



PRAYER



3



How not to Pray

1

Do not force God.

2

Do not accuse Satan.

3

Do not forget the Father.

4

Do not seek mediators.

5

Do not harbour hatred in your heart.

6

Do not be selfish.

7

Do not be earthlyminded.

8

Do not speak too much.

9

Do not act artificially/unseemly.

10

Do not boast of praying.



How not to Pray

Introduction

- The first evidence the Lord pointed out to Ananias about Saul's conversion —
Acts 9:11 ... *"Behold, he is praying"*
The first step we must take for the salvation of men is to pray for them —
1 Tim 2:1 ... *"first of all ... prayers ... for all men"*
The first obligation in missionary work —
Mt 9:37,38... *"Therefore pray...to send out labourers..."*
- Jesus began His ministry in prayer —
Lk 3:21 ... *"Jesus ... baptized ... prayed"*
He continued it in prayer —
Mk 1:35; Lk 5:16 ... *"morning ... solitary ... prayed"*
He continues it in Heaven —
Heb 7:25 ... *"ever lives to make intercession"*
- The early Church was born following 10 days of waiting in prayer —
Acts 1:14
It grew in an atmosphere of prayer —
Acts 3:1; 4:24; 6:4; 12:5; 16:13; 20:36
- One of our great privileges is that we have a prayer-answering God —
Dt 4:7 ... *what great nation ...*

- *Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
uttered or unexpressed ...
Prayer is the simplest form of speech
that infant lips can try ...
Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
the Christian's native air ...*
— James Montgomery (1771-1854)
- Prayerlessness is sin —
1 Sam 12:23 ... Samuel's promise
- Into such a vital spiritual discipline,
so many unscriptural practices have crept in.
Hence this study —
*“How **not** to Pray”*

How not to Pray

1. Do not force God.

- A popular novel doctrine—

“Command God in prayer!”

Quotation: Isa 45:11

“Concerning the work of My hands, command Me!”

This is a translation error:

KJV ✗

NKJV ✗

NIV ✓

“Do you give Me orders about the work of My hands?” (NIV)

Look at the context:

v9 ... Clay to the Potter...?

v10 ... Son to the Father or Mother...?

vv12,13 ... *“I” created the heavens,*

the earth and the man

(Creator vs. Creature)

- Even though Jesus was the only begotten Son of God,

He never once “commanded” His Father—

— Psa 2:8 ... He was told to **“ask”**

— Heb 5:7,8

He **cried** with *“tears” and was heard*

because of His reverential fear.

— Mt 26:39,42 ... In Gethsemane

First time: *Not as I will, but as You will!*

Second time: *Your will **be** done!*

- God's "Perfect" will vs. "Permissive" will
 - eg) A child keeps on persisting that he wants to cross a road.
Finally the dad reluctantly says, "OK, Go!"
 - Psa 106:15,
*"God gave them their request,
but sent leanness into their soul!"*
(quails from the sea by a wind)
 - 1 Sam 8:4-9,
People to Samuel: *"Give us a King like the **other** nations..."*
Samuel ... displeased ... prayed...
God told him, *"They have not rejected you but Me...
Give them a King but warn them of how he would behave!"*
- Does it mean,
 - we cannot expect God to answer all our prayers?
 - No, God **does** answer!
 - The answer:
 - Sometimes, YES!
 - Many times: NO!
 - Oftentimes, WAIT!
 - Most often: SILENCE!
 - Mature Christians know this!
- A Father knows **when** to give,
 - what** to give,
 - and to **which** child!
- Prayer is not to change God,
but to change us to fit into His plan.
The Parable of the Unjust Judge is just to teach us,
"We must not lose heart in prayer!" (Lk 18:1-8)

The Unjust (corrupt) Judge answered her just in order to avoid further “disturbance,” but God answers prayer out of “delight!”

