

Dr. Gary Meadors, Knowing God's Will,

Session 14, The Role of Prayer

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Welcome again to our lectures concerning Biblical Theology for Knowing God's Will. We're coming right down to the end now. We're in the last section of the Discernment Requires Addressing Subjective Challenges, Part 3. These subjective challenges have been conscience, the Holy Spirit, understanding how they operate in us, the role of providence that we talked about, number 13, and now the role of prayer, GM 14.

This is GM 14. You have a minimal number of slides, but you have some notes that are very important to me, which I'll be getting to in this lecture. Prayer is a major part of the discipline of the Christian life.

The Word of God is studied to show that thyself is approved of God. Of course, all the epistles say, make your supplications and prayers to God. We're told to pray in many ways.

We want to think a little bit about this. I'll give you some extra materials to read from things that I've written myself on this. We never really know everything we want to know about prayer, even when we work through these kinds of materials.

But the bottom line is there are no boundaries for prayer. Take to God your life. Read the Psalms.

Read them over and over because the Psalms are the prayers of the holiest men in their holiest moments. And in some of their bad moments, they complain to God. They complain about their enemies.

We have what we call imprecatory Psalms, which call down judgment on the enemies of God, but Revelation does the same thing. So, it's not something that's just in the Old Testament. And asking God, why did you do this? Why do you treat us this way? Look at the book of Job.

The Bible is one of the interesting books on religion that exposes the struggles of the saints. And prayer is always going to be one of those domains. I have a very standoffish role sometimes in terms of prayer meetings because we hear the same thing over and over again, sometimes rather juvenile, repetitious requests that don't really reflect our struggles in our depth of history, but they're meaningful to the person who makes the request.

Therefore, they're meaningful to God. But at the same time, if that person doesn't understand how God relates to those prayers in terms of answers and non-answers, they can be very confusing. So, if you would, please turn in your slides to our first slide, which is text for reflection.

Text for reflection. And I'm looking for my glasses. Oh, here they are.

If they were on my face, I might find them. By the way, I have a red shirt on today. And I don't know why.

It's not because of the nativity of Jesus that we use red so much. Red is a royal color, and purple is used for the birth of the king. But this is Christmas Eve, 2024.

Christmas Eve, 2024. I was going to try to find a little hat to wear. But nonetheless, that's where we are today.

And I'm doing these final lectures around the Christmas period of 2024. All right. So text for reflection.

Text for reflection. All right. There are only twice in the New Testament where prayer and the will of God are linguistically linked.

Where they're linguistically linked. The Lord's Prayer. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And that's in the model prayer. That prayer, you should study that prayer because it is a model prayer. It lays out aspects of prayer that we should observe, I think, even though we may expand.

Just praying the words of that prayer is not necessarily your prayer, but it gives you an outline, as it were, of how to address God. So that's one place. The other place is 1 John 5, 14.

If you ask anything according to his will, that's a prayer text, and it conditions the prayer by asking according to his will. That will there more than likely relate to the sovereign will of God. What God chooses to do.

Why would you pray for it? Why would God tell you to pray? John, as God's representative, tells you to pray according to God's will in the moral realm. You're supposed to know what that is, and you should pray that way. In other words, you don't go to the Lord and pray your temptations and say, Lord, you know, I really shouldn't be thinking this way. Well, you know you shouldn't be thinking that way.

That's what you need to deal with as you go to prayer and ask for help. But those are two passages that relate prayer to the will of God. The only two that should be known.

There are prayer promises. These are probably the most challenging. Ask anything and you'll get it.

I only know of three times where this happens, and it's all in Johannine writing. In John 14:14, we should turn to this passage. John 14:14.

Now, we've talked about this part of John previously, and I wonder if you remember what we are in terms of this context. Every passage that you read must be read in its context. Remember, the Bible is for you, but the Bible wasn't written to you.

It was written to many different individuals in time and place over somewhere around the 2000, well, not quite, about a 1500 to 1600 year period from Moses to the end of the New Testament. And in John 14, we're in the midst of what we call the Upper Room discourse. It was Jesus's last night with his disciples.

