

"Lord, teach us to pray..." Luke 11:1
2-10-13

What is Purpose? Many people live without purpose. The end of the day is all they see; in the end, they have nothing to show for the lives that they have lived. Many others realize this, and try to fill their lives with flawed purpose. Ideas like family, romantic love, or success are in the end flawed purposes, because they are neither guaranteed to fill or satisfy our need for purpose. Family can fail despite the best of intentions; love can be lost or grow cold. Success can be elusive. Perhaps we need to think about our own purpose in life.

What is Purpose? Simply put, purpose could be called the reason for your actions, or the accomplishment you seek to fulfill. Maybe we can call it the "Why" in your life. So our question is: Is there PURPOSE in your prayers?

To describe Purposeful Prayer we might first describe what is NOT praying with purpose. For example, afterthought prayers, which are more of a thought than a purposed prayer. Filler Prayers, those prayers we offer when we have a moment with nothing else to do. "911" Prayers, the emergency offerings that are soon forgotten. While these prayers are important and useful, they are lacking in purpose.

What we need to consider is that Jesus prayed with PURPOSE. Consider Mark 1:35: "Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed." More importantly, Jesus taught Prayer with Purpose when His disciples asked Him to teach them in Luke 11:1-4. There Jesus taught us that praying with a purpose requires us to separate our needs verses wants. It also required us to prepare ourselves with patience and trust.

Another place that Jesus taught Prayer with Purpose was in Matthew 6:7-8. There he told us that we need to beware of vain (meaningless) repetition. More importantly, he said that we need to know that God already knows what we need before we pray.

God knows what is needed? If so, Why am I talking to God? We might ask the same question of our Lord and Savior; why did Jesus talk to the Father? He and the Father were one, so why did He need to speak to the Father? In the Garden we saw Jesus NEED to pray, but it was not expecting that the Father would end His mission.

What if the true purpose of prayer is not to bring God an awareness of our needs, but to bring ourselves to an awareness of God's will? We use the expression "God answers prayers" quite often, but that expression is missing from the Bible.

What if God does not answer prayers, but instead, prayers answer God? If this were the case, then we might consider prayer an answer to God for the things He has told us in His word. If we prayed with such in mind, we might meet the standard of being in the will of God. Purposeful prayer is not meant to bring God to us, but to bring us to God