

BIBLICAL PRAYER (63)

QUESTION #15 – What are the Biblical postures people used when praying?

Through out the Scriptures, there are seven physical postures we want to observe concerning those who prayed:

(Posture #1) - Some prayed while they were standing. **I Samuel 1:26**

(Posture #2) - Some prayed while they were kneeling. **I Kings 18:42; Luke 22:41; Ephesians 3:14**

(Posture #3) - Some prayed while they were lying down. **II Samuel 12:16; Isaiah 38:1-2; Mark 14:35**

(Posture #4) - Some prayed while using their hands :

A. Some prayed with their hands spread. **I Kings 8:22, 54; Isaiah 1:15**

B. Some prayed with their hands lifted. **Psalm 63:4; I Timothy 2:8**

(Posture #5) - Some prayed specifically facing Jerusalem. **Daniel 6:10**

(Posture #6) - Some prayed specifically facing the Temple. **I Kings 8:29-30**

(Posture #7) - Some prayed with a head bowed. **Luke 18:13**

Certainly when we observe these various physical postures for prayer, one must conclude that they are greatly varied. **To my knowledge there is no specific command regarding one's posture of prayer, and certainly one's spiritual condition and heart attitude when approaching God is far more critical than one's physical posture.**

It does seem to me, however, since all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness (**II Timothy 3:16**), that some of these glimpses we get of the postures of prayer must be given to us by God as a means of instruction. If, for example, Jesus Christ knelt in prayer before the Father, it would seem to me that there ought to be times when we do the same. If Jesus prostrated Himself before the Father, it would seem to me there ought to be times when we do the same.

Although we certainly do not want to legalistically demand a posture of prayer, we also do not want to minimize the illustrations in the Bible regarding the postures of prayer. Quite frankly, kneeling or lying prostrate before God can be a true private, not public, demonstration of real humility.

The central issue in prayer is the heart, not the posture. But one who would refuse to kneel down and bow his head before the Sovereign God of the Universe must have a major heart problem. When we do physical things for God with proper spiritual attitudes, it does please God.