He's in the Upper Room. Only a few of them are there. Excuse me, they're all there.

Judas leaves early. He left actually before the Lord's Supper. He left as a part of the meal, and you can read that account in John.

Then in John 14:14, what we call the Upper Room discourse, Jesus says in verse 13, and whatsoever, whatever, I'm reading the American Standard Version again. You shall ask in my name what I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask anything in my name, that is what I do.

Now, you say, well, that's a prayer promise, and that's the prayer promise that I'm going to claim. Well, I'm sorry. That promise was made to the disciples as Jesus was giving them their last instructions about what they were going to do when he was gone.

And they're going to go out and blanket the world with the message of Christ. They're going to face hardships, toils, and so forth. And they're going to do things that are not normally done.

For example, some miracles will be performed. God will be very active in that evangelistic and teaching aspect of those apostles right there at the end of the first century. And so this is addressed to them.

The address that I'll do anything that you ask for is not a common promise to me. Now, that would be nice, but you have experienced this passage, and you've

probably claimed this passage and prayed and said, Lord, I'm asking. You said you'd give.

Well, the problem is, is that it creates a false hope because you ask, and you ask, and you ask, and God doesn't give. And you come back, and you don't want to act like you're mad at God because he didn't do what he said he would do. But the whole problem is our problem.

We're not reading the text in its context. This is something that has to do with the orchestration of the earliest aspect of the spread of the gospel by the disciples. And in the Upper Room Discourse, Jesus is preparing them for that.

The other passage is also in the Upper Room Discourse. John 16:23. John 16:23.

We looked at this in another context previously. Verse 22: And you therefore now have sorrow. He's talking to his disciples.

But I will see how I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice. Your mind, your whole body, your whole complex shall rejoice. And your joy is that no one takes away from you.

And in that day, you shall ask me no questions. Verily, I say to you that if you ask Father anything, he will give it to you in my name. Hitherto, have you asked nothing in my name?

Ask, and you shall receive. That your joy may be made full. And here again, it is exclusively in a context that Jesus addressed in his disciples.

That's not addressed to you or to me. It's addressed to them. Now, it's for me that God loves us like Jesus loved the disciples.

And there are lots of general truths I suppose you can walk away with. But the fact is, is you've got to be very careful that you don't claim something that's in a context that really isn't for you. It is not addressed to you.

It's addressed to them. It's for you to see how God dealt with them. So be careful of those promises.

1 John 5:14, ask anything according to his will. Now that one's already conditioned. That's one of the passages where will and prayer are linked.

Ask anything according to his will. Well, there again, I think that interfaces with God's sovereign will because it would be very difficult even to interface that necessarily with the moral will.

Because if you ask, Lord, I wish the world would act like they love Jesus. Well, the world's not going to act that way. That would be a false expectation from that prayer.

Ask anything according to his will. In other words, align your life with God's will, which, in this case, I think means his sovereign will, which you don't know ahead of time. And it will come to pass.

Now you'll say, well, geez, that's kind of baiting me in prayer, isn't it? It's giving me an expectation that I can't fulfill. That may be answered as a passage in Romans here in a moment. As we will see in Romans, the Spirit of God interprets your prayers to Jesus and to the Father.

And you don't know what to pray for as you ought. And I think we just need to face that right up front. We have all kinds of desires.

We want to see our relatives come to Christ. We have friends who have died of some horrible disease that we want to see delivered. And we go on and on and on with our wants in that regard.

But the fact is, things don't always work out the way that we want them to work out. And no amount of prayer will achieve that if it is not in the sense of God's sovereign control of the world. I'm sure that John the Baptizer was praying in prison, that he could get back out there where Jesus was preaching and see what was developing in terms of what he, as Jesus' cousin, had the expectation that he saw at the baptism of Jesus that he was actually the Messiah.

But that didn't happen. That didn't happen. We'll talk more about that.

Jesus said in Luke 22, said, not my will be done. I came to do your will. He says in Hebrews 10:7, I came to do your will, O Lord.

