

The ACTS Method of Prayer

People pray all across the world. They pray for health, jobs, food and peace. Most of the time we pray for a difficult situation in our personal lives. Praying for our lives is perfectly fine but it limits the capacity of prayer. I once had someone come up to me at a basketball game asking me to pray for his shot! If we just pray for our needs it may turn God into a personal Santa Clause. This happens when we pray that the teacher will cancel the test that we didn't study for. St. Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 writes, ¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you (ESV). Praying without ceasing means we pray throughout the day as much as we can. Prayer is about developing a relationship with God. It is a conversation that happens between us and God. The importance of silence in prayer cannot be overstated. We need to allow time for God to speak to us. Who likes a conversation where someone does all the talking? The ACTS method of prayer is one way to expand our prayer life.

Adoration

If we pray to God than it makes sense to honor God for who God is. As Christians we have God as Creator, Jesus as Savior, Holy Spirit as Comforter/Guide. Depending on my mood I may pray to one form of the trinity or all three. Jesus begins the Lord 's Prayer with Our Father, Hallowed by Thy name. God is worthy of our praise for giving us brains to think and hearts to beat. Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the Savior of the world. The Holy Spirit walks with us in our lives and helps to direct us where we need to go. Adoration is also a time where we give our lives over to God's care. It is a prayer of faith and trust. Scripture has many names for God which honor God such as: Advocate, Anointed, Messiah, Bread of Life, Comforter, Day Spring, Emmanuel, Fortress, Healer and Hope of Glory. Use these and many more to adore the Trinity.

Confession

Since prayer is a relationship confession is good for the soul. If we have a fight with a friend, apology and forgiveness must happen for that relationship to be whole. Confession allows us to go to God and admit we have not been the people God needs us to be. It allows us to share our mistakes but also to seek forgiveness. Confession reminds us that God also has plans for our lives. God wants us to bring the world back to God. God wants us involved in mission and ministry. Part of the confession is asking and seeking God's will and direction for our lives. This is hard because God may just send us where we don't want to go. You see it is not about our wants but about our needs.

Thanksgiving

Rejoice always means we find ways to be thankful even if life is hard. Developing an attitude of gratitude takes practice. It means for us to count our blessings and maybe we don't really need that new house anyway. Thanksgiving honors God for taking care of our lives. This is a great opportunity to reflect on how God has

walked with us in the past. This reflection builds confidence in knowing that God will walk with us in the future.

Supplication

This is the asking portion of prayer. If prayer is more about God than us, than we should consider our framework for asking. To just pray for our own needs limits prayer. Jesus was sent to save the whole world. So the asking should make up needs of the whole world. So we pray from Global to Local. We can start by praying for needs in Africa followed by the United States and work our way to Maricopa. We then may focus on friends and family and finish by laying out our personal needs to God.

Prayer changes us. Perhaps the whole point of prayer is to gain a sense of the depth and love of our God. Jesus always was more concerned about our Spiritual health than our physical needs. So whatever we do, just pray.

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