

# TEACH US TO PRAY



**Sandra Glahn**



## *introduction*

# Teach Us to Pray

**B**ack in my daughter's car-seat days, our state had a couple of droughts. We rationed water, prayed for farmers going bankrupt, and noticed our tap water tasted metallic. During the second drought, more than sixty days passed without a drop from the sky. One afternoon as I was driving with my girl, we spotted a grass fire in the median. So I pulled over and called 9-1-1.

Days later when we passed the same patch of what was then scorched earth, my girl wanted to know all about it: Should we

be scared? Is it bad to call 9-1-1? What causes fires? Would it happen again? Why does grass burn? Why? Why? Why?

I explained that the grass needed a drink—that all the grass in our state needed a drink, that the plants were thirsty, that the trees craved rain.

“What can we do?” she asked.

“All we can do is pray.”

“Right now?”

“I suppose,” I said. “Now’s as good a time as any.”

She insisted that I pray then and there.

“Okay,” I said. So I kept my eyes on the road and talked to our heavenly Father. I told Him about how the grass needed a drink. I reminded Him that the trees were thirsty. And I told Him we were scared we’d run out of water. “Please, God,” I pleaded, “we need rain.”

When I finished, she prayed, too, and her words reminded me of the time Jesus exhorted His followers to be like little children in faith and humility (MATTHEW 18:2–5).

About twenty seconds after we said “Amen,” an inch-wide drop splashed onto my windshield. I glanced over to see if a truck in the next lane was leaking fluid. Then another drop hit. And another.

And it dawned on me. Ohmyword!

“HE SAID ‘YES’!” my daughter screamed from the back seat. “HE SAID ‘YES’!”

Sure enough, that liquid was falling straight from the sky. I dabbed my eyes and kept on driving. We

passed others who had pulled off the road, stood on the shoulder, and thrown their arms in the air.

“HE SAID ‘YES’!” my daughter kept screaming.

“Yes, He did,” I whispered. I shook my head as we marveled at the timing.

The apostle James told his readers that God hears the prayers of ordinary, even powerless, people. He wrote, “Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years” (JAMES 5:17). Sometimes we get the idea that God answers the prayers only of those with spiritual super-powers while He glosses over the requests of us everyday folks. Does God even hear the prayers of some unknown mom and her little girl driving by a burned median? James answered this very question—Elijah was actually mortal, just like us, and see what his prayers accomplished?

*Sandra Glahn*



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*one*

## The Object of Our Prayers

**P**art of knowing how to talk to God is knowing the kind of God we address when we pray.

In the book of Revelation, the elderly John recorded a vision he had of end times: “Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: ‘Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns’” (REVELATION 19:6). The very name of God he uses, “Lord God Almighty,” suggests His omnipotence. And because He is all-powerful, we can ask anything



and know He has all power and ability. For example, consider His power with only the stars...

Centuries before Jesus came, one of the prophets who predicted Christ's coming wrote this of God: "Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing" (ISAIAH 40:26). Scientists estimate that our galaxy contains roughly 100 billion stars, and that there are about 10 trillion galaxies in the universe. Totaling those numbers, we end up with 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000. That's a "1" followed by twenty-four zeroes: And God created them all, named them all, and never confuses one with another.

Looking into the sky with its seemingly numberless stars, we might feel insignificant. That's how one of the biblical poets felt when gazing up. He asked God, "What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?" (PSALM 8:3-4). Aren't we mere ants on a small blue dot?

Jesus told His followers, "Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?" Then Jesus added, "Why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like

one of these” (MATTHEW 6:26–29). The God who holds all the universe’s power cares for us more than for the birds He made, all 200–400 billion of them. And the ultimate demonstration of His care was that He loved the world so much that He sent His Son, that whoever believes in Him will have eternal life (JOHN 3:16).

God does want us to recognize our smallness, but not so we’ll conclude we’re insignificant. Recognizing our tininess in contrast with the enormity of the Creator’s universe should not lead us to think “I’m too insignificant to bother God” but rather, “God is so great and so big, He can do anything.” When the Virgin Mary learned she would conceive a child by the Holy Spirit, she said of God, “No word from God will ever fail” (LUKE 1:37).

