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Bridgeway Community Church
Series: "Table Talk"
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TABLE TALK:
"Can We Pray & Praise Together?"

Can I hear it for the Ravens?

Can I hear it for the Washington Commanders?

People ask me who my favorite football team is.

I respond like this:

- My favorite NFC team is THE COMMANDERS.
- My favorite AFC team is THE RAVENS.

It is HOMECOMING SUNDAY, as you know and I am looking forward to hanging and tailgating with you before the 1pm game today between the Ravens and Steelers.

Today I have organized my sermon time to teach you about prayer and then to take some time for us to actually pray together.

We all pray for different things, including prayers for our football team to win.

- What happens when the fans are praying for the **Baltimore Ravens** to win the game today and other fans are praying for the **Pittsburgh Steelers** to win?
- What happens when *godly fans*, like me, pray for the Washington Commanders to win, and *wretched SINNER* fans (like Henry Dawson) and other Cowboy fans pray for the Dallas Cowboys to win?

If you know any Dallas Fans feel free to pray for their salvation. :-)

Question:
Seriously though, whose prayers does God answer?

Answer:

After seeing my Washington team lose on Thursday night, clearly NOT MINE!

Recently, the Ravens fans were praying ALL GAME LONG against the Indianapolis Colts who, sadly, beat us by a field goal in overtime 22 to 19.

Question:

Were the losing fans just not praying hard enough? Were the winning fans godlier or holier in their prayers? Sports games and entertainment may not matter as much to some, but what about the more important matters?

What about when we pray for more serious things, *like our health, our relationships at home, our employment situation, our contracts bids to come through, or our friendships in school to turn around?*

This is why we are also told when we pray to PRAY THAT THE WILL OF GOD BE DONE!

We are told in the book of James to say...

- *“If it is the Lord’s will we will live and do this or that.” (James 4:15 NIV84)*

Sometimes our will just doesn’t line up with God’s will. And sometimes it does.

Either way, we are told to pray in faith

Question:

What Is Prayer?

Answer:

Prayer is simply having a conversation with God.

Prayer is talking to God and listening to God talk back to you by His Spirit and through Scripture. It’s a conversation.

Question:

How do you pray?

Funny you should ask. Jesus’s disciples asked him the same thing in Matthew 5.

- They said, “*Lord, teach us to pray.*” (**Luke 11:1 NIV84**)

Jesus gave a model prayer or a “Pattern of Prayer,” if you will.

TRANSITION: For the next several minutes I will teach through the following outline for my sermon...

- **The PATTERN OF PRAYER** (e.g. model prayer)
- **The PRACTICE OF PRAYER** (10 types)
- **The PERSON OF PRAYER** (God himself through Jesus Christ)

After we talk quickly about these 3 areas, I will give us some personal time to pray and then have someone come up on the stage to pray over us...

- JONATHAN ADEJOH @ 9AM
- ASIA ANDERSON @ 11AM

I. THE PATTERN OF PRAYER

Jesus says to pray this way:

- *“Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever, amen.”*
(**Matthew 6:9-15; Luke 11:2-4 KJV**)

Here is the pattern:

- Pray to God about **HIMSELF** (**Matthew 6:9-10**)
 - The first half of the prayer

- Pray to God about **YOURSELF (Matthew 6:11-13)**

- The second half of the prayer

Begin and end your prayers with God Don't just jump into your needs or asking for help with your situation. When you begin and end with acknowledging who GOD is, your troubles and your situation begin to dim.

II. THE PRACTICE OF PRAYER

Now I'm to give you **10 Ways to Pray** according to the Scriptures...

1. PRAY FOR OTHERS (Intercession)

- *"Pray **for** us"* (1 Thessalonians 5:25 NIV84)
- *"Pray **also for** me"* (Ephesians 6:19)
- *And pray **for** us too, that God may open a door for our message..."*
(Colossians 4:2 NIV84)
- Jesus as Peter, James, and John in the Garden of Gethsemane to pray for him.
(see **Matthew 26:36**)

2. PRAY WITH OTHERS (Fellowship)

- *"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."* (**Matthew 18:19-20 NIV84**)
- God expects believers to pray together, not just alone!

3. PRAY OVER OTHERS (Covering/laying on of hands)

- Before preaching today, my clergy support (Minister Lisa Bryson) and the Elders Council have prayed *over* me
 - Before you go home to have a difficult conversation...

- Before you walk into a meeting at work...
- Before you travel from point A to point B...
- Have someone pray over you!
- We have Elders Pray at Wednesday Night Alive where our Elders will pray with you and over you. James the brother of Jesus says this...
 - *“Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord.” 15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up.*”
(James 5:14-15 NIV84)

4. PRAY WITH THANKSGIVING (Praying in Faith)

- *“But in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving present your requests to God.” (Philippians 4:6 NIV84)*
- Thank God in advance for what he is going to do!
- FIVE times a day (*in the morning, before 3 meals, and at night*)

5. PRAY WITHOUT CEASING (Ongoing Prayer)

- *“Pray continually” (1 Thessalonians 5:17 NIV84)*
- It's like when you open a file on your computer and keep it open on your desktop even while you're engaged in other things. Leave the file open...
 - Before every meeting, every business deal, every trip you travel, every doctor's visit
 - Pray for peace, wisdom, discernment
 - Pray when your angry, mad, sad, depressed, offended, hurt
 - Pray when you get an *unexpected bonus*, a word of much needed *encouragement*, or a *daily bread blessing*!

