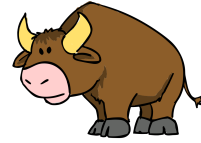




Prayer & Fasting: Ritual vs. Righteousness



Prayer

Matthew 6:5-8

“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

Jesus prayed publicly

Matthew 14:19
Matthew 19:13

Jesus prayed privately

Matthew 14:23
Mark 6:46
Luke 6:12
Mark 1:35

Jesus prays for us

Romans 8:34b
John 17:20-21

The Holy Spirit prays for us

Romans 8:26-27

Additional references: **Luke 18:10-14; I Kings 18**

Fasting

Matthew 6:16-18

“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Exodus 34:28 (Moses)
Daniel 9:3 (Daniel)
Daniel 10:3 (Daniel)
Matthew 4 (Jesus)

Acts 13:1-3 (church)
Luke 5:33 (John’s disciples)
Isaiah 58:1-12

Fasting principles:

1. Fasting is assumed. Jesus says “when you fast...”.
2. Jesus fasted, as recorded in **Matthew 4** and **Luke 4**.
3. There’s a time to fast and a time not to fast. See **Luke 5:33-35**.
4. There are several examples of fasting modeled in the Bible; here are a few:
Daniel 10:3 (Daniel engaged in a partial fast—no meat or wine—for three weeks)
Exodus 34:28 (Moses engaged in a complete fast—no bread or water—for 40 days)
Acts 13 (members of the church at Antioch fasted and prayed before and after they set apart Barnabas and Saul for missionary work).
5. Fasting drives us to prayer and helps us to focus on God.
6. Fasting is private, except when it’s not (as in **Acts 13**).

The Lord’s Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

“Our Father
in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

Who God is
Where God is
God’s holiness

Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

God’s sovereignty and
my surrender to his will
both now and forever

Give us this day our daily bread,

Request for today (**present**)

and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Request for forgiveness (**past**)

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.”

Request for guidance and
deliverance (**future**)

Recommended: *When The Pieces Don’t Fit...God Makes the Differences,*
by Glaphre’ Gilliland (Zondervan)
Talking With God: Studies on Prayer, by Glaphre’ Gilliland (Zondervan)

The Lord's Prayer - A One Week Challenge

Every day this week, pray:

“Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name.
 Your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread,
 and forgive us our debts,
 as we also have forgiven our debtors.
 And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.”

- **Matthew 6:9-13** (ESV)

	Record your thoughts regarding:	Hint: let God do most of the talking. As you quiet your thoughts, let him guide you.
Tuesday	God as our father	
Wednesday	God in heaven	
Thursday	God's kingdom	
Friday	God's will	
Saturday	Our daily needs	
Sunday	Our debts	
Monday	Our temptations	

Text and outline from *Talking With God* by Glaphre' (1985, Zondervan)

If you don't believe prayer can help you in some area of life, or don't believe it as much as you need to, then try this:

1. Begin with an honest request
2. Listen to what God says
 - a. **1 Chronicles 16:11**
 - b. **Colossians 4:2**
3. Look to Jesus
 - a. **Luke 5:16**
 - b. **Mark 1:35**
4. Ask God to help you believe in prayer
 - a. **Numbers 11:2**
 - b. **James 5:17-18**