And not my will, but your will be done. Jesus imaged himself in submission to the Father's will. And I think here again, it is the sovereign will that's in view here.

The cross was an awesome thing for Jesus to bear. And he was meditating upon that in a very real way, just like the psalmist did about a lot of things. He said, you know, I, I'm, I'm stressed over this, but not my will, but yours be done.

I submit myself to the sovereignty of the decrees of God. So, text for reflection. Let's go on.

As I mentioned, it is not my will, but yours be done. And I came to do your will. Hebrews 10:7. It's Jesus' statement.

And Paul says something quite interesting in 2 Corinthians 12:8-9. I've given it to you here. Concerning this thing, I've assaulted the Lord three times, that it might depart from me. Something that was interfering with Paul's ability and maybe even freedom, but more than likely it was his ability to communicate the gospel.

He had, he said to me, my grace is sufficient for thee. What, what was this with Paul? Well, we don't really know. My thinking about this is, is that this takes place after he was stoned by the religious leaders and left for dead.

And after that, I think his relations in some other places indicate he had trouble with his eyes. He either had an eye disease or perhaps, you know, when people stone you, they don't throw stones at your feet. They throw them at your head.

And I wonder if Paul wasn't severely damaged in the stoning. And he wanted that to be alleviated. He wanted to be able to preach the gospel with all his previous power.

And yet that prayer was not answered. My grace is sufficient for thee, God says, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, Paul reflects, will I rather glory in my weaknesses than at the power of Christ my rest upon me.

Wherefore, I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distress, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. There's Paul dealing with unanswered prayer.

By the way, both Jesus and Paul, as I'll mention in the next slide, experienced unanswered prayer. Jesus said, not my will but yours be done when he was struggling in Gethsemane concerning the cross. But he knew what lay before him, and he submitted to the sovereign plan of God that even he himself was a part of in eternity past.

And Paul and had a good motive for the sake of the gospel; I'm asking that you will alleviate this problem for me. God said no. So, both of them experienced unanswered prayer.

We've all experienced unanswered prayer. None of us have gotten to the level of Jesus and Paul in the way that we live, the way that we serve God and obey God. And so don't think that unanswered prayer is God slamming you.

It's the way life is. For whatever reason, and you're not always told, you do not know. For whatever reason, God may not choose to give the answer to the prayer that you desire.

A non-answer, in a sense, is an answer. So, accepting God's sovereign will in the outcome of our prayers is our greatest expression of faith. I think I actually said that myself in the book that I mentioned to you.

Let me say that again. Accepting God's sovereign will in the outcome of our prayers is one of our greatest expressions of faith. The book of Joel, though, illustrates that.

Our lives need to be illustrated as well. Romans 8:26 and 27 is a relatively well-known text. When we get there, you'll recognize it immediately.

Romans 8:26 and 27. In a similar manner, the Spirit also helps our infirmity. For we know not how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered.

He that searches the minds, the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, what is the mind of God. Because he makes intercessions for the saints. Now, this is not in Greek.

It says according to the will of God. In a lot of versions, you'll see that in italics. In the older versions, there were formal translations.

But it's not there, but that's the sense. According to God, according to the will of God. And then it says in verse 28, that famous passage, we know that all things work together.

Verse 28, which is so famous that people memorize it, is actually a submission to the sovereignty of God in your life. So, Romans 8:26 and 27 tell us that the Spirit translates to God the sentiments of our prayers. And even then, they may not be answered.

And so you don't need a word about how you pray because God knows your mind and your heart. He knows your being. We can rest in that to some extent.

Sometimes, we're abused in life for one reason or another. Maybe sometimes we deserve it. But at the end of the day, our integrity toward God is what is going to be focused on by God in terms of his judgment of us.

Other texts, Matthew 7, 7 to 12. I'll just turn over here for a moment. Matthew 7:7 to 12.

You have the advantage of looking at it. Of course, I've looked at all these a number of times. But you have the advantage of looking at it ahead of time as you get ready for these lectures.

