

# EVERLASTING LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

## AN AID TO PRAYER

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The well-known acrostic *ACTS* has been used by Christians as a help to prayer. Each letter in the acrostic represents an element in prayer that a believer may include when praying.

*A* represents *adoration* for God, *C* stands for *confession* of sin, *T* is for *thanksgiving*, and *S* represents *supplication*. These elements of prayer are not to be construed as exhausting the components of prayer. Scripture provides additional matters that should be a part of a believer's prayers, e.g., intercession, prayers for fellow Christians, the coming of God's kingdom, salvation of the lost, physical needs, etc.

An elaboration of the elements of prayer represented by the acrostic will help our understanding of them.

*Adoration* of our God is a vital prayer component. The believer extols God for what He has revealed Himself to be in Scripture. The believer, for example, can praise God for His character, sovereignty, greatness, kindness, love, power, etc. As one becomes more familiar with Him through reading and meditating on Scripture then one's ability to express adoration is enlarged.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the widely acclaimed British pastor of the 1800s, was noted, along with his great preaching, for his wonderful public prayers.

Here is a sample of one of Spurgeon's public prayers of adoration: "We would begin with adoration. We worship from our hearts the three in one, the infinitely glorious Jehovah, the only living and true God. We adore the Father, the Son and the Holy [Spirit], the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob...."<sup>i</sup>

The redeemed heart delights to adore our God.

The second element in the acrostic is *confession* of sin. This is a necessary element because there is no man alive who does not sin. Sin is a hindrance to a believer's prayers (Psalm 66:18; I Peter 3:7). It is essential then that the believer address his sin before the Lord.

First John 1:9 gives us the wonderful promise of forgiveness and cleansing of sin when we confess it. The confession here is not for salvation because one has already been saved. A spiritually transformed life will issue in a life of growing hatred for sin. This is the product of the

Holy Spirit's work in the believer's life as He sanctifies them (Ps. 97:10; Prov. 8:13; Rom. 7:15-25; Phil. 3:8-9).

The word *confess* in I John 1:9 renders the Greek term *homologeō* which means *to say the same thing*. When a Christian confesses his sin, he is saying the same thing about it that God says. To state it another way, when Scripture states that an action or attitude is a sin, the believer concurs.

Confession of sin by the child of God is a prerequisite to spiritual well being, power and joy in his life, and the avoidance of chastening (Prov. 28:13; Matt. 6:14-15; 18:21-35).

The third element in *ACTS* is *thanksgiving*. The child of God should regularly include thanksgiving to God in his prayer. Thanksgiving is an acknowledgement that "every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow" (James 1:17). Moreover, Scripture commands believers to be thankful (Phil. 4:6; I Thess. 5:18). Ingratitude to our gracious Lord mimics the unsaved (Rom. 1:21) and is an affront to our loving and beneficent Father.

The fourth and final element of the acrostic is *supplication*. To supplicate before God is to bring our needs and problems to Him (Phil. 4:6). We petition Him to supply the need to resolve the problem.

### **Conclusion**

It is the writer's prayer that this brief commentary on the acrostic *ACTS* will be beneficial to your prayer life. Additionally, may it be an impetus to move you further along the path in the understanding and practice of prayer.

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<sup>i</sup> *Spurgeon's Prayers*, Christian Heritage Publications, [www.christianfocus.com](http://www.christianfocus.com)