Because the one we draw near to in prayer is so great, it’s only logical that we His creatures should approach Him in humility. Decades after Jesus rose from the dead, His disciple Peter wrote to encourage suffering Christians. ▀ And he told them to humble themselves “under God’s mighty hand . . . Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” (1 PETER 5:6–7). Elsewhere, the apostle Paul said that prayer is the antidote to anxiety (PHILIPPIANS 4:6). So we call on our great God and tell Him our anxiety-causing “cares”—about the cancer treatment and the broken dishwasher and the wrecked car, the missing keys, and the children’s cavities—because He cares for us.

✶ **The believers** *Peter was writing to likely faced persecution at the hands of Nero, who had scapegoated Christians for the fire that engulfed much of Rome in 64 AD.*

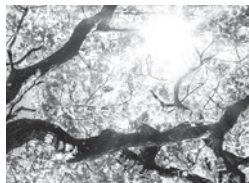
When I was in middle school, I thought helping me would distract God from doing His really important work. One evening, stomach cramps made me double over in pain. So I cried out to Him, saying, “I know You’re super busy helping the poor, but would You please stop helping them for just a minute to help me?” Then I felt guilty. Who was I to keep God from doing such important work? I needed a bigger view of Him! For God it’s an easy thing simultaneously to help the poor, heal a teen, keep the earth spinning, and keep track of a hundred billions stars.

So we pray because God cares for us, and He is great enough to handle it all. One of the biblical poets wrote, “The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth” (PSALM 145:18). So He invites us to draw near, and He promises that if we do, He will draw near to us (JAMES 4:8).



If we really grasped the truth that God is both this accessible and this powerful, people would have to pry us up off our knees. In *Teaching a Stone to Talk*, Pulitzer-winning author Annie Dillard put it this way: “On the whole, I do not

find Christians, outside of the catacombs, sufficiently sensible of conditions. Does anyone have the foggiest idea what sort of power we so blithely invoke? Or, as I suspect, does no one believe a word of it? The churches are children playing on the floor with their chemistry sets, making up a batch of TNT to kill a Sunday morning. It is madness to wear straw hats and velvet hats to church; we should all be wearing crash helmets. Ushers should issue life preservers and signal flares; they should lash us to our pews.”<sup>1</sup>



**Does anyone have the foggiest idea what sort of power we so blithely invoke?**

Dillard is right. We far underestimate the power we invoke. If the God to whom we pray has this much power, praying is like lighting dynamite. Imagine! We have a standing invitation to commune with God the Father Almighty. That's what prayer is—talking with the invisible, speak-worlds-into-being, keeps-tracks-of-all-stars, sent-His-Son-for-us God.

Yet because our heavenly Father is *also* invisible and tends not to use sound waves to speak, our experience of Him often falls far short of what we know to be true of Him. Although He has all power, on a day-to-day basis we may feel like we can't even

get the match lit. We pray, and the rain doesn't come. We ask God to heal, and chooses not to. It can feel like we ask, and He does nothing. That's why Jesus taught that humans "should always pray and not give up" (LUKE 18:1). And decades after Jesus's resurrection, the apostle Paul exhorted some of his friends to "pray continually" (1 THESSALONIANS 5:17). We're tempted to give up, to stop, to quit. Because it can feel like our prayers stop at the ceiling rather than storming heaven.

Jesus told His disciples, "Ask and it will be given to you" (MATTHEW 7:7). Later He told them, "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation" (MATTHEW 26:41; MARK 14:38; LUKE 22:40, 46). He also wrote to his protégé, Timothy, saying, "I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people" (1 TIMOTHY 2:1).

Our experience of God's seeming silence is one reason the Bible talks so much about faith. We may know something to be true, but our experience may leave us feeling like what we believe falls short of reality. The author of the book of Hebrews wrote, "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see" (HEBREWS 11:1). When we pray, we interact with a Father who is "not seen." So, often we can't trace His hand at work.