- Paul had a *“thorn in the flesh”*—
 - He did not **command** the thorn to go ...
 - He did not **command** God to remove the thorn ...
 - He simply, *“pleaded”* with the Lord (2 Cor 12:8).
 - He gladly “accepted” the Lord’s answer:
 - “My **grace** is sufficient.”*
 - “My **strength** will manifest in weakness.”*

 - God is our Creator—
 - The creature cannot command Him.
 - God is our Lord/Master—
 - The servants/disciples cannot command Him.
 - God is our Father—
 - He’s asking, *“If I’m your Father, where’s My honour?”*
 - (Mal 1:6) *“A son honours his father...”*
 - “A servant honours his master...”*
 - “If I’m your Master, where is My reverence?”*

 - When you pray,
 - Ask God
 - Plead before Him
 - Cry unto Him
 - Wait before Him
 - Yield to Him
 - Never, command Him!
- Commanding God in prayer does not agree with the practice and teachings of Christ and the Apostles.

- The Book of Psalms abounds with prayers offered in distress, difficulties and desperate situations.

They are all characterised by humility and yieldedness.

eg) 3:2,4,5 65:2,5 118:5,21
20:5,6 81:7 119:25,26
22:4,5 91:15 120:1,2
34:4 99:6,7

- What's bothering you? Unanswered prayer?

Tell God, "*Your will be done!*"

This is not lack of faith,

but expression of confidence

that God knows what's best for me!

- A hymn by Adelaide A. Pollard (1862-1934):

Have Thine own way, Lord!

Have Thine own way!

Thu art the Potter,

I am the clay.

Mould me and make me

After Thy will,

While I am waiting,

Yielded and still!

How not to Pray

2. Do not accuse Satan.

- Two extremes:
 - Denying the existence/influence of evil spirits
 - Attributing all our failures to Satan
- **We** are responsible for our sins—
 - Js 1:14-16 ... *desires* (step 1)
 - temptations* (step 2)
 - sin* (step 3)
 - death* (step 4)

Satan can only “tempt” us as he tempted Jesus.
He cannot “defeat” us without our cooperation.

If Satan had been solely responsible for the failure of
Adam & Eve,
God need not have brought curses upon them!
The curses: “*hard work*” “*labour pain*” (Gen 3:16-19)

- A murderer cannot throw the blame
on the “spirit of the murder.”
- An adulterer cannot throw the blame
on the “spirit of lust.”
- A thief cannot throw the blame
on the “spirit of coveteousness.”

Jesus taught us to pray, “*forgive us OUR sins!*”

- Another wrong practice—
“Binding Satan in prayer”
The Scripture quoted is —

Mt 16:19 ... *whatever you bind on earth ... heaven ...*

This simply refers to

our heavenly authority on earth!

Otherwise, is there Satan in Heaven? !

Similarly, Mt 18:17,18

... meaning: forgive or condemn

“Binding & Losing” — judicial terms

Mt 16 — Concerning evangelism — Outsiders

“What do people say that I am?”

(Peter opened the doors for Jews and Gentiles)

Mt 18 — Concerning Church discipline — Insiders

■ We can—

Rebuke the devil (Mt 17:18).

Cast out the devil (Mt 10:1,8).

Refuse to *give place* to the devil (Eph 4:27).

Resist the devil (Js 4:7).

Watch against the devil (1 Pet 5:8).

i.e. Stay alert ... not arrest him!

Do not cross the Biblical boundaries.

It's God's plan that the devil roams about loose today.

At the maximum Jesus said, *“Get behind Me, Satan”* (Mt 4:10)

The binding of Satan is in the future— Rev 20:1-3

Before and after the 1000-year reign he must be free (v3c)

If you bind Satan now,

you can't cast him out;

you will have to carry him away!

How not to Pray

3. Do not forget the Father.

Whom to address in prayer is not properly taught.

Most of the modern Christians address only “Jesus” in prayer—

It’s because,

that’s how many preachers pray!

