

## OUR MODEL PRAYER

### PRAY THIS WAY AND NOT THAT WAY

Excerpt from the book *Transforming Prayer: How Everything Changes When You Seek God's Face*, by Daniel Henderson

When Jesus said, "Pray like this", it was not just a suggestion or one of many options. It was a command for our good and His glory as we pray. We are not permitted to freelance with traditional alternative approaches or override this model with our own clever "improvements." The prayer pattern described on the following pages is based on a very basic premise. The first half of Jesus' model prayer is entirely Godward (or upward). The second half is manward (or downward). This can be summarized by the phrase: "*He is worthy. We are needy.*" Even when there is only a short amount of time to pray, starting with a passage of Scripture then engaging in a pure articulation of worship captures the participants with His worthiness. Then, moving to a time of trusting Him with our needs is natural. Our requests are informed and inspired by our worship.

<sup>9</sup> "This, then, is how you should pray:

**(God is worthy)**

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, <sup>10</sup> your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

**(We are needy)**

<sup>11</sup> Give us today our daily bread. <sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. <sup>13</sup> And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.' (Matthew 6:5-13)

In reviewing Jesus' teaching on prayer from Matthew 6:5-13, I think we realize that our own traditions and bad theology can also land us in a rut of prayer that just does not work. Many Christians are as frustrated as the "pagans on the hill" struggling to find an approach that makes their walk with God real, natural, and sustainable for a lifetime.

So as we prepare to clearly understand and apply a pattern that can enliven our prayer life and give us a biblical, balanced approach to prayer, let's review a quick list of "pray this, not that" principles:

- Pray to seek God's face, NOT just His hand.
- Pray with your heart fixed on God's glory, NOT just your personal satisfaction.
- Pray from the treasury of God's Word, NOT from a list of your own ideas.
- Pray according to the Spirit's instruction, NOT only from human reason.
- Pray with a heart completely surrendered to His will, NOT with a hurried personal agenda.
- Pray in anticipation of living triumphantly in the war zone, NOT in satisfaction with your comfort zone.
- Pray that God would change you, NOT simply change things.

In which ways listed above do you need to most transform your prayer life?

Additional Resources:

*Transforming Prayer: How Everything Changes When You Seek God's Face* by Daniel Henderson