But we continue to pray, even when our efforts seem to lack results, because we believe that the God who named the stars has counted every hair on our

heads (MATTHEW 10:30). And He invites us to ask, seek, and knock (MATTHEW 7:7–8). Fundamentally, we pray because we have a relationship with Him. As parents want their children to communicate, so God desires for us to talk to Him. And conversely, as children want to communicate with good parents, we too desire to know and be known, to express our deepest selves. (Or perhaps if we don't want that, we may at least want to want it.)

Yet we might wonder why a God who knows everything would even invite us to pray. Doesn't the Bible say He knows our needs even before we ask? (MATTHEW 6:8). Certainly the act of prayer benefits us by helping us to stop and think about what's important from God's perspective. But ultimately much of the answer to "Why pray?" is a mystery, hidden in the God whose ways are so far above our ways that we can't comprehend them (ISAIAH 55:9).

When I take my cat to the vet, he hates being in the car—showing how he feels with hissing and clawing and meowing. And because I'm so far above him in intelligence (hopefully), I can't simply explain to him that I love him and have plans to benefit him. Similarly, God's ways are so far above ours that His loving plans lie beyond our ability to understand. His love can even come cloaked in what looks like cruelty.

Because God is invisible and His ways are so far above ours, we need help. So we begin with the same

request one of the disciples made of Jesus: “Teach us to pray” (LUKE 11:1). And we find in Scripture some practices to avoid and some to embrace.

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1 Annie Dillard, *Teaching a Stone to Talk* (New York: Harper 1982), 58.



two

## How *Not* to Pray

**D***on't pray while ignoring broken relationships.* Jesus told His disciples that if someone has unresolved conflict while they are on the way to engage in spiritual practices, that person should first stop and resolve the conflict before proceeding (MATTHEW 5:24). So if I spout unkind words at my co-worker, or if a family member hurts my feelings, I need to go make things right before showing up for worship. Certainly, not everyone will respond to attempts at reconciliation (ROMANS 12:18). Nevertheless, we should initiate restoration—whether we are the



offended or offender—before approaching God in worship (MATTHEW 18:15).

***Don't pray to get human praise.*** Jesus had little tolerance for people who prayed, fasted, and gave money making a big show so everyone would see their good works and applaud their spirituality. Prayers should focus on the greatness of God, not on how great *we* are. Jesus told one of His audiences, “When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full” (MATTHEW 6:5). Showing off is a horrible reason to pray. And who wants to be around a self-righteous person? People who pray to improve their standing in the court of public opinion receive nothing more from God, having already been paid in full in the form of human applause.

***Don't be long-winded or repeat words meaninglessly.***

Jesus also criticized those who pray long prayers in public and engage in meaningless repetition (MATTHEW 6:7). So a good rule of thumb is “short prayers in public, long prayers in private.” It’s tempting to read Jesus’s words about repetition as a warning against praying any written-out prayers or repeating what we’ve prayed in the past. Yet the problem is not in the repetition, but in the word “meaninglessly.” The danger in repetition is in

allowing our brains to settle into “neutral” so we fail to actually think about what we’re praying.

For many years I struggled much more than I do now in prayer. But during a retreat one year, a friend gave me a blank notebook and encouraged me to write out my prayers. By doing so, I now find it much easier to stay focused in my communing with God.

I’m not alone in this. The psalmists—those who wrote much of the poetry we find in the Bible—wrote out some of their prayers, and God’s people collected them through time. We know this collection today as the book of Psalms. Often we lack the right words, but the Hebrews’ prayer and hymnbook can help us again and again. So rather than eschewing such pre-formed and repeated prayers, we should guard against developing a callousness that can come from familiarity.

The Psalms contain timeless prayers that express every human emotion. Overwhelmed by God’s greatness? Psalm 150 lists ways to praise. Needing comfort? Psalm 23 assures that “the LORD is my shepherd” (v. 1). Angry about injustice? Psalm 2 expresses the fruitlessness of the nations conspiring against God. Grieving over injury caused by the



**A good rule of thumb is “short prayers in public, long prayers in private.”**

human tongue? Psalm 12 expresses such a lament. Feeling guilty? Psalm 51 is a confession of sin, probably penned by David after he violated Bathsheba.