Looking through the notes and reading the text. If I was smarter, I would mark these to be facts. Matthew 7: 7 to 12.

And in praying, use repetition that is not vain as the Gentiles do. Now, that could be unpacked culturally, I suppose. Sometimes, I think that in church, we do a lot of vain repetition.

Also, vain requests that we just never seem to get away from. That's not bad, necessarily, because it's a burden, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

Be not, therefore, likened to them. For your father knows what things you need before you even ask him. After this manner, therefore, pray.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. And so here we have Jesus talking about how to pray. This is in the Sermon on the Mount and what we call the model prayer, which lays out an idea of prayer.

I guess I should have probably given you a chart on that, which I used when I preached that, but I didn't think to include it here. John 14 and 1 John 5, we've already talked about it in slide 2, slide 30. But James 1:5 to 8, I'd like to look at this for just a moment because I hear this one misused a lot.

I've heard all these texts misused because people don't want to accept context. They want a flat Bible that they think was written to them personally. We do not understand the fact that it was written to an audience, and we get the side benefit of that opposition.

In James 1 verses 5 to 8, you're familiar with these. James is one of the first books that I recommend that a new pastor preach. The reason is that James is very strong in the moral teachings, and it's very reflective of the Sermon on the Mount, which is very reflective of doing righteousness, which is another thing to discuss.

But look at this where he says, count it all joy in verse 2. My brothers, when you fall into various trials, the words trial and temptation are exactly the same Greek words. But you determine by context how you're going to translate that. The newer translations, I think, do a better job because they distinguish trials from temptation, particularly in this text.

Knowing that the proving of your faith works patience, that patience has its perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all liberally, and if breaketh not, it shall be

given him. Let him ask in faith, nothing in the wavering, for that he that wavers and doubts are like the waves of the sea, driven and tossed.

Let not that person think that they'll receive anything. So, what is this thing about you're in trials, deep trials, and you don't know what to do? And you remember this passage: if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all liberally.

Well, how does that happen? How does it happen? I really don't believe that James intended to tell us that prayer is kind of like a magic wand that will bring you information that will make your trials make sense to you. No, I don't think so. I think this is a prayer for what the context is about.

The context is about trials, and it goes on to talk about temptation. A trial is God can bring trials into our lives. Life brings trials into our lives.

A trial is a solicitation for character development. Trials make us who we are if we rise to the occasion. When mature people face a trial, they will begin to pray and talk to God, which is our constant pattern.

We pray constantly, Lord, help me when we face trials. And so, a trial brings out our level of maturity. If we face a trial and we get all angry and mad and bent out of shape, that shows our maturity isn't adequate.

But if the first thing that our first response to trials that come into our life, be it a flat tire, an accident, or cancer, is our rest in God's goodness and God's sovereignty, we begin to think about those kinds of things. So, if you lack wisdom, ask God who gives you. Well, the fact is that prayer here and the asking have to do with understanding how trials relate to life.

We all live with trials, some orchestrated by God directly, and some just part of living in a broken world. But we still have to respond with the same wisdom. The wisdom about trials is not something that comes to you out of the blue, but it is just what we've been talking about.

The wisdom comes from your bringing the trial into that transformed mind and asking yourself, what is God's purpose for me and this? Allow that biblical worldview and values to help you define and explain the trial that you're facing. You think about that. James 1 is not some secret little prayer to get information you don't have.

But it is a prayer once again to engage the information that you do have. God has literally given you the whole Bible. And in the Bible, we see people working with their trials.

What's the first thing you do when you face something? I'll guarantee you that 90% of you or more run to the Psalms. If you read long enough, you'll find the psalmist in a situation that has some analogy to your situation, and you can find comfort. Why? Because that's what the psalmist was doing, was dealing with life and thinking out loud, and it got recorded, and it's part of scripture.

Some propositions about prayer. At this point, I need to turn you to the notes that I've given you on prayer. They're called Prayer and God's Will, right at the top of the notes.

