

**Discipleship:  
An  
Introduction to  
Systematic Theology and  
Apologetics**

**Protestant Reformation Doctrines of Salvation**

**The Heights Church September 29, 2019**

## Prayer: Should we end our prayers in Jesus' name?

- *“In Jesus' name”* is not a magic phrase that guarantees success in prayer. Jesus did not say, If you ask anything in prayer and add the words *in Jesus' name* after your prayer, I will do it.
- There are not any NT prayers that end with the phrase *in Jesus' name*.
- BUT Jesus did say to ask *“in my name.”*

Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. (John 14:13 – 14)

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. (John 15:16)

## **Prayer: Should we end our prayers in Jesus' name?**

In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. (John 16:23 – 24)

## Prayer: Should we end our prayers in Jesus' name?

- In the ancient world the name of a person represented the person and their character. To come in the name of someone means they have authorized you to come in their authority. Therefore, praying in Jesus' name is equivalent to praying in his authority and character. This would be close to praying according to his will.

And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything **according to his will** he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him. (1 John 5:14 – 15)

## Prayer: Should we end our prayers in Jesus' name?\*

1. It is not wrong to add in Jesus' name if we know what we mean.
2. There is a danger to add it to every public and private prayer we make because it loses its meaning and may look to some as a magic formula.
3. In our hearts we must continually realize that it is our Savior who enables us to pray to the Father.
4. Genuine prayer is a conversation with a person we know well and who knows us. It does not require specific words or formulas but sincerity in our speech, attitudes and heart.

\* Points raised by Wayne Grudem in his Systematic Theology on page 380.

## Prayer: Should we pray to Jesus and/or to the Holy Spirit?

- The majority of the prayers in the NT are prayed by Jesus so we cannot rely upon a simple counting of the prayers.
- There is a clear pattern of addressing prayers to God the Father in the NT.
- Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. (Matthew 6:9)
- In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. (John 16:23)
- giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, (Ephesians 5:20)

## Prayer: Should we pray to Jesus and/or to the Holy Spirit?

- There are times where prayers are addressed to Jesus.

And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." (Acts 7:59)

But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name." (Acts 9:13 – 14)

If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! (1 Corinthians 16:22)

## Prayer: Should we pray to Jesus and/or to the Holy Spirit?

- There are times where prayers are addressed to Jesus.

Three times I pleaded with the **Lord** about this, that it should leave me. (2 Corinthians 12:8)

He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! (Revelation 22:20)

- Conclusion: The normal pattern is to pray to the Father but it is not wrong to sometimes pray to the Son.



## **Prayer: Should we pray to Jesus and/or to the Holy Spirit?**

- There are no examples in the NT of a prayer addressed to the Holy Spirit. BUT there is nothing in the NT that strictly forbids praying to the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit is fully God just as Jesus and the Father are fully God.

# Prayer: Should we pray to Jesus and/or to the Holy Spirit?

- According to the NT the Holy Spirit relates to us in the following ways:
  - Comforter/Counselor                      John 14:16
  - Believers know Him                              John 14:17
  - Teacher    John 14:26
  - Is grieved by our sin                              Ephesians 4:30
  - Distributes Spiritual Gifts                      1 Corinthians 12:11
- It is not wrong to pray to the Holy Spirit, especially regarding his special areas of ministry or responsibility, but it should not become the dominate pattern of our prayers.
- The normal form of our prayers should be to the Father in the name of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit.

## Prayer: What is the role of the Holy Spirit in prayer?

Likewise the Spirit **helps** us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (Romans 8:26 – 27)

- Interpreters differ on whether the “groanings too deep for words” are the Holy Spirit’s or ours.

## Prayer: What is the role of the Holy Spirit in prayer?

- The Greek word translated as helps in Romans 8:26 is the same Greek word translated as help in Luke 10:40.

But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me."

Therefore, it seems the most reasonable understanding of this passage is that the Holy Spirit takes our expressions of our heart-felt (groanings) desires and intercedes to make them into effective prayers.

## Prayer: What does it mean to pray in the Spirit or Holy Spirit?

and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, **praying at all times in the Spirit**, with all prayer and supplication.

(Ephesians 6:17 – 18)

But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and **praying in the Holy Spirit**, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. (Jude 20 – 21)

## Prayer: What does it mean to pray in the Spirit or Holy Spirit?

- There are many activities that the NT says can be done in the Holy Spirit.
  - rejoice in the Spirit      Luke 10:21
  - Decide/resolved/purposed something in the Spirit      Acts 19:21
  - be in the Spirit      Revelation 1:10
  - bear witness in the Holy Spirit      Romans 9:1
  - have access to God in the Holy Spirit      Ephesians 2:18
  - love in the Holy Spirit      Colossians 1:8
- Therefore, to pray in the Spirit or Holy Spirit is best understood as praying with a conscious awareness of God's presence surrounding us as we pray.