But the Bible consistently teaches us to address the

“Father” in prayer—

- Jesus’ teaching,
 - The Lord’s Prayer (Mt 6:6,9).
“Our Father who is in Heaven ...”
 - New dispensation
“On that day you will ask Me nothing...” (Jn 16:23,24)
Directly to the Father...
because *“the Father Himself loves you”* (Jn 16:25-27)
 - An outstanding resurrection blessing:
*“My Father and your Father...
My God and your God...”* (Jn 20:17)
 - We are to ask the Father for the Holy Spirit even though
Christ is the Baptizer in the Holy Spirit (Lk 11:13)
- The teaching and practice of Apostles and Disciples:
 - Prayer following persecution (Acts 4:24-30)
“They raised their voices TO God ... Your holy Servant Jesus”
 - Eph 2:18 ... *Thro’ Jesus TO the Father*
3:14 ... *I bow my knees TO the Father*

- Rom 8:15 ... *By the Spirit ... Abba, Father!*
- Christ seated at the right hand of the Father **for us...**
 - a) As a sympathetic High Priest (Heb 4:14-16)
 - b) As an Advocate (1 Jn 2:1)
 - c) As our Intercessor (Heb 7:25)

He intercedes to the Father.
- We confess our sins to the “Father” with the advocatory help of the Son —
 - 1 Jn 2:1
 - 1:7,9
 - Heb 2:17,18
- Thus,
 - the Trinity of Godhead is best understood
 - when we follow the Scriptural pattern in Prayer.
- Does it mean we cannot address Jesus at all?
 - We can, but it’s an exception—
 - Stephen’s Prayer: “*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*” (Acts 7:59)
 - An unusual experience: “*Seeing Jesus standing...*”
 - Dying words of commitment
 - Rev 22:20 ... “*Come, Lord Jesus!*”
 - This is not an example of regular prayer,
 - but an invitation with expectant hearts!
- How about John 14:14?
 - a) Translation? — “*ask in My Name*”
 - b) Context v13— This cannot contradict v13.
 - You cannot ask Me in My Name!!!

Children & Non-Christians —

When they learn to pray,
it may be alright to pray, “Jesus, ...”

We must grow out of childhood—

“When I was a child...” (1 Cor 13:11)

Mature doctrinal understanding necessary.

Take conscious effort to change.

■ The divine order—

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are coequal,
but they maintain an order!

Jesus: *“My Father is greater than I”* (Jn 14:28c)

The Holy Spirit *“will not speak on His own authority”*
(Jn 16:13)

The final scene —

1 Cor 15:24,28

“The Son Himself will also be subject to Him (Father)”

(See also Pages 160-161)

How not to Pray

4. Do not seek mediators.

The call of preachers everywhere—

“Rush your prayer requests to us!”

People, who are desperately seeking some help,
never try to find out whether this is a Biblical prescription.

■ Let’s see what the Bible teaches on this—

a) OT vs. NT ... **all** are priests (1 Pet 2:5,9)

Repeated

Now no two groups as “clergy” & “laity”

eg) Acts 2 ... *all flesh ...*

sons ... daughters ...

young men ... old men ...

men servants ... women servants ...

No age or class distinction!

Protestant Reformation: To restore the truth of the

“Priesthood of all believers”

b) Children asking the Father

Mt 7:7-11 ... “Ask ... Seek ... Knock”

“Everyone who asks ... seeks ... knocks”

v11 ... *“If you being evil ... how **much more**”*

c) First Comforter (Helper) — Rom 8:34

In Heaven for us (Heb 7:24-26)

Throne of Grace (Heb 4:15,16)

“boldly” ... no hesitation/no apprehension

Second Comforter (Helper) — Rom 8:26,27

On earth with us

We do not need a Third Comforter (Helper)!

- Roman Catholics use “Mary” as a mediator
— who brought forth Jesus to us
- Protestants use “Preachers” as mediators
—who bring us to Jesus
- Both are wrong.

- If God does not listen to you,
nobody can recommend your case!

Biblical prescription:

Js 5:13-15 ... *If anyone suffers, let **him** pray.*

Get elders of your own Church to pray

if you are too weak to pray.

Confess your faults ...

Pray for “one another” ...

