsemane from Upper Room; Prayed in Gethsemane; Arrested; Interrogated by Sanhedrin; Tried by Herod and Pilate
5. **Friday:** Crucifixion and Burial at Golgotha
6. **Saturday:** Jesus rests in the tomb.
7. **Sunday:** Jesus rose from the dead.

It was almost time for the Passover Feast; everyone expected Jesus to come to Jerusalem. The chief priests had given orders that if anyone knew where Jesus was, they were to report it. They planned to arrest Him. When He came near Bethpage by the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples ahead for a colt that had never been ridden (Luke 19:30-37).

The Triumphal Entry Begins at the Mount of Olives **Do you see the Kidron Valley?** It originates in Jerusalem and spans nearly 20 miles to the Dead Sea. It divides the Mount of Olives and the Temple Mount. "Kidron" means "*murky, dark.*" It is also called the **Valley of Judgment**. God will gather the nations to the Kidron Valley at the end of the Great Tribulation Period to judge them (Joel 3:1-3). Jesus took this route in fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9: *Behold your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.* **Jesus rode into Jerusalem as the sacrificial Passover Lamb of God—the One who takes away the sin of the world.**

The crowd places palm branches on the roadway to meet Him. The palm branch was like the national flag. It was the Jews' way of saying that they wanted Christ to be their king and deliver them from the Romans. **But Jesus is weeping.** ~Luke 19:42

When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, He went directly to the temple and was outraged at what He found. People were exchanging money to buy animals for sacrifice and selling all kinds of merchandise: *“It is written in the Scriptures that God’s house is a place of prayer for all nations, but you have turned it into a den of thieves.”* **Now the religious leaders devise a plan to kill Him.**

The Widow’s Mite **Jesus sat down near the place where people brought money to the temple.** He watched as the rich put in large sums, and then he saw a poor widow who put in two small copper coins or mites, worth only a fraction of a penny: *“I tell you the truth, this woman has put in a larger gift than all the others. The rich gave out of their wealth; she, out of her poverty, gave everything she had to live on.”*

Destruction of the Temple Mount As they were leaving the temple, the disciples said, *“Rabbi, look at these large magnificent buildings.”* Jesus replied, *“Yes, they are great buildings, but they will be completely destroyed. Not one stone will be left on another that shall not be thrown down.”* **Jesus prediction was fulfilled 40 years after He gave it.** Under Titus, commander of the Roman army, in the summer of 70 AD, after six months of fighting, Roman legions burnt the temple and leveled Jerusalem.

The Western (Wailing) Wall **To this day, Jews weep over the destruction of the Temple.** They have been praying here for centuries, repeating the words of the 79th psalm: *“O God, the nations have come into Your inheritance; Your holy temple they have defiled; They have laid Jerusalem in heaps. We have become a reproach to our neighbors . . .”*

The Passover *“You are to observe this event as an eternal ordinance, for you and your children”* (Exodus 12:24). **Messiah Jesus gave thanks for the bread:** *“Blessed art thou, Jehovah, our God, King of the world, who causes bread to come forth from the earth.”*

Jesus broke the bread: *“This bread is my body. Eat it in remembrance of Me.”* **He then took a cup of wine:** *“This is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for many. Drink it in remembrance of Me. Whenever you do this, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.”*

A Savior Who Sings *When they had sung a hymn [Psalm 118:24 & 29], they went out to the Mount of Olives* (Matthew 26:30).

Gethsemane (gat shemen) means “olive press” in Hebrew. Our Savior had frequently found quiet refuge in Gethsemane. The Garden was an olive orchard with an oil press. Today the Garden features ancient, gnarled trees. The roots go back much further, and they may represent offshoots of trees that stood in the Garden where Jesus prayed.

Jesus' High Priestly Prayer (John 17) Jesus prays for **Himself** (v.1); for the **disciples' safe-keeping** (v.11); that they might have **joy** (v.13); that they might be **kept from evil** (v.15); for their **sanctification** (v.17); for their **unity** (v.21); for their **glorification** (v.22); for their **presence in heaven** with Him (v.24); and that His **love** might be in them (v.26). He did not pray only for the disciples but "*for them also which shall believe on Me through their word*" (v.20).

"That they may know You" (v.2-3) The Lord Jesus makes it clear that people may be devoutly religious and still not know God. Eternal life is a gift we receive. When we place our faith in what Jesus accomplished on the Cross, dying for our sins, we begin to know Him as our Savior and His love for us. As a result, our prayers become deeper as we trust His Word. We begin to know and trust the Lord and what He tells us in His Word. Our prayers expand as we pray for others because we understand their pain.

"They have kept Your Word" (v.6) Jesus praised the disciples for responding to the message of God through Jesus Christ. God is glorified when we have believed His Word. Jesus prays that we will be set apart from the world by the Word of Truth. Pray it; read it; know it.

The Lord Jesus prays for us. He desires that we know Him and behold His glory, valuing His amazing work for us.

Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46) Jesus went with His disciples into the garden of Gethsemane to pray. He took Peter, James, and John with Him and told them to watch. Then He fell on His face and prayed.

As God, He understood the terrible experience that lay before Him: 1. Taking on the weight of our sin; 2. Separation from the Father.

As Man, He was very sorrowful and troubled: "*Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me*" (v.39). He suffered and felt things just as we do. He understands our fears and sorrows as well as our temptations (Hebrews 4:14-15).

As the perfect Man, He relinquished His will to the Father's: *Nevertheless, not as I will but as You will* (v.39). There is freedom in trusting God and His Word. Then God is free to take over in our circumstances. We can take comfort that the Father has a plan for our lives. He deeply loves us, understanding our emotions and fears. He wants us to come to the Father as He came to His Father. In this way, we bring glory to God as the Lord Jesus brought glory to the Father (2 Corinthians 9:15; Titus 2:11).

Upcoming Events: HTBC, Retreat Repeat (Soup, Salad, Dessert Potluck); Saturday, May 4, (9:30 coffee 'n, music); 10:00 am—2:00 pm

A Conversation of Hope: HTBC, Thursday, May 16, 6:00

A Conversation of Hope: DBC: Sunday, May 19, 4:30