When we don't know how to express ourselves to the Lord, the Psalms provide the words we're having difficulty forming.

***Don't pray only for your own needs.*** In the first-century Greco-Roman world in which Paul lived, Christianity was wildly *unpopular*. Arrested on many occasions for preaching the good news about Christ, he served a lot of jail time. And while sitting in an unlit cell one day, probably in Rome, he received a financial gift with a letter from a church he'd started with a group of praying women in the city of Philippi (ACTS 16:13–14). So Paul wrote them an epistle, known to us as the New Testament book of Philippians, in which he expressed his gratitude. And in it he described how he had been praying for them: “And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God” (PHILIPPIANS 1:9–11). Notice how he focused on their spiritual needs and ultimately that God would be glorified. That's a great model for our priority in prayer.



*three*

## How to Pray

**W**e know that Jesus prayed (E.G., JOHN 17), and He taught His disciples to pray (LUKE 11:1–4). And biblical writers throughout both Old and New Testaments exhorted believers to pray. We may not understand exactly how prayer works, but we have enough information about God's power, God's goodness, and His desire for us to call on Him to know we should draw near.

Luke the gospel writer records that one day when Jesus had finished praying in a certain place, one of

His followers asked, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John [the Baptizer] taught his disciples” (LUKE 11:1). With these words, one of the disciples acknowledged a tradition of prayer—the prophet John’s.

The apostles, including the one who asked, were all Jewish. They had doubtless memorized the Psalms.■ And they had probably uttered the same Sabbath prayers since they could remember. Praying every day of their lives since they were old enough to speak was part of how Jewish people lived—especially in a pre-literate society. Yet still these Jewish disciples felt the need for instruction about how to pray. I hope that encourages you as it does me, because it suggests that growing in prayer is a lifetime pursuit. Even those who’ve spent decades praying have not mastered having meaningful interactions with God.

Jesus’s answer to the disciple who asked “how?” still benefits us two thousand years later. Our Lord’s most famous prayer gives us insight and direction for how to pray. So let’s look deeply into Jesus’s most famous prayer for insight and direction:

***Pray to our Father.*** Of course not all people have good earthly fathers that help them to imagine a good heavenly Father. But most of us have seen a good earthly father in action. After I became an adult, one of the kids from the neighborhood where I grew up said he learned what a good father looked like by watching mine.

## ▶ **THEY MEMORIZED THE PSALMS**

*British theologian N. T. Wright, in The Case for Psalms, wrote, “The Psalms were the hymnbook that Jesus and his first followers would have known by heart. Even in today’s world, where electronic gadgets have radically reduced the need for memorization, most of us can remember the songs, whether sacred or secular, that were popular in our childhood and teenage years. Jesus and his contemporaries would have known the Psalms inside and out. Paul would have prayed and sung them from his earliest years. What Jesus believed and understood about his own identity and vocation, and what Paul came to believe and understand about Jesus’s unique achievement, they believed and understood within a psalm-shaped world. That shaping, remarkably, is open to us today.”*

*Before the invention of the printing press, believers with means had copies made of the book of Psalms and prayed them daily. But with the invention of movable type, devotional books became affordable, largely replacing daily psalms-reading. The book of Psalms has 150 “chapters,” each of which is often the length of a sonnet. Consider following the ancient practice of reading five psalms per day.*

Sitting at the door to our bedroom, Dad used to play the autoharp at night, singing my sister and me to sleep. When our Girl Scout troop got stuck in the mud at a campout, he drove his truck to our retreat site and pulled us out as everyone cheered. He took my siblings and our friends camping and canoeing. He taught us to sing at the top of our lungs “Christ the Lord is risen today!” at sunrise on Easter. He adored

our mother, loving her till his death in their sixty-fifth year together. And in his ninetieth year, he was still picking up day-old bread from the grocery store and delivering it to the local food bank. Our father gave us the great gift of seeing a righteous life well lived. And Jesus asked the crowds, “If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!” (MATTHEW 7:11).