Self-examination a must —

Lam 3:1,8,44 ... Prayers unanswered ...

:28,29,38-41 ... *search ... repent ...*

Don't bypass these steps.

Don't go for shortcuts.

- Beware of “anointed” oil —

We are not to “anoint” the oil,

but anoint “with” the oil.

“blessed cloth”—They took; Paul didn't send (Acts 19:11,12)

“holy” water — Bethesda — This was just a Jewish belief—

Did not water splash on him when others jumped in?
Jesus didn't help him get into the water!

God does not sanctify **objects** today.

Attaching sanctity to objects/places is outright idolatry.

These are all relics of Roman Catholicism (Dark Ages).

Only when Christians come "Back to the Bible,"

commercialisation of religion will stop!

Praying for the sick and the suffering has become

a profitable business today.

- Each Preacher has enough and more of his own problems.

Don't believe promises like,

"I am praying for you daily with tears!"

As a preacher for over 45 years, I tell you,

"Beware of Preachers!"

How not to Pray

5. Do not harbour hatred in your heart.

- Immediately after teaching on Prayer, Jesus spoke about “forgiveness” —
Mt 6:9-13 — The model prayer
Therefore ... “For if you forgive men ...”
vv 14,15
Of the 7 requests, He picks up “forgiveness” only.
i.e. the 5th request

- These days there is an overemphasis of “faith,” and no reference to “forgiveness”—

But the Biblical teaching:

Mk 11:22-24 ... Following the cursing of fig tree ...

*“Have **faith** in God ...”*

Say to this mountain ... sea ...

***believe** ... whatever ... receive ...*

“AND” — v25 — *“Whenever” you stand praying ... **forgive**.*

Two sides of a coin: *“Whatever ... Whenever”*

Everytime you pray, check this out.

- | | | |
|------------|--|-----|
| • Anytime | | v25 |
| • Anything | | |
| • Anyone | | |

- Sins which stop God’s ears —
Isa 59:1-4 ... *lies ... perversity ... injustice ...*
Relationship problems
“lips ... tongue ... speak” (vv 3,4)

Yes, especially what we **speak**—

What we speak to men

and what we speak to God are interconnected—

Js 3:8-10 ... *bless God ... curse man ... NOT to be so!*

— Abusive language

— Angry words

— Accusing statements

— Arrogant comments

That's why James calls for mutual confession —

Js 5:16a ... *“Confess your faults to one another”*

— Only then, prayer becomes *“effective”* (v16b).

■ A call for Reconciliation

A call for Restitution

Make a list: *“forgive”* & *“apologize”*

No clear *“conscience”* otherwise —

1 Jn 3:20-23

heart condemns ... ask ... keep commandments ...

“This” is His commandment (v23a)—

Believe AND love one another.

- As you pray for your protection and blessing,
remember that the other person is also as precious to God
as the apple of His eye!

Various organs of the Body of Christ—

You can't amputate a hand or a leg for a small wound!

“Be patient as God is patient towards you!

- Prepare a Reconciliation List before making a Prayer List.

“FIRST” reconcile, *“THEN”* offer! (Mt 5:23-25)

The context is about speaking abusive words:

“danger ... danger ... danger ... anger ... rascal ... fool” (v22)

Agree with your adversary “QUICKLY.”

This will bring about a great REVIVAL.

(See also Pages 38-39, 198-201, 255-258, 751-754)

How not to Pray

6. Do not be selfish.

This generation is called the “Me” Generation.

The question is always: What do “I” get out of it?

Selfishness is more today than anytime in history—

2 Tim 3:1,2 ... *Perilous times*

19 evils are listed.

The first one is “*lovers of themselves*”

This spirit of the age has pervaded religion also—
especially in our prayers.

Most of our prayers are self-centred—

My needs ... My job ... My family ...

But, look at the **model** prayer taught by Jesus—

Mt 6:9-13 *Our ... us ... we ...*

not “I” and “my”

- God has no respect for the prayers of a person who is full of selfishness, who has no concern for others—

eg) Isa 1:15-17 ... “*spread out hands ...*

make many prayers ...”

