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## English Sermons

### How to Pray Effectively (1)

#### Aligning Our Heart with God's Sovereign Plan

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# We Don't Know What to Pray for

Romans 8:26- 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 with groans that words cannot express.

# Definition of Praying

To pray is to

Access into the presence of God,

Align our heart with His sovereign plan,

Allow Him to transform us to His image, &

Ask Him for His provisions

# The Disciples' Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)

- A) **Accessing into God' Presence**- Our Father in heaven, **Hallowed be Your name** (v9).
- B) **Aligning Our Heart with God's Sovereign Plan**- Your **kingdom** come. **Your will** be done on earth as *it is* in heaven (v10).
- C) **Asking for God's Provisions**- Give us this day our daily bread (v11).
- C) **Allowing God to Transform Us**- And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors (v12).
- B) **Aligning Our Heart with God's Sovereign Plan**- And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us **from the evil one**. For Yours is the **kingdom** (13a) and
- A) **Accessing into God's Presence**- the **power and the glory** forever. Amen (v13b).

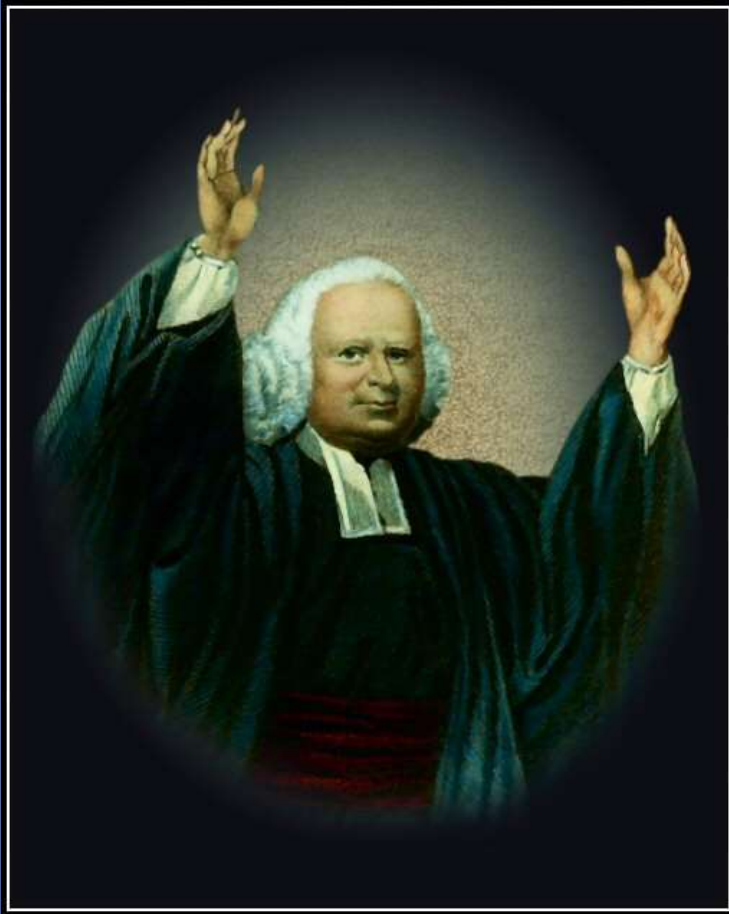
# Pray According to God's will and it will be Answered by God

**1 John 5:14 & 15-** This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

**John 15:7 -** if you abide in Me and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

**John 14:13 & 14 -** And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

# John Wesley & George Whitefield



**George Whitefield**



**John Wesley**

# Example 1: Aligning to God's Sovereign Plan in Our Prayers - 1 Samuel 12:19-23

- 19 The people all said to Samuel, “Pray to the Lord your God for your servants so that we will not die, for we have added to all our other sins the evil of asking for a king.”
- 20 “Do not be afraid,” Samuel replied. “You have done all this evil; yet do not turn away from the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart.
- 21 Do not turn away after useless idols. They can do you no good, nor can they rescue you, because they are useless.
- 22 **For the sake of his great name the Lord will not reject his people, because the Lord was pleased to make you his own.**
- 23 **As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you.** And I will teach you the way that is good and right.

## Example 2: Aligning to God's Sovereign Plan in Our Prayers - Romans 9 & 10:1

- 9:27 Isaiah cries out concerning Israel:  
“Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea, only **the remnant will be saved.**”
- 9:28 For the Lord will carry out his sentence on earth with speed and finality.”
- 9:29 It is just as Isaiah said previously:  
“Unless **the Lord Almighty had left us descendants**, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah.”
- 10:1 Brothers and sisters, **my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved.**



## Example 3: Aligning to God's Sovereign Plan in Our Prayers - Revelation 22:20

- John wrote twenty two chapters on the Second Coming of Christ
- Revelation 22:20a- He who testifies to these things says, **“Yes, I am coming soon.”**
- Revelation 22:20b- **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

## **Example 4: Aligning to God's Sovereign Plan in Our Prayers – Hebrews 5:7**

During the days of Jesus' life on earth, **He offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the One who could save Him from death, and He was heard** because of His reverent submission.

**(Jesus certainly knew His Father's sovereign plan, but He still prayed with "fervent cries & tears")**

# Lord, Your Will Not Mine!

‘Prayer is not a device for employing the resources of omnipotence to fulfill our own desire, but a means by which our desires may be redirected according to the mind of God’ – *William Barclay*

A lot of times Christians pray that God would bless our plans, but instead, Christians should learn to plan according to God’s will.

# Genesis 18:25

Surely you wouldn't do such a thing, destroying the righteous along with the wicked. Why, you would be treating the righteous and the wicked exactly the same! Surely you wouldn't do that! Should not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?" (NLT)

# The Will of God

- Ephesians 5:17-18- Therefore do not be foolish, but understand **what the Lord's will is**. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, **be filled with the Spirit**.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3- For this is **the will of God, your sanctification**: that you should abstain from sexual immorality.
- 1 Peter 2:13-15- Therefore **submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake**, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. **For this is the will of God**, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish
- 1 Peter 4:1-2- Therefore, since Christ **suffered in the flesh**, arm yourselves also with the same attitude (for whoever suffers in the flesh has broken with sin), so as not to spend what remains of one's life in the flesh on human desires, but **on the will of God**.
- 2 Peter 3:9- The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, **not willing that any should perish** but that all should come to repentance.

# Conclusions

**The reasons to pray according to God's Will:**

- **1) It's a sin to know God's will but not pray for it (1 Samuel 12:22)**
- **2) God graciously allows us to effect His sovereign plan through our prayers (John 14:13 ,14; 15:7; 1 John 14,15)**
- **3) So that we can be transformed into Christ's image, much like Abraham did, praying for the sinful city of Sodom (Genesis 18:16-33)**

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