

## “LOOK TO JESUS AND PRAY”

by Lee Moses

The above line is often sung in many congregations of the Lord's body. When Christians sing in worship, they are teaching one another (Colossians 3:16); therefore, when they sing this line, they are teaching one another to “look to Jesus and pray.” Sometimes there can be a tendency to gloss over words and phrases sung without considering the true import of their meaning (contrast with 1 Corinthians 14:15); and this particular line is one that may not be thoroughly considered as often as it should.

But what does it mean to “look to Jesus and pray”? I never had the opportunity to meet Emory S. Peck, the writer of “Sing and Be Happy,” and thus am not able to comment on what his intentions were in writing it. If his intended meaning was, “Look to Jesus and direct your prayer toward Him,” then his intended meaning was unscriptural. Jesus instructed His apostles, “And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you” (John 16:23). Once Christ had ascended to the Father, requests which formerly might have been made directly of Christ were now to be prayed to the Father.

While prayers are to be directed toward the Father, this by no means implies that Jesus plays an insignificant or nonexistent role in prayer. He serves an indispensable role in prayer and deserves a place in the mind of every person who offers prayer. Thus, there is a very real sense in which Christians should “look to Jesus and pray.”

### Look to Jesus' Authority . . .

While Jesus instructed that prayer was to be directed to the Father, He also mandated that prayer was to be offered “in my name.” When something is done “in Jesus' name,” it is done by His authority (compare with Acts 4:7). Everything that a Christian does is to be done by the authority of Jesus (Colossians 3:17). It is by Jesus that each man and woman is going to be judged (2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:1). And the words of Jesus, as delivered by Him and His inspired ambassadors on earth (the apostles), will be the standard of judgment (John 12:48; Romans 2:16). Therefore, one must conduct his life, and his prayer, according to Jesus' teachings. Otherwise, it may be said of the one praying, “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts” (James 4:3).

When we pray, we need to look to Jesus' authority. And when we do so, when can realize the great power that is behind every word we offer to the Father. Jesus confessed, “All power (“authority,” American Standard Version) is given unto me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18, emphasis added). What an honor it is to be able to conclude a prayer with “In Jesus' name. Amen”!

### Look to Jesus' Humanity . . .

Although Jesus possesses all Divine authority, He came to earth as a man (John 1:14; Galatians 4:4; Philippians 2:6-7). As such He experienced heartbreak, joy, physical pain, and death. He even experienced temptation to sin (Luke 4:1-13). But as He ascended into heaven to receive His kingdom, He also received His High Priesthood. Just as priests under the Old Testament could be sympathetic to the people because of their humanity (Hebrews 5:2), Jesus is sympathetic to the wants, needs, and troubles of each of His followers – because He experienced such things.

*“Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted” (Hebrews 2:17,18).*

*“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16).*

Upon considering Jesus' sojourn on earth, one sees a great example of prayer. Jesus responded to adversity with prayer (Matthew 26:37-44; Luke 22:32; 23:34); he responded to blessings with prayer (Luke 10:21; Matthew 26:27). He prayed in public (John 11:41-42), He prayed with His friends (Luke 9:18), and He prayed in private (Matthew 14:23). He prayed at times when crucial decisions were to be made (Luke 6:12,13). Others sought to emulate His manner of prayer (Luke 11:1), as should we. In His humanity, He taught us how we should pray through all the experiences of our humanity.

### Look to Jesus' Access . . .

It is to God the Father that the Christian brings his petitions. But who is at the right hand of the Father? “It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Romans 8:34). Christ is present where He is always able to plead the Christian's cause to the Father. What a joy to know that “if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous”! (1 John 2:1). The patriarch Job in his sufferings pleaded for a Mediator between him and God (Job 9:32,33), a plea realized in the Person of Jesus Christ: “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5). There is no one else by whom one can approach God.

The purpose the Old Testament priests served was as the means to approach God. But now through Christ's High Priesthood, all Christians are priests; “an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5). It is through Christ's shed blood that one has access to the Father (Ephesians 2:13); blood which is contacted as one is Scripturally baptized (Romans 6:3), and blood continually applied as one continually abides in Christ's teachings (1 John 1:7). Each Christian indeed has reason for immeasurable gratitude to Jesus, “In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him” (Ephesians 3:12).

...And Pray!

Jesus was often to be found praying immediately before He received tremendous spiritual blessings (Luke 3:21; 9:28-29). Unfortunately, too many Christians fail to seize the spiritual blessings which are theirs for the taking. They dutifully seek to fulfill their responsibilities to the Lord and His church, and rightfully so. They eagerly anticipate their reward in heaven, but fail to receive rewards available while on earth. Prayer is not merely Christian duty; it is a tremendous Christian privilege.

Jesus said, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matthew 7:7). But before the Christian is going to be given these blessings, before he is going to find them, before they are going to be opened unto him; he first needs to ask, seek, and knock. Just as Jesus serves to provide access and Advocacy to the Father, the Father Himself desires to answer the prayers of His children (7:9-11). As the Christian looks to Jesus' authority, humanity, and access, let him not forget to pray.

### Conclusion

Prayer must be offered according to the commandment of Christ, and as such is not to be directed to Him. However, we must never diminish the crucial role that our Savior serves in prayer. As we look to Jesus' authority, we can know that our prayers are backed by “all power in heaven and on earth.” In Jesus' humanity, we can find a perfect ideal worthy of emulation, and yet a sympathetic ear to our imperfections. By Jesus' access, we can have our prayers rise up before the Father as an offering pleasing to Him. Let us look to Jesus' authority, humanity, and access . . . and pray!

