

- Why do you think we are all so quick to bring our “wish lists” to God rather than praying according to His will?
- Many people I have spoken with over the years have expressed being very uncomfortable praying. Why do you think people are uncomfortable going to God in prayer?

Read Hebrews 4:13-16 and Philippians 4:5-7

- What do these two passages tell you about being comfortable in approaching God in prayer? What do they tell you about the process of prayer?

Another key aspect of prayer is simply worship and thanksgiving. For example, praying through a Psalm while directing your thoughts to God can bring you into the proper presence of God. While you worship and thank Him in prayer consider the beauty of His amazing creation, the blessings He has poured out in your life, His sovereignty, His protection, His deliverance, His forgiveness and His faithfulness.

One other aspect of prayer is to come clean with God. In order that nothing hinders our prayers we should search our heart for sin and any wrong motives. Then confess our sin before God and ask Him to forgive us. Read 1 John 1:8-10, Psalm 66:18 and Psalm 139:23-24.

Note: Keeping a prayer journal to remember how God has led you to pray and to acknowledge His answers will help strengthen your faith.

Each day of the week I am asking you to read the scripture and in a journal or notebook answer the following two simple questions:

- What God Said to Me: (My Discovery from His Word)

- What I Said to God: (My Prayer Response)

Daily Bible Reading for the Week:

- Day 1: Matthew 6:7-11
- Day 2: Hebrews 4:13-16
- Day 3: 1 John 5:14-15
- Day 4: Matthew 26:36-45
- Day 5: 1 Samuel 1:1-28 & 2:1-10

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Pastor Tim Wood

Footprints of Jesus: Pilate before Jesus

John 18:28-40

1. An attitude to avoid

“...to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover.” (v.28)

2. A testimony to remember

“I find no basis for a charge against him.” (v.38)

3. A kingdom to live in

“My kingdom is not of this world...But now my kingdom is from another place.” (v.36)

4. Truth to be trusted

“In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, to testify to truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.” (v. 37)

5. A decision to be made

“What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?” Pilate asked. (Matt. 27:22)

Discipleship Study

Jesus said, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." Luke 9:23

A disciple's life of following Jesus can be summed up in the disciples cross illustration to the right. In this illustration, there are five essential principles disciple's life; Christ, the Word, prayer, fellowship, and witness.

Obeying each principle will lead the follower of Jesus to put into practice the ministries of a disciple.

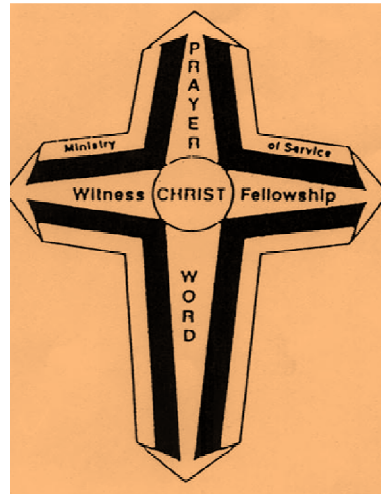
Each week leading up to Easter, we will be studying one of the five aspects of the Disciples Cross illustration above.

The Disciples Cross

1. Pray In Faith: Our Vertical Relationship with God

When I have faith in God, I will trust and depend on Him for every need. Prayer is an essential part of my walk with Christ. I will be led to worship Him and I will long to communicate and fellowship with my Lord and Savior in prayer.

- John 15:7, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you."
- Jeremiah 33:3, "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know."
- Philippians 4:6-7, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."



The Disciples Cross

The direct petition and intercession of prayer is one of the greatest blessings God has given to the follower of Christ. Jesus said over and over again in various ways that if we seek Him and look to His kingdom and abide in His presence, then we can freely go to the Father with our requests and He will answer our prayers.

However it is oh so important that we understand the purpose of prayer. Prayer is intended to involve me in God's purpose rather than me involving God in my plans. Let me say that again, prayer is intended to involve me in God's purpose rather than me involving God in my plans. Read Mark 14:36

- Have your prayers been about seeking God's will and His purpose or have they been about involving God in your plans?

Let me describe two forms of prayer; petition and intercession. Petition is asking for yourself. God wants us to pray for our personal concerns. Think about this, God's answer to your prayers are for the benefit of you growing closer to Him and to help mold you into the person He wants you to become.

Intercession is praying for others. You pray for others for the same reason you pray for yourself, so that they can grow closer to God and that He can mold them into the persons He wants them to become. In intercession, God uses you as His vehicle to accomplish His will when you pray for others.

- Why do you think God chose prayer as His divine means to intervene in our lives?

God delights in answering prayers that are asked in accordance to His will. We need to hear God's voice and watch where He is already at work to guide us in prayer. Then we need to stop and pray and seek His will to be done.

- What do you think it means to pray according to the will of God?

(Study continued on back side)