I've given you a bibliography here, a reference to some issues by a fellow named Terrence Thiessen, who deals extensively with prayer. I'm not going to talk about that right now. But anyway, I'm going to go to point B, propositions about prayer.

Now, you think through these. I'm going to go through them quickly. But you think through these because these will bring wisdom to you.

First of all, prayer is subject to God's will. Every prayer that we pray is subject to God's will, either his moral will or his sovereign will. So when we lay our prayers before God, we do have to leave them there.

Because we don't always have the understanding to be able to know exactly what they mean with the plan of God. All prayers, no matter what they are, are subject to God's will. Our requests must conform to God's moral will.

You don't pray about whether you should divorce your wife and marry that other woman that you like. You don't pray about whether you should shoot that person that you're mad at. You don't pray about that.

Why? Because you know the moral will of God forbids it. But the fact is that you do have to recognize that our requests must conform to God's moral will and its subject, and it's subjected to God's sovereign will. So, prayer is subject to God's will always.

Furthermore, secondly, prayer is an expectation to fulfill God's will. We're commanded to pray. Lord's Prayer does that itself.

Prayer is an aspect of being thankful. If you look at the salutations of Paul's epistle, in all things, give thanks. Thankfulness is one of the key terms that dominates Paul's salutations, being thankful.

And he prays for his children, the ones that he's mentoring, particularly in Asia Minor, that they might be thankful. Thankfulness is such an important part of life, isn't it? I'm not nearly thankful enough. I'm thankful for the life that God has given us and for the opportunities of life.

And everybody has their own challenges. Some people live with pain and health problems their entire life. That's something that's hard to be thankful for.

But many will say and will tell you that they're thankful for the fact that that kept them close to God. I know a person who had a very serious accident, a brain, or a major brain injury. Wonder he didn't die.

He hit black ice in the winter, flipped his car, and had one of the most serious swollen brain injuries the doctors had seen. Well, he lived. He was handicapped the rest of his life in many ways.

But the one change that happened to this person was that all of a sudden he engaged his belief in Jesus. In fact, he was such an ambassador for Christ to everybody. He was always talking about God and recognizing God's sovereign will and those kinds of things more than he ever did before the accident.

Physical ailments bring us to God. If you get a bad case of the flu, what do you do? Oh, Lord, help me. We've all been there, haven't we? Our temporary illness.

Prayer is an aspect of being thankful. Prayer is an expectation to fulfill God's will and fulfilling God's will is having a thankful spirit. Romans 8:26 and 27, which we've already read, state that it is our duty to pray.

It is a spiritual discipline. It is duty. It is our obligation to pray.

And we say, well, I don't know what to pray for. Pray anyway. Just be honest with God.

You can talk to God like you don't talk to anyone else. It is the Spirit's duty to mediate your prayers. As one writer said, thus, the Holy Spirit is the arbiter, director, and interpreter of our desires.

Accordingly, God may answer our petitions in his own way. In his own way, he may give us the wisdom to see that in spite of the difficulties and the pain and the hurt, the damage that could come from an incident. And yet, at the same time, we can say, I'm better off knowing the Lord and dealing with this than I was without it.

The next bullet point under this prayer is an expectation to fulfill God's will. Answers to prayer are grounded in God's graciousness and faithfulness to his promises, not in our rights. We don't come to God demanding our rights.

We come to God with a submissive spirit. And I pray a great deal. Lord, you know me better than I know myself.

You know my failings. You know what few strengths I have. You know that I seek diligently to have integrity in my soul between us in spite of my actions.

Sometimes, you can't fool God, so don't try. Be open and honest with the Lord. We should be open and honest with our closest friends and family, but it's a hard thing to do sometimes, isn't it? Number three, prayer is a mature response to life's circumstances.

That is the biblical worldview part. We pray because we are mature. Remember I mentioned to you my friend in that car accident? He's trapped, he smells gas, he can't get out of the car, and his eyeball is actually lying on his cheek.

It got popped out. The only verse that came to his mind, and all things give thanks. Wait a minute, wait a minute.

