

TALKING TO GOD

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INTRODUCTION

- A. Interpersonal relationship *vs.* mystical flight of the soul to God
 - 1. Transcendental meditation
 - 2. Approaching God through a priest or other intermediary
 - 3. Symbolic ritual (Lord's Supper)
- B. Important examples of biblical prayers
 - 1. Dedication of the temple: 1 Kings **8:23-53** = 2 Chronicles **6:14-42**
 - 2. Model Prayer: Matthew **6:9-13**
 - 3. High Priestly Prayer: John **17:1-26**
 - 4. Disciples' Prayer: Acts **4:24-30**
- C. Jesus prayed all night before he chose the Twelve; perhaps some meditation was included during that time: Luke **6:12**

I. USING ALL THE PRAYER ELEMENTS (as wide a range of expressions as talking has)

- A. Talking normally weaves all kinds of things together and so does Jesus in John **17**.
 - 1. Rehearsed what happened: John **17:6, 12, 25**
 - 2. Stated things at the time: John **17:7**
 - 3. Quoted scripture: Acts **4:25-26**
- B. Request (supplication on behalf of another person): Acts **4:29**
- C. Praise (adoration): Acts **4:24**
- D. Thanksgiving: Luke **10:21** (cp. acknowledging in Acts **4:24**)
- E. Confession: Luke **18:13**
- F. Promise

II. CORRECTING WEAK PRAYER PATTERNS

TALKING can correct praying . . .

- A. Infrequently
- B. In vague generalities

- C. Only in group situations
- D. Really fast
- E. In vain repetition (**Matthew 6:7**)
- F. Only memorized, canned, or read prayers
- G. In the wrong directions (to other people) (for show)
- H. In archaic English
- I. With an artificial voice and intonation

III. DEVELOPING A STRONGER PRAYER LIFE

- A. Talking (public and private); not worrying about . . .

1. having all the prayer elements in each prayer
2. an outline (Matters can be interwoven: **1 Kings 8:23-26.**)
3. being eloquent (It does not have to be an oratorical masterpiece.)
4. using Old English
5. being “fluent” (no pauses) even in public prayer
6. making it long

- B. Changing some daydreaming into prayer

Freshening by changing some of the postures you use:

- C. Praying with our eyes open (Closing the eyes is probably our way of “going into the private room.”)

Examples:

Matthew 14:19	(feeding of the 5,000)
Mark 7:34	(healing the deaf-mute)
John 17:1	(Jesus’ high priestly prayer)
John 11:41-42	(resurrection of Lazarus)
Acts 7:55	(Stephen’s martyrdom)

There is not much in scripture about praying with the eyes shut.

- D. Praying out loud

1 Corinthians 14:28

There is not much about silent prayer in scripture.

Ancients read out loud; cp. Ethiopian eunuch in **Acts 8:30**.

- E. Kneeling (**1 Kings 8:22, 54; Acts 20:36**). Other postures in scripture are standing (**1 Kings 8:20**) and prostrating oneself (**Matthew 26:39**).
- F. Lifting up the hands.
- G. Praying specifically. Lengthens prayer and makes it more real.

H. Praying for something more than once

Matthew **26:39, 42, 44** (Gethsemane; three times)
1 Corinthians **12:8** (Paul's thorn in the flesh; three times)

Some other mechanics

- I. Establishing a specific times to pray: Acts **3:1** (an hour of prayer)
- J. Noting down things to pray about
- K. Keeping a prayer journal
- L. Praying with someone.

CONCLUSION

- A. Talking removes artificial things from our prayers (public and private).
- B. Talking makes prayer a more fulfilling experience because prayer is then done in conformity to what we really are: persons.

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