

My Life Lesson

With Father's Day passing and my dad's birthday approaching I began to remember some of the things my dad has said to me. (Dad entered his rest in May of 2007). One of the Biblical truths that dad shared with me was "learn to pray by praying Scripture!" I have taken that to heart and while reading through the Bible I have highlighted ALL the Scriptural prayers. What I have discovered was that many of my prayers were not Biblical.



Let me give you some examples of prayers that are less than Biblical. I can remember often praying, "Lord be **WITH** Uncle Dave in his hour of need". In my reading of Scripture, I have found only a single prayer that asks God to be **WITH** anyone. It's when Boaz calls to his workers with "The Lord be **WITH** you." Ruth 2:4 (ESV) Even that probably is not a prayer but a greeting. I have taken note in my reading of the Bible of 57 other times that **GOD IS WITH** someone already. As a matter of fact, Jesus' name in Matthew 1 is Immanuel—**God WITH us**. The better way to pray for "Uncle Dave" is "heal," "teach," "guide," or even "give him an abundant entrance into your kingdom". Remember Jesus promised us "**HE IS WITH US** ALWAYS, TO THE END OF THE AGE." Matthew 28:20 (ESV)

Another example of my misled prayer is: "Lord save Aunt Hilda". Again in my limited research there is only one time that anyone prays for the unsaved. Romans 10:1 (ESV) "Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them (Israelites) is that they may be saved." So maybe on occasion you can pray a similar prayer. Far more often the prayers in the Bible are directed at believers concerning the salvation of people. Let me give you a number of examples:

Matthew 9: 37-38 (ESV) "...The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, therefore **pray earnestly** to the Lord of the harvest to **send out** laborers into his harvest." (Also Luke 10:2) POINT: Pray the Lord would send workers to share the Gospel.

Ephesians 6:18-20 (ESV) "...**praying at all times** in the Spirit with **all prayer and supplication**...making supplication for all the saints, and also for me that words may be given to me **in opening my mouth boldly** to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, ... that I may declare it **boldly**, as I ought to speak." POINT: Pray that we could speak the Gospel boldly.

Colossians 4:2-4 (ESV) "Continue **steadfastly in prayer** ... **pray also for us**, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ...that I may **make it clear**, which is how I ought to speak." POINT: Pray for clarity in sharing the Gospel.

Philemon 6 (NIV) "I **pray** that you may be **active in sharing your faith**, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ." POINT: Pray that believers would actively share their faith—then they will understand the good things they have in Christ.

Thanks Dad for the life lesson. You set me on a course of true Biblical prayer!

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