Is that what I want to pray right now? But he was conditioned by his own maturity to love God in the midst of a horrible accident. Prayer has no boundaries. We should pray for whatever we're burdened about.

You don't have to figure out what to pray for to pray. You go ahead and pray. If you're praying wrong or whatever, God takes care of that.

It's in the spirit center session for you. The spirit says, oh Lord, forgive me. You know, he's kind of dumb about it.

You say, well, it may not be quite that silly, but the fact is, is that prayer doesn't have boundaries. You take to God the honest feelings of your soul. Cry out to him, read the Psalms, read the Psalms, read the Psalms, and you'll see the Psalmist doing it over and over again.

Prayer's fulfillment is bounded by God's sovereign will. It's also bounded by his moral will. Don't pray for something that you know isn't right.

That's kind of a fraud to God. Our prayers are always bound. Just like our nature is bound, our will is bound by our nature.

Our prayers are bounded by God's moral and sovereign will. And yet, there are no boundaries when we're not in that particular domain. Of course, we're always in the sovereign domain, so there's a boundary that's always there.

But don't worry about what you're praying about. Just pray and say to the Lord, Lord, I don't know how to pray. I don't know what to ask for here, but you know my mind.

You know what I'm thinking about, and you know my desires. The bullet point under this is not bound; prayer's fulfillment is bounded by sovereignty and the moral will. First of all, God has ordained that prayer affects the outcome of events in his world, although prayer does not change or direct the minded will of God.

You see, prayer is a part of God's sovereign will because he's commanded us to pray. That is an expectation. That's what we are supposed to do.

And so, he's ordained prayer as a part of the process. Your prayers may be part of what he has ordained to bring something to pass. Now, we don't understand all that, but that is what is asserted.

In the next bullet, here's another quote. We must guard against equating Christian belief with the efficacy of prayer and magic. People treat prayer like it's some kind of a magic thing.

If I just pray right, God will do it. Magic attempts to control or manipulate the divine will in order to induce it to grant one's wishes, especially through the use of techniques such as charms, spells, and rituals or ceremonies. That's what magic does.

Sometimes, Christians do that. We have something we don't know how to deal with, so we'll have a 24-hour prayer meeting just to show how serious we are. Well, that's okay.

You can do that, but that's not going to manipulate God. It's the authenticity of our prayer and his sovereign will that's going to deal with that. Christian prayer involves a struggle of wills in which the prayer attempts to persuade God, all the time seeing prayer as a divinely given means whereby the prayer can participate in God's agenda.

Your praying participates in God's agenda in ways you don't even know. So, no matter what you think the outcome of your prayer is, forget that. Pray anyway.

Prayer is to be a staple of life. The gospel prayer promises are framed by in Christ's name, in my name, and they're framed by context, too, which is a variation on tapping into God's will. Just snuggle up close to Christ in your prayers and plead that the Holy Spirit will translate those prayers to the Father.

The Bible does the image of the Trinity in certain ways, doesn't it? Father in the Bible, as God, is like a father in a family in a sense, kind of the leader of the whole in an appropriate manner, at least at the human level. So, the fact is that the gospel prayer promises are framed by Christ's name. You know, there were those who imitated the Christians in the early centuries.

They saw how Christianity was so effective, and they started little calling things as of their own, and they would even use these formulas, we call them, to try and get what they saw the Christians doing as far as their success was concerned, not as far as their beliefs were concerned. So, prayer promises in Christ's name is a variation of tapping into God's will. And when you say in Christ's name, you have left that prayer with God to deal with it as he sees fit, not your manipulation.

Here's another one, number six, on the second page. Prayer is a form of worship. It verbalizes our response to God's self-disclosure.

I should write here and mention to you that you should look at Exodus chapter 34. Exodus 34, where you have Moses, 32 to 34, deals with the post log of God giving the second time around Israel an opportunity. And you can read that narrative.

It's one of the greatest narratives, I think, in the Old Testament. They're all great. I particularly like this one.

And I have a sermon that I preach on worship, which is Exodus. And you can go back at this. You'd have to read 32 to 34 together.