— Seek justice for the oppressed.

— Defend the fatherless.

— Plead for the widow.

- There’s a Revival of Praise & Worship today.
This must not blind our eyes to the needs and sufferings of others—

Heb 13:15,16 ... “... *praise ... giving thanks ...*
but do not FORGET to share...”

■ Come out of self-sympathy!

The problems and sufferings of others are

much more than mine!

Nobody other than Jesus suffered so much like Job—

However, instead of sinking himself in self-sympathy,

he prayed for his friends—

Job 42:7 ... God’s anger aroused against Job’s 3 friends.

We don’t know what misery came upon them.

It must have been terrible (v8). “*deal with you... your folly*”

It was when Job prayed for them

that God restored his own losses! (v10)

A Tamil Proverb: If you sumptuously feed someone’s child,
your child will grow well and automatically!

ஊரார் பிள்ளையை ஊட்டி வளர்த்தால் தன் பிள்ளை தானாக வளரும்!

■ We think we pray for “others” also —

Does this include “strangers” and our “enemies” also?

Mt 5:44,46

Widen your horizon of prayer—

Include “*all*” men— 1 Tim 2:1

Not casual mention,

but, “*supplicate*” for them

“*pray*” for them

“*intercede*” for them

“*give thanks*” for them.

Pray for others — Plead for others — Praise God for others!

- Do not be selfish—
 Enlarge your heart to enclose as many as possible
 in your prayers.

For example—

- When you pray for the exam of your son/daughter,
 pray for the other students also—
 especially those who are weak in studies
 and those who come from very poor background.
- When you pray for your sons/daughters in marriageable age,
 pray for parents who cannot afford to conduct
 a decent marriage.
- When one of your own family members dies in an automobile
 accident, don't forget to pray for the driver
 who was killed too.

 Let "ours" become "others!"

- Selflessness of Jesus:
 - He did not pray for angels to be sent for
 His protection (Mt 26:53);
 but prayed for Simon Peter's protection from Satan
 (Lk 22:31,32)
 - He did not perform a miracle for His hunger (Mt 4:2-4);
 but multiplied bread and fish for others (Mt 14:15-21).

How not to Pray

7. Do not be earthminded.

- People these days think that
Heaven is a supermarket,
and prayer is a shopping list!

We spend too much time asking God
for material benefits and physical blessings.

There needs to be a strong correction here—

Let's turn to the Model Prayer again—

Mt 6:9-13 ... 7 requests

Only 1 of the 7 relates to bodily needs

“Give us this day our daily bread”

In prayer, we must thus be preoccupied with—

first, the things of God: *His Name*
 His Kingdom
 His Will

next, our “spiritual” needs: *Forgiveness of sins*
 Victory over temptations
 Deliverance from evil

This is where the People of Israel failed—

God had spiritual objectives for them,
in bringing them out of Egypt:

- That they should be a worshipping community.
- That they should be used to destroy the wicked.
- That they would be the chosen people to bless the whole world.

But they forgot all those and got lost in physical needs—

eg) Num 11:5,6 ... *fish ... onions ... garlic*

God's anger: vv19,20

- One reason why we are earthlyminded in our prayers is that the most popular message we hear from pulpits is the “Health & Wealth Gospel” or “The Prosperity Gospel.”

— This is not what Jesus taught ...

Mt 6:31,32,33 (*Pagans: Those who don't*

worship a living God)

— The apostles warned believers about

overoccupation with earthly concerns ...

1 Cor 15:19

... If for (in) this life only ...

— Why do people cry/weep in Gospel meetings?

Not mainly for their sins,

but for their physical sufferings and material needs—

2 Cor 7:10

“godly sorrow ... repentance ... salvation”

We are to WEEP for our sins (Js 4:8,9)

“sinners ... lament ... mourn ... weep ...”

- In this context

a reference to making of vows in prayer—

i.e. “O God, if You do this for me, I'll ...”