Our heavenly Father is the best father of all—way better than my own dad. And Jesus began His prayer by addressing God with “Our Father” (MATTHEW 6:9). Notice that first word, “our.” It assumes that those who follow God are brothers and sisters, sharing a family identity as we have the same Father. And we pray in community with each other.

As for “Father,” the first person of the Godhead is not a male or a human. The word “Father” is a metaphor, albeit a favorite and intimate one. My friend Barb Peil notes that before Christ, “God’s people recognized Him as Creator-Father of their nation, but never as their personal Father.”<sup>2</sup> So no one had ever prayed quite like Jesus. And Jesus escorted His disciples into the intimate relationship He had with His Father, inviting them to address God in the same way. We have the intimacy with Him that comes from belonging to His family.

***Pray in Jesus’s name.*** Often we end our prayers with “In Jesus’s name, Amen.” The apostle John recorded

that Jesus promised His disciples, “And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (JOHN 14:13). But what does it mean to pray in Jesus’s name?

Years ago when I worked for a financial services corporation, I noticed that when the CEO’s administrative assistant called and told my boss, William, that the CEO said he had to go to China, William booked tickets, even if he didn’t want to go. Yet that assistant’s official rank in the company was far below that of William. And in fact, when she resigned, she could not even have summoned him to a conference room with any authority at all. Only when speaking in the name of the CEO did she have the power to act.

The same is true of us when we pray in Jesus’s name. By making our requests “in the name of Jesus,” we speak not in our own power but in the name of the One who has all authority in heaven and earth. Of course, when Jesus spoke of praying in His name, He did not mean that we mindlessly tack on “in Jesus’s name” as if doing so requires the Father rubber-stamp our every request. Rather, the Father’s glory is the ultimate end of praying in Jesus’s name. So our lives and prayers must align with that which honors Him.

***Pray in the Spirit.*** But what if we have no idea what will bring God the most honor? When my father was dying of Alzheimer’s, I wondered if God would be more glorified by taking Dad home or by leaving him



on earth for us to serve. The answer to that question required the omniscience I lacked. How could I pray God's will when I didn't know exactly what that was?

The answer came, as all such answers do, in the third person of the Trinity—the Spirit. The apostle Paul told the church at Rome that we all groan awaiting our redemption, but he went on to say “in the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God” (ROMANS 8:26–27). What a comfort to know that we have a helper—an intercessor. Our prayers don't have to be perfect. Because the omniscient Spirit prays along with us, uttering groanings too deep for words. He knows our hearts, and He also knows the mind of the Father. And He stands in the gap. So we never have to worry that we lack the perfect words to express our needs, desires, and sufferings to God. The Spirit helps with our weakness.

***Approach God confidently.*** Because Jesus came in the flesh and knows how it feels to be hungry, betrayed, homeless, injured, and even murdered, He has empathy for humans. The writer of Hebrews put it this way: “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin” (4:15). And the writer ends with an

exhortation full of comfort for those of us learning to talk to the Father: “Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (v. 16).

**Pray continually.** Thessalonica, a Greek port city. Later, he wrote these friends a letter in which he instructed them to “pray continually” (1 THESSALONIANS 5:17). Theologian Steven Cole writes that the phrase we translate as “without ceasing”<sup>2</sup> was used in Paul’s day when describing unrelenting military assaults or hacking coughs.<sup>3</sup> Clearly one cannot pray every second of every day. But we can pray relentlessly—and as often as someone hacks with chronic bronchitis.

↗ *Many translations of Scripture render “pray continually” as “pray without ceasing,” including the Authorized Version and the New King James Version. Dr. Cole references the New American Standard version in his commentary, which also says “without ceasing.”*

So rather than “checking off” that we have finished with our prayers for the day, we are to live in constant conversation with the One who loves us. We address Him when we wake up; we worship Him when we see the sunrise; we give thanks for our daily bread at breakfast; we praise Him for work and ask for skill in engaging in it; we pray that our love will abound and the God will use us to share the gospel; we lament over broken relationships; and we talk to Him about traffic as we drive. In the evening we seek His counsel

about how to spend our time. We ask Him to help us remain patient with family members. We ask Him to use us when we call to comfort a friend. We watch the news and pray for our government. As long as we're awake, we invite Him into our lives. And when we lie down, we recount His goodness to us; when we can't sleep, we cast our cares on Him.