But anyway, and so he goes in 34 and tells him to the two tables of stone, like the ones that he broke. When he broke those, that wasn't just out of anger. The stones were a contract.

In the ancient world, contracts were written on clay stones. And when that broke, the contract's broken. He took the tent of meeting and took it outside the camp.

All that's symbolic is that God has broken the contract with you. You are on your own. Very symbolic in this narrative.

So, he hewed the two tables of stone. Jehovah had commanded him to take the tables of stone. And the Lord descended in the cloud here on Mount Sinai and stood with him there and proclaimed the name of the Lord.

The Lord. See, Lord is repeated here—notice verse six.

And the Lord or Jehovah passed by before him and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord. Now, if you know anything about language, this is what we call an appositional construction. The reason the Lord is repeated twice is because the second Lord is going to unpack the first Lord.

And in verse 6, down to about verse 7, we have a fascinating expose of God, who God is and how God acts. I wish I could go through this. This would take an hour.

But the nouns in the first part of this, which talk about God's attributes, become verbs. In the second part, it's interesting how the Hebrew takes this and brings it together. And so here we have a call to prayer.

Moses illustrates that prayer is a form of worship. And in verse 9, it says he bowed to the ground and worshiped. This is my text that I preach on.

What is worship? Worship is a recognition of who God is, how God acts, and how we respond. There is a piece of bibliography there as well. Seventh, prayer is monitored by Jesus.

Study the Lord's prayer. Look at it closely. Outline it.

Notice how it proceeds from speaking to God. God comes first in your prayers and we come last. Notice how that's framed.

I listen to prayers in church a lot, and they never follow the pattern of the Lord's prayer. They always jump to my name is Jimmy, and I'll take what you gimme. There were always the gimme, gimme, gimme in prayers.

We seldom address God as God. And yet, that's how Jesus taught his disciples to pray. Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

And then his will, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And then he gets around to us, give us this day our sustenance. Prayer is monitored by Jesus.

There's a lot there, and there are some good books on it, too, if you'll just look for them. Look for real books. I would never let my students use preacher's commentaries in papers.

Preachers do a great job, but they're secondary or tertiary sources. You need a more primary source. You need a good commentary that's telling you and is competent to tell you what that text actually says.

From there, you can move on. And in prayer is monitored by the apostles. We have plenty of this in the epistolary literature and in every part of the Bible and the book of Revelation.

I've included in your notes an article that I wrote. A book called *The Bible in Prayer* was published. And I'm not sure how it happened, but I got the lead article in that book called *Giving*.

The book is called *Giving Ourselves to Prayer*. That's on page two. My article is The Bible in Prayer, and that article is included in your notes. You can read it in order to get a lot more information.

In chapter 10 of my Decision Making God's Way book that I mentioned to you before, you can get this from Lagos. It's available in English or Spanish. I'm going to be writing an expanded version of this as when these lectures are finished.

I'm going to start that work, and you will watch for that in the next couple of years. They take me that long to get it out there. I have a tendency to do too much before I start getting into what I'm doing.

So, the Bible is in prayer, prayer, and God's will. Prayer is not magic. Prayer is not a way to manipulate God.

Prayer is a submission to God. Prayer is for us to come to God because in his presence, we have a better tendency to cleanse ourselves and confess to him our needs and plead that he'll help us to take that transformed worldview and value system that he's blessed us with and apply that to life in a way that will go on. So, why don't we just pray this particular time?

I've explained to you before how we open and close, but it would be appropriate to stop and pray on this occasion. Holy Father, we bow before you. We recognize that we're so feeble.

We believe, and yet we pray to help our unbelief. We don't know how to pray as we ought, and yet you've commanded that we pray, and you have even done something so special as to include our burdens and our prayers in the fulfillment of your decreed will. We ask that we might be servants to you in prayer.

We confess that prayer is not a magical thing that solves our problems; it addresses our self-needs, but that it is a form of worship and submission to you, and we pray that we might model that in our lives and in our churches. In Jesus name, Amen. Have a good day.