Do not make cheap vows to God —

eg) “I'll write a testimony in the magazine!”

- Look at Hannah's vow—

1 Sam 1:11 ... *“a son ... all his life”*

“I give back to God what He has given me”

See vv 27,28 ... This is true *“worship!”*

- Similarly, David —

He was going thro' "*afflictions*" (Psa 132:1)
But he made a vow to **sacrifice** all comforts:
"house ... comfort ... bed ..." (vv 2-5)

- God was pleased with what King Solomon did **not** ask Him in prayer —

1 Ki 3:10,11 ... *health ... wealth ...*

- An ancient Irish hymn—

*Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Be Thou mine inheritance now and always;
Be Thou and Thou only the first in my heart;
O Sovereign of Heaven, my treasure Thou art!*

(See also Pages 52-54, 439-440, 563-565, 676-679, 755-758)

How not to Pray

8. Do not speak too much.

- In the very first teaching on Prayer,
Jesus spoke against “*vain repetitions*”
and “*many words*” in prayer—
Mt 6:7,8 — **Before** giving the model prayer
That’s “heathenic” practice. “*They think*”—chanting
eg) “Give ... Give ... Give ... Give ... O Lord!”
Why no vain repetitions—
Because, “*Your Father already knows your need!*”
What a difference this realisation will make
in our prayer exercise!
Prayer is not to give **INFORMATION** to God
but develop **INTIMACY** with God.
- Too much talk in prayer is “*sacrifice of fools*”—
Eccl 5:1-3
... *Draw near to hear rather than to give ...*
... *Let your words be few*
eg) David prayed *to set a guard over his mouth in prayer!*
Psa 141:2,3
- Prayer must be a 2-way communication—
Hear more; speak less!
Js 1:17 ... *Every good gift from above*
:18 ... God alone initiated our rebirth by the **Word**
:19 ... **Therefore** ... *swift to hear ... slow to speak ...*
:21 ... *With meekness receive the **Word** to be implanted.*

eg) While Paul was praying for his thorn —
2 Cor 12:7-9

God implanted **His Word** in his heart —
i.e. *“My grace sufficient ...
My strength in your weakness...”*

He received it with meekness
How do I say that?
After this experience only,
he wrote, *“lest I **exalt** myself!”*

- Pray with an open Bible—
Soak yourself with its message—
You can even kneel down while reading the Bible.
Jn 15:7 ... **IF My words** abide in you...
*you will **ask** ...*
- This is the “ONE THING” David desired of the Lord —
Psa 27:4 ... *“To behold and to inquire (study)”*
- Don’t **preach** to God in Prayer!
1 Sam 3:10
Samuel: *“Speak, O Lord; Your servant hears!”*
But we: *“Hear, O Lord; Your servant speaks!”*

Lesson from the story of the Pharisee and Publican
(Lk 18:10-14):

He who emptied himself of words in prayer
returned empty!

How not to Pray

9. Do not act artificially/unseemly.

- More noise does not mean more power!
More shouting may actually mean lack of substance.
Avoid yelling, screaming, ...
Prayer must be “*in spirit and in truth.*”

Prophet Elijah mocked at the pagan practice—

1 Ki 18:25-29 ... *leaping*
shouting
cutting with knives
prophesying(!)

In the previous lesson we considered what Jesus said:
Vain repetitions are a pagan custom.
Excessive shouting is also pagan—
“*as was their custom*” (v28)

There are times when our deep emotions may be stirred up—
eg) Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane (Lk 22:44)
“*agony ... earnestness ... sweat ... blood*”

This is commented by the Author of Hebrews (Heb 5:7)
“*vehement cries and tears*”

But there was nothing “artificial” about it.

- In the same way,
quiet praying does not mean
powerlessness or spiritlessness —

eg) Hannah

1 Sam 1:10 ... *bitterness ... tears ... anguish*
:12,13 ... *lips moved ... no voice!*

She was actually —

“pouring out her soul before God” (v15)

“out of abundance of her grief” (v16)

She brought forth one of the mighty prophets —
and that too, a **Praying** Prophet.

