

Luke 11:2 God-centered Prayer

Jesus teaches us to pray with a God-centered priority.

God-centered prayer:

1) Addresses God with humble confidence and affection

- a) "Father" is bold intimacy—The OT and Jewish tradition understood God to be the Father of His people, but was not accustomed to calling upon God as "Father" in prayer. This was unique to Jesus and inherited from Him by the Church.
- b) Humble Confidence not Arrogant Presumption
 - i) Arrogant Presumption comes from inflated views of self and deficient views of God
 - ii) Humble Confidence comes from sober views of self and trusting views of Christ
 - (1) Sobering reality of God's evaluation of self: **Hebrews 4:12-13** "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from His sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."
 - (2) Trusting views of Christ: **Hebrews 4:14-16** "Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." **Hebrews 10:19-22** "Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that He opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." (cf. **Eph. 3:12**)
- c) Affection—deep attachment of soul; filial love/honor
 - i) Our access to God as Father is in union with Christ as the Father's "Beloved Son" (**Eph. 1:6; Luke 3:22**).
 - ii) **John 17:26b** "that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them"
 - iii) Loving and being loved: **1 John 4:16-19** "So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as He is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because He first loved us."
 - iv) Honor to the Father: **Malachi 1:6a** "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is My honor?" **1 John 5:3** "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome."
- d) Are your prayers grounded in the loving relationships of the Trinity? In Christ? In the love of the Holy Spirit (**Rom. 15:30**)?
- e) Hymns: *And Can It Be*—"bold I approach the eternal throne, and claim the crown, through Christ, my own" (Charles Wesley, 1738); *Arise, My Soul, Arise*—"My God is reconciled; His pardoning voice I hear; He owns me for His child, I can no longer fear; with confidence I now

draw nigh, with confidence I now draw nigh, and 'Father, Abba, Father!' cry." (Charles Wesley, 1742)

2) Seeks the display of God's holiness through His people among all nations

- a) "hallowed"—sanctified; set apart in supreme transcendence and truth and beauty; declared/displayed as holy
- b) OT background: **Ezekiel 36:23** "And I will vindicate the holiness of My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord God, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes."
- c) Eschatological prayer that God would do, through us, what He promised long ago through the prophets.
- d) God's name is hallowed through the redeemed lives of His saints.
 - i) Love: **John 13:35** "By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
 - ii) Unity of the Church: **John 17:17-21** "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, so I have sent them in to the world. And for their sake I consecrate Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word, that they may all be one, just as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You have sent Me."
 - iii) Purity: **1 Corinthians 6:18-20** "Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body." **Titus 2:11-12** "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age . . ."
 - iv) Faithful witness: **Philippians 1:20** ". . . now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death"
 - v) The very fact of our redemption: **1 Timothy 1:16** "But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost [sinner], Jesus Christ might display His perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe." **Ephesians 1:12** "so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of His glory"
- e) Are you praying for God to be glorified in your life? In the Church?

3) Seeks the uncontested reign of God over all things

- a) God reigns!: **Isaiah 52:7** "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'"
- b) The Kingdom has already come (inaugurated): **Luke 11:20** "But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."
- c) The Kingdom is increasing through opposition: **Luke 13:18-20; 17:20-37**
- d) The Kingdom will culminate in final judgment/salvation: **1 Corinthians 15:24-25** "Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet."
- e) Are you praying for God's will to be done in your life? In your family? In your community? Country? Among the nations?

Doxology (Responsive Reading of Psalm 99):

Pastor: The LORD reigns; let the peoples tremble!

People: He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!

Pastor: The LORD is great in Zion; He is exalted over all the peoples.

People: Let them praise Your great and awesome name! Holy is He!

Pastor: The King in His might loves justice. You have established equity; You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.

People: Exalt the LORD our God; worship at His footstool! Holy is He!

Pastor: Moses and Aaron were among His priests, Samuel also was among those who called upon His name.

People: They called to the LORD, and He answered them.

Pastor: In the pillar of the cloud He spoke to them; they kept His testimonies and the statute that He gave them. O LORD our God, You answered them; You were a forgiving God to them, but an avenger of their wrongdoings.

All: Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at His holy mountain; for the LORD our God is holy!