# NEWS AND NOTES

“I was sick, and ye visited me...” (Matthew 25:36)

**Remember in Prayer:**

Miles Dodson has been hospitalized in Memphis last week.

Jerry Dodson had eye surgery last week.

Sharon Wallace continues to recover at home from her surgery.

Linda Baker is improving and out of quarantine now at Ridgecrest, Room 405.

Marshall Lands is continuing to recover at home.

Myra Preston also remains at home recovering and undergoing therapy.

*Please be sure to remember those of our sick with cards and prayers and other acts of kindness. Check the bulletin boards for updates on the Prayer List. Let us know of any updates as well, please.*

**In Other News:**

Ukraine Missions is in need of shaving cream, hairbrushes, band-aids and clothing. There are buckets in the foyer for those items.

**Upcoming Events:**

The monthly Men’s breakfast is scheduled for Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 A.M.

Ladies’ Night Out will be held on Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>. More details will be announced later.

Graduates’ Supper will be after Sunday night services on May 30<sup>th</sup>. If you are a high school or college graduate, please give a picture and information to Martha Kee.

The wedding of Sierra Bright and Samuel Light will be Saturday, May 22 at 4:00 p.m. at Cherry Farm Event Barn in Poughkeepsie, AR, with reception to follow. RSVP to 501-201-1113 or 870-679-0837 with number of guests attending. The invitation is on the bulletin board by the office.

Our Vacation Bible School with the theme of *The Gospel Railroad* is scheduled for June 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>.

**Please add to your May Calendars:**

Patricia Wood’s birthday is May 15<sup>th</sup>.  
Carlos and Patricia Wood’s anniversary is May 21.

**Those Privileged To Serve  
May, 2021**

**NUMBERS FOR THE WEEK  
Week Of  
April 25, 2021**

**SUNDAY MORNING**  
Song Leader: Scottie Blanchard  
Opening Prayer: Logan Snyder  
Closing Prayer: Reginald Read  
Bible Reading: Stan Honeycutt  
Preacher: Terry Joe Kee

**SUNDAY EVENING**  
Song Leader: Kevin Roush  
Opening Prayer: David Dye  
Closing Prayer: Ryan Manley  
Preacher: Terry Joe Kee

**LORD’S TABLE**  
Presiding: Stacy Eddleman  
Jeff Presley Mike Felts  
Jimmy Powell Logan Snyder  
Mitch Mosley Gerald George

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT  
May 5, 2021**  
Song Leader: *Singing Night*  
Opening Prayer: Terry Joe Kee  
Closing Prayer: Scott Pratt

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
Randy Oden

**DEVOTIONAL SPEAKER  
May 5, 2021**  
Dan Nichols

Sunday Bible Study 95  
Sunday AM Worship 116  
Sunday PM Worship 84  
Wednesday Bible Study 84  
Contribution \$6121

**“Speak not in the ears  
of a fool; for he will  
despise the wisdom of  
thy words.”**

**Proverbs 23:9**

# The Friend of Truth



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## KeeNotes

### A “Thus Saith The Lord” Is Needed

One of the greatest errors being perpetuated today is that one may do anything not expressly forbidden. The truth of the matter is that one must have a “thus saith the Lord” for what he does in religion. Do you remember when King Saul decided to offer the sacrifice because he thought Samuel would not arrive in time? The issue is not whether Samuel will arrive in time to make the offering – the issue is that King Saul is not qualified to make the sacrifice. When Samuel arrived, he said to Saul, “Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Samuel 15:22). Sacrifice without obedience is worthless!

Do you also remember the reason Nadab and Abihu were killed by God? The scripture says, “And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took each of them his censer, and put fire therein, and laid incense thereon, and offered strange fire before Jehovah, which he had not commanded them” (Leviticus 10:1-2). It is an “un-get-aroundable” point that Nadab and Abihu offered “strange fire” unto God. It was “strange” because it was fire that “he had not commanded them.”

The silence of the Scripture is to be respected, but one must understand that silence does not authorize. The question is not “Where does the Scripture forbid an action?” but rather “Where does the Scripture authorize an action?”

- Author Unknown

**SHEPHERDS**  
Dan Nichols  
Randy Oden  
**DEACONS**  
Scottie Blanchard  
Jerry Dodson  
Stacy Eddleman  
Mike Felts  
Jason Garland  
Scott Pratt  
Kevin Roush  
Mark Wooten

**MISSIONARIES**  
Guyana, South America  
Samrit Kammanee  
Micah Robertson, Montana  
Warren, PA

**SUNDAY SERVICES**  
Classes 9:00 a.m.  
Worship 10:00 a.m.  
5:00 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY**  
Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

**What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

**Hear** the Word of God  
*Romans 10:17*  
**Believe** the Word of God  
*John 8:24*  
**Repent** of your sins  
*Luke 13:3*  
**Confess** your faith in Jesus as the Son of God  
*Romans 10:9,10*  
**Be Baptized** for the remission of your sins  
*Acts 2:38*  
**Live faithfully**  
*Revelation 2:10*  
*“Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.” (John 4:35)*

**Each One Invite One in Twenty-One**