

Prayer – John 17: 1-11

There is a manual for almost every thing in life.

From internet: manual: 981 millions, manual for life: 122 millions, manual for church: 81.2 m, for cleaning: 96.8 m, for sleeping: 32.5 m, eating: 45.9 m, education: 355 m, preaching: 2.77 m, for baby: 147 m, for prayer: 16.8 m,

SO, what are the purpose of manual ? learning ... something new...

How do we learn to pray ? by manual or by example ?

From a cultural perspective, prayer is a socially meaningful act of communication directed to divine power to be in control of the life situation of the one praying and performed for the purpose of getting results. The message of the prayer reveals how the persons praying perceive themselves and God. This is captured in a traditional saying: how and what we pray reveal what we believe about the one to whom we pray.

If we were asked to repeat the Lord's Prayer, we would say, "Our Father which art in heaven," for this is universally called The Lord's Prayer. Actually it is not the Lord's Prayer at all, it is the disciples' prayer. It is the prayer the Lord gave us to pray. But the true Lord's Prayer is in John 17. This is often called the "High Priestly Prayer" of Jesus.

In this prayer, we get to sacred conversation between Jesus and his Father. Jesus deliberately prayed this prayer aloud in the presence of his disciples because he wanted them to hear it. That is the basic relationships that he expresses in this prayer between him and the Father and the relationships that obtain between Jesus and us. There is a very real sense in which every believer in Jesus Christ can pray this prayer! This prayer was designed to teach us how to pray with the sense of wonder.

One of the things that Jesus says here is he distinguishes between "the world" and his own followers. He's praying for believers, not for the rest of the world.

Our Lord saw very clearly into the nature of life as it is, the nature of reality. He realizes that Christians, believers, are facing a hostile world. Christians now have struggled with this problem of "the world" in the twenty centuries and wondered what this means.

There are some who have made the mistake of thinking it is the world of nature and that Christians ought not to have anything to do with enjoyment of natural beauty, the glories of the mountains, and the sea, and the world of natural life. This is certainly not true.

Others have wondered if it means the world of natural relationships, our family life, the joys of family living, of friends, of home, of mothers and fathers and children and their relationship together. No, this is not "the world" of which our Lord warns.

The world, in the evil sense, in which this word is used here, is the basic assumptions that men and women can live without God.

In the midst of our struggling with the World, the good news of this prayer is that we don't face the world alone. Jesus prays for us and asks the Father to keep us in his Holy Father's name.

For us how do we pray?

Pray with the right motivation. Selfish motives will not be blessed by God. "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures" (James 4:3).

Pray with a spirit of forgiveness toward others (Mark 11:25). A spirit of bitterness, anger, revenge or hatred toward others will prevent our hearts from praying in total submission to God. Just as we are told not to give offerings to God while there is conflict between ourselves and another Christian (Matthew 5:23-24), in the same way God does not want the offering of our prayers until we have reconciled with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Pray with thanksgiving (Colossians 4:2; Philippians 4:6-7). We can always find something to be thankful for, no matter how burdened we are by our wants or needs.

Pray with persistence (Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17). We should persevere in prayer and not quit because we have not received an immediate answer. Part of praying in God's will is believing that, whether His answer is "yes," "no," or "wait," we accept His judgment, submit to His will, and continue to pray.

Rely on the Spirit of God in prayer. This is a wonderful truth: "We do not know. Then we can have confidence that the Holy Spirit will accomplish His work in presenting our prayers to the Father according to His perfect will and timing, and we can rest in the knowledge that He is working all things together for our good (Romans 8:28).

Prayer is an act of faith and we need to practice it in order to experience the wonder of prayer.