Samuel continued his prayer ministry
even after his retirement (1 Sam 12:2,23).

- Emotions can be there,
but emotionalism will rob prayer of its sweetness and depth.
God is not far away!
How people from India shout when making
long distance phone calls! (America)
Dt 4:7 ... “so near!”
- Apostle Paul’s regulations for collective praying — 1 Cor 14
 - *Spirits of prophets under the **control** of prophets* (v32)
 - *God is not the author of **confusion*** (v33).
 - *Let all things ... decently and in **order*** (v40).
- eg) When one person prays,
follow softly ... don’t suppress his voice.
- Do not copy any preacher!
How will I feel if my daughter starts talking to me suddenly
like my neighbour’s daughter?
Don’t lose your naturalness and originality.
God loves variety from His children.

That's why He has not created two individuals alike!

Beauty of variety!

Naturalness in prayer is supernaturalness.

- If we maintain “reverence” in prayer,
there will be no place for artificiality.

eg) Kneeling — a posture that's becoming extinct

Daniel: “**knelt**” down and prayed (Dan 6:10)

Paul: “*I bow my **knees** before God*” (Eph 3:14)

This does not mean we must not raise our voice in prayer.

A time to shout ... A time to be silent (Eccl 3:7b)

Psa 46:10 ... *Be still*

47:1 ... *Shout to God*

How not to Pray

10. Do not boast of praying.

- The very first teaching of Jesus on prayer —
Mt 6:5,6 ... *seen by men* ...
E.M. Bounds: “The secret of prayer is praying in secret.”
Read “*The Complete Works of E.M. Bounds on Prayer*”
(8 Books in one Volume)
(He was a Lawyer turned Pastor, 1835-1913)

Examples of mistakes:

- Taking credit for our prayers for someone if the prayers are answered.
eg) A student: “I did the history paper well!”
Praying woman: “You know how much I prayed for you!”
Next day: “I could not do geography well!”
Praying woman: ???

What about—

Jesus told Peter that He had prayed for him? (Lk 22:31,32)
— It was before the crisis.
— It was just to encourage Peter and not for Jesus to exalt Himself.

- Fasting is an integral part of prayer.
Here again,
Jesus taught against publicity and boasting—Mt 6:16-18
But our fasting programmes are the most advertised events!
No wonder we accomplish little!
In everything, we have gone away from the Bible.

- Pray... Pray... Pray,
but don't depend on your prayer—
but on GOD who answers prayer.

Why we must not boast of prayer—

- a) What God has given us of His own will and desire is
much more than what He has given in answer to our prayer
— and even before we prayed!
- eg) Rebirth: *“According to His own will ... every good gift”*
(Js 1:17,18)
“You did not choose Me...” (Jn 15:16)
- b) Gifts and miracles: *According to His own will* (Heb 2:4)
- c) *He gives even more than what we ask or think —*
Eph 3:20

At the end,

not the one who **offers** prayer,
but the One who **answers** prayer,
must get all the credit and glory!

- **Conclusion:** Next page

How not to Pray

■ Conclusion

All these 10 lessons are enshrined in the Lord's Prayer itself—

1. Do not force God.
— *“Your will be done!”*
2. Do not accuse Satan.
— *“Deliver us from the Evil One!”*
3. Do not forget the Father.
— *“Our Father in Heaven!”*
4. Do not seek mediators.
— *“Our **Father** in **Heaven!**” (open!)*
5. Do not harbour hatred.
— *“Forgive us as we forgive others”*
6. Do not be selfish.
— *“**our** bread ... **our** sins ... **Deliver us**”*
7. Do not be earthminded.
— Only 1 of 7 requests for physical need.
“Your Name ... Your Kingdom ... Your will”
8. Do not speak too much.
— The shortest but the greatest Prayer!
9. Do not act artificially.
— *“After this **manner**”*
— Father-children relationship
10. Do not boast of praying.
— *“FOR Yours is the Kingdom... Power... Glory!”*