

SHOULD WE PRAY TO JESUS?

A NEW LOOK AT PRAYER AND WORSHIP

When we pray, or worship, we want to do it the way God and Jesus instructs us. Throughout the Bible we find God telling us to do everything how He instructs, otherwise it is an act of Idolatry, which He hates. It makes sense that we take that seriously. If we are not following His directions, not doing it His way, it is not going to be honored, or answered. Why go to the trouble, and time, if it is not going anywhere, except to influence others to do the same?

Since Jesus had not been born before the New Testament, no one prayed to Him before he had been born. However, in the New Testament, we know that Jesus was available to receive prayers, but did He? Are we praying according to His command? If not our prayers will not be accepted, or answered. What does God or Jesus, or Paul have to say about prayer and worship?

This study is answering that question. Most reference is being used where the word “prayer” or “worship” is mentioned according to what we think of when we pray.

On the other hand it can also simply mean to make a “suggestion” or “a polite request,” which we will not need to study in this case. We start with the conversation Jesus is having with his apostles.

Mt 5:44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Mt 6:5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

At the very beginning Jesus begins by instructing us about prayer. Let us listen. He is dressing down false religious men for “blowing their own horn” so to speak. He is accusing them of being hypocrites.

Mt 6:6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

If we want the Father, to see us, (or hear us) Jesus says his believers must pray in secret. Then He says we are to pray “to the Father” not to Himself. He also tells us if we do it the way the Pharisees pray, openly, and not in private, we are doing it for attention, not for a secret visit to the Father, who wants our prayers done in secret (privately). We are not to use written or memorized prayers. I ask: should we not teach our children to pray the same way?

Mt 6:7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

Mt 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Does this not teach us to respect the authority, power, and righteousness of our Heavenly Father, the Lord of the harvest of souls (humans)?

Mt 9:38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

It is very evident that Jesus always prayed to His Father, (and our Father) setting an example for us. Nowhere did Jesus ever tell anyone that they were to pray to him. Below are many mentions of prayer.

Mt 14:23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

Mt 17:21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

Mt 19:13 Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.

Mt 21:13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have

made it a den of thieves.

Mt 21:22 And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

Mt 23:14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

Mt 26:41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Mt 26:53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

Jesus explains: the only way to perform special acts of miracles we must add fasting to our prayers. We also have to act on what he tells us, not just believe that he, and God, our heavenly Father, made it possible for our sins to be forgiven. Of course! The Father was there with Jesus all the while. It was His plan from the very beginning

Jn 3:16. The Father walked and talked from that very same body! Just

because He is spirit does not mean He does not grieve and feel more deeply about

our pain than we even remotely suspect. I know how painful it is to lose a child. I have lost three of my own. But they were not tortured as His son was. Yes, He could have stopped it if He wanted to lose all of his potential children to eternal death. All of us would have been aborted without His plan.

Mr 9:29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

Mr 11:17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My (God's) house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

Jesus explains, and demonstrates, that one should not use His Father's house for financial gain. In other words, no one should charge for the truth that God the Father, allows some to share with others, so they might be called out of the world, and hopefully be chosen to spend eternity in His kingdom. Mr 12:40 Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

Mr 11:24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

Mr 11:25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses..

Lu 6:28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

Lu 18:10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

Lu 18:11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

Lu 21:36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Jesus says if we want to escape future horrors we have to be in constant contact with the Father in prayer (doing it His way, of course). Some may escape through death, which is not as bad as we may think.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Joh 16:26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

Joh 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

Joh 17:15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

Joh 17:20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

Jesus prays to the Father, not only for those of His day, but for us as well, that is IF we are obediently praying the right way, believing the Word. We have read many verses that is found in the time of Jesus, but how do the new churches

teach on prayer, do they pray to Jesus now that He has become the “first-born of many” and gone up to heaven? We go now to how Paul, and others, taught about praying.

Ro 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

Ro 12:12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

Ro 15:30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; on our behalf.

2Co 5:20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

Phm 1:4 I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,

Re 8:3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

Re 8:4 And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

Now, I ask the questions, should we put our prayers and pictures (which in no way is anyway close to Jesus' picture), on the internet? According to the Bible our prayers should be personal, not be broadcast to the world, nor are we to worship Jesus more than God the Father. There is no instruction in the entire Bible as to how to pray to Jesus, our firstborn brother. Below is the definition of Strong's Concordance, how the Greek word “prayer” is translated into English.

1189 deomai deomai deh'-om-ahee

middle voice of 1210; TDNT-2:40,144; v

AV-pray 12, beseech 9, make request 1; 22

1) to want, lack 2) to desire, long for

3) to ask, beg

3a) the thing asked for

3b) to pray, make supplications

I have found no place in either O.T. or N.T. where anyone prayed to Jesus.

Next we will see from the O.T. a few (of many) scriptures how prayer is connected to “worship.” We will see who is worthy to be worshipped, through prayer.

Ex 34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:
2Ch 7:3 And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.

Ps 22:27 All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

Ps 22:29 All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.

Ps 29:2 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

Isa 2:8 Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made:

Isa 2:20 In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats;

Isa 27:13 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

Eze 46:3 Likewise the people of the land (Israel) shall worship at the door of this gate before the LORD in the sabbaths and in the new moons (in the future).

Zec 14:16 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the

feast of tabernacles.

Zec 14:17 And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

We could go on and on, but it is clear that there is no mention of Jesus being worshipped in the O. T. The word "LORD" in captis is referring to the Hebrew God, Jehovah.

Next we will look in the N.T. for more info on worshipping of Jesus.

We find in Strong's Concordance, the Greek most used for the word "worship" means:

4352 ~proskunew~ proskuneo \@pros-koo-neh'-o\@
from 4314 and a probable derivative of 2965 (meaning to kiss,
like a dog licking his master's hand); TDNT-6:758,948; v
AV-worship 60; 60

- 1) to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence
- 2) among the Orientals, esp. the Persians, to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence
- 3) in the NT by kneeling or prostration to do homage (to one) or make obeisance, whether in order to express respect or to make supplication
 - 3a) used of homage shown to men and beings of superior rank
 - 3a1) to the Jewish high priests
 - 3a2) to God
 - 3a3) to Christ
 - 3a4) to heavenly beings
 - 3a5) to demons

Jesus permitted the above kind of worship, but not the kind of worship that belongs to Jehovah, God the Father. He, however, shows a difference concerning the loving commitment kind of worship. Jesus never approved this kind of worship toward himself. Jesus explained this kind of worship to the woman at the well.

Joh 4:21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

Joh 4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

Joh 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Mr 7:6 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Joh 9:31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

Jesus supports worshipping and keeping the Father's laws found in the O.T. Not only that, he says it is necessary to get Him to hear us.

Lu 4:8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Act 24:14 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

Notice even after converting to Jesus' teachings Paul voiced his commitment to God the Father, not to

Jesus, the son. The only place permission is given to worship Jesus is to the angels, not to humans.
Heb 1:6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

I have noticed so many pictures on face book of handsome men supposedly in honor of Jesus, in someone's effort to worship Jesus. I also have read public prayers that has a show of being to Jesus. Many religious songs are sang, in religious gatherings, in worship of Jesus. Brothers and sisters ask yourselves this very important question: am I worshipping Jesus, our older brother, instead of the Father, contrary to the commandment of God, neglecting our Creator? Where are we given permission to worship Jesus, proclaiming a greater worship toward him than to our Father, who craves His children's devoted love? Listen to what Jesus said:

Joh 4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

Read the study "Building an Idol In Our Hearts".