

1. Differentiate between individual and collective prayer.

Individual prayer is private and personal (Matthew 6:5-6), so it may include unutterable groanings (Romans 8:26), and confessions not intended for a wide audience (1st John 1:9).

Public prayer is a different matter (Acts 2:42; 12:5), with the expectation that others will say, "Amen" (1st Corinthians 14:15-17).

Considering these differences, it is preferable to word group prayers with collective pronouns: "we," "us," and "our" instead of "I," "me," and "mine" (2nd Chronicles 20:5-12).

2. What posture should be assumed when leading prayer?

Standing is appropriate (2nd Chronicles 20:5; Mark 11:25). Kneeling is, too (1st Kings 8:54; Luke 22:41; Acts 20:36; 9:40; 21:5). Sitting is not wrong (2nd Samuel 7:18) and neither is lying face down (Mark 14:35). Lifting hands has its place, too (1st Timothy 2:8). The occasion ought to be considered.

3. Who should prayer be addressed to and through whom must we pray?

Prayer should always be to the Father in Jesus' name (Ephesians 5:20; Colossians 3:17; cf. Romans 1:8; 7:25). Christ is our High Priest (Hebrews 3:1), our Advocate (1st John 2:1), and our Mediator (1st Timothy 2:5) with God, so it stands to reason that we pray not to Him, but through Him.

The specific order for wording this is unimportant.

4. What names are appropriate to call the Father?

There are a number of proper ways to refer to God the Father. Using some that are out of the ordinary might freshen up the approach.

"Abba" (Romans 8:15).

"Most High God" (Genesis 14:20).

"The Lord our Maker" (Psalm 95:6).

"I AM" (Exodus 3:14).

"The God of heaven" (Psalm 136:26).

"God of our Salvation" (1st Chronicles 16:35).

"The God of my life" (Psalm 42:8).

"The God of my strength" (Psalm 43:2).

"The God of glory" (Psalm 29:3).

"Lord God of truth" (Psalm 31:5).

5. What names are appropriate to call the Son?

Jesus Christ has many scriptural epithets which could be employed to keep prayers from getting dull.

"Immanuel" (Matthew 1:23).

"The Blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords" (1st Timothy 6:15).

"The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

"The Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Revelation 5:5).

"The only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14).

"The Prince of life" (Acts 3:15).

"Shiloh" (Genesis 49:10).

"Physician" (Matthew 9:12).

"The Dayspring from on high" (Luke 1:78).

"The Root and Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star" (Revelation 22:16).

"The Just One" (Acts 7:52).

6. Is prayer a teaching opportunity or should that wait until the sermon?

It certainly could be an occasion to teach (1st Corinthians 14:15-19) and Jesus acknowledged this (John 11:41-42), but that is not necessarily its primary purpose.

7. *"When you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words" (Matthew 6:7).*

We don't need to say "Lord " or "Father" at the beginning of every sentence. More than once is acceptable, maybe even at the beginning of each paragraph, but not every sentence, and certainly not multiple times per sentence.

Phrases like "Guide, guard, and direct us" are not bad, but we do not want to say them so often that, as soon as we approach the microphone, members begin wondering if we will say it this time.

We don't need verbal waste, such as, "like," "just," "um," or even "you know."

8. What are the basic components of prayer as Jesus demonstrated for His disciples?

- 1) Exaltation (Matthew 6:9),
- 2) Submission (10),
- 3) Material requests (11), and
- 4) Spiritual requests (12).

9. Explain the distinction between *"supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks."*

"Supplications" are requests, even pleadings, "prayers" refers to communicating with God in general, "intercessions" means speaking with God on behalf of others, and "giving of thanks" speaks, obviously, of gratitude expressed (1st Timothy 2:1).

10. Is God able to fulfill requests? Is He obligated to do so?

Yes, we must ask in full faith, without doubting, that God can grant what we ask (Mark 11:24; James 1:5-8), but, no, He is not beholden to us. He may decline our requests if they are selfish (James 4:3), or if they are not in our best interest (2nd Corinthians 12:7-10), or if a higher purpose would be served (Matthew 26:39, 42; James 4:15). So, we must ask according to His will (1st John 5:14-15).

11. Whose prayers does the Lord hear?

He listens to the righteous (James 5:16-17; 1st Peter 3:12; 1st John 3:21-22; John 15:7).

12. Is there anything wrong with a scripted prayer written out in advance?

This is fine for a novice to get used to what he's doing, provided the words are his own and that they are sincere. However, it should not be a crutch for long because it will sound like reading and become a distraction to others.

13. How is a closing prayer different than an opening prayer?

- 1) If prayer request cards have been turned in, it is important to announce them, and pray accordingly.
- 2) The exhortation has been preached, so the contents of the message can be applied and prayed about.
- 3) The earlier announced prayer requests might be prayed for again, but that is not altogether necessary. It is more relevant at this juncture to pray for God to keep us in His grace until we gather again.

14. Be prepared to practice a public prayer.