***In devotion, alertness, and with thanks.*** Paul lived two years in Ephesus, a bustling major metropolis in Asia Minor which today lies in ruins in Turkey. About 120 miles away was Colossae, a wealthy trade center. And his friend Epaphras probably planted the church there (COLOSSIANS 1:7; 4:12–13) and traveled to work with Paul and inform him of the church's progress. Paul sent a letter to the church in Colossae, and in it he packed a lot of instruction about talking to God into one line: "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful" (4:2).

➤ *Even though Ephesus was home to one of the earliest churches in all Christendom, God warned the believers in a letter through John the disciple, "If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place" (REVELATION 2:5). This was a reference to the church no longer being a witness—a light—to God's truth. And indeed, that church has long since ceased to exist.*

To be devoted to prayer is to be set apart and ready. My friend's pit bull adores her, lying on the rug with

eyes glued to her and poised to jump up the minute she touches the leash. That's devotion! Paul's word for "devoted" was used elsewhere of a boat docked and ready for use.

He concluded his exhortation to the Colossians with a reminder to be thankful. Without gratitude, prayer can degenerate to a shopping list. We want food. We need the broken dishwasher to work. We need to find our keys. We need to get stuff done. We need our bodies and those of our loved ones to function. We request good fellowship. And we ask for open hearts to the gospel and help with temptation. Our communication with God runs the gamut of emotions and expressions. From praise to lament to confession to requests for ourselves to supplication for others, prayer consists of every feeling and need we have.

Yet when our prayers are about only what we want minus thanks for what we've already received, we are confusing God with a vending machine. We put in our dollar of obedience and expect the car to work, the chicken pox to strike someone else's child, and the checkbook to balance. And we might even throw a tantrum when we "pay" and "the machine just eats our dollar." Thankfulness reminds us to exchange our sense of entitlement for gratitude that we've already received infinitely more than we deserve.

***Sometimes pray without using words.*** In addition to talking to God, prayer also includes silence before Him, sitting or standing in an attitude of quiet and



**When our prayers are about only what we want minus thanks for what we've already received, we are confusing God with a vending machine.**

waiting in the divine presence. King David wrote many poems and songs included in the book of Psalms, including this: “My soul, wait in silence for God only, for my hope is from Him” (PSALM 62:5 NASB). Elsewhere in the psalms we read of the power that our God holds. He is the Lord Almighty who “makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear . . . . He says, ‘Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth’” (PSALM 46:9–10)

“All we can do is pray,” I had told my daughter, as if praying were barely a cut above nothing. But I was

wrong. Prayer is talking to the greatest power in the universe. E. M. Bounds, a nineteenth-century clergyman who wrote nine books on prayer, rightly described the “prayer closet” as the “battlefield of the church; its citadel; the scene of heroic and unearthly conflicts. The closet is the base of supplies for the Christian and the church. Cut off from it there is nothing left but retreat and disaster. The energy for

work, the mastery over self, the deliverance from fear, all spiritual results and graces, are much advanced by prayer.”<sup>4</sup>

God the Father, Son, and Spirit—our three-personed God—is involved in our intercessions. The object of our prayers is our omnipotent heavenly Father, who loves us. And we pray to Him in the name of and through the intercession of the Son with the help of the Holy Spirit. So let us, therefore, approach the king’s grace-throne boldly, asking with the disciples, “Lord, teach us to pray.” ☝

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- 2 Barb Peil, “Model the Prayer of Jesus,” *Kindred Spirit* magazine, <<http://www.dts.edu/read/model-the-prayer-of-jesus-dallas-theological-seminary/>> April 1, 2002, accessed March 19, 2017.
- 3 Steven J. Cole, “Lesson 81: Persevering in Prayer (LUKE 18:1–8),” bible.org, June 18, 2013, < <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-81-persevering-prayer-luke-181-8>>, accessed March 19, 2017.
- 4 E. M. Bounds, *The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds*, (Floyd, Virginia: Wilder Publications) 164.