- Pray, pray, pray
 - I even pray for parking spaces!! :-)
 - NO JOKE. I will pray for a corner spot!
 - Do you have any weird, specific prayers?
- When you can't sleep at night, don't count sheep, PRAY!!
- You'll be amazed how fast you'll fall asleep
- Don't feel bad about it. IT IS THE BEST SLEEP anyway!
 - If you don't believe me, ask Peter, James, and John. :-)
 - They were supposed to be praying for Jesus in his darkest hour.
 - They fell asleep good!
 - The next time someone says they can't sleep, ask them, "Can you pray?"

6. PRAY IN JESUS'S NAME (Pray with Authority)

- *"I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Ask and you will receive and your joy will be complete."* (John 16:23-24 NIV84)
- When we go to God the Father, we go through God the Son, JESUS CHRIST...
 - Not through psychics, palm readers, or fortune tellers
 - Not through the Virgin Mary or the Saints
 - Not through Buddha, Krishna, Mohammad, or Confucius
- JESUS is the only one through whom God accepts us and our prayers; He is the one God the Father sent to stand in the gap between us in our sin and Him in his holiness
 - He was born of a virgin, crucified for our sins, raised for our justification, and he is the only mediator between God and humanity!

- **Acts 4:12 (NIV)** says: “*Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.*”

- When you pray, pray in the NAME of JESUS!

7. PRAY ON YOUR KNEES (Posture of Prayer)

- “*He withdrew about a stone’s throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed.*”
(**Luke 22:41 NIV84**)
 - This was when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane right before his arrest.
 - These are times of private prayer when it is just between you and God. Jesus said...
 - “*But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you. 7 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.*” (**Matthew 6:6-7 NIV84**)
- When you get down on your knees in the presence of Almighty God, *the real you* comes out! The veil of everything you said you were begins to fall apart... you cry out to God... (DA takes off purple Ravens jacket and reveals his Washington Commanders jersey)...And your true self comes out! And the things holding you back fall off!
- Of course I’m just kidding. The Washington Commanders can’t get you to God either - Lord knows they need prayer themselves! :-)
- I’ll add something else to this before moving on to #8. And that is - when you pray on your knees, do it **STANDING** on God’s Word! **How do we do this? Through Declaration, praying God’s word back to him.**

8. PRAY ON THE ARMOR OF GOD (Prayer of Protection)

- “*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.*” (**Ephesians 6:10-11**)
- The way to put on the armor of God is to PRAY IT ON.

- I have this prayer on my FaceBook page. (Go to [@AndersonSpeaks](#))

9. PRAY IN THE SPIRIT (Spirit-led Prayer)

- “*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.*”
(Ephesians 6:18 NIV84)
- This means inviting the Spirit into the room and into your prayers to be led by Him in whatever way he wants to guide you.

10. PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS (Cleansing Prayer)

- “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*” (1 John 1:9 NIV84)
- Jesus taught the disciples to pray...
 - “*Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.*”
(Matthew 6:12)

Let's Review!

A. We talked about THE PATTERN OF PRAYER

- Talk to God about HIMSELF
- Talk to God about YOURSELF
- BEGIN and END your prayers with God

B. We talked about THE PRACTICE OF PRAYER

- I shared 10 Ways to Pray according to the Scriptures...
 1. Pray for others
 2. Pray with others
 3. Pray over others

4. Pray with thanksgiving
5. Pray without ceasing
6. Pray in Jesus's name
7. Pray on your knees
8. Pray on the armor of God
9. Pray in the Spirit
10. Pray for forgiveness

Now, let's look at the PERSON of prayer...

III. THE PERSON OF PRAYER

As believers we do not pray to other gods or other people...

WE PRAY TO AND THROUGH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST:

- *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other NAME under heaven given to men in which we must be saved."* **(Acts 4:12 NIV84)**
- *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through me."* **(John 14:6 NIV84)**
- *"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."* **(Romans 10:9 NIV84)**
- *"For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* **(Romans 10:13 NIV84)**

And our Key Verse for this whole series that we are closing today is from **Acts 2:24 (NIV84)**. It says...

- *"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to PRAYER."* **(Acts 2:42)**

Now, I'd like to close by praying together for a few minutes.

- You can *pray alone* in your seat among the community of believers

- You can bow on your knees there at your seat
- You can pray with a few others around you if you feel comfortable
- You can pray at the altar
- If you haven't prayed to RECEIVE SALVATION, do it now!
- Today is your day of salvation! :-)

The GOAL is that we spend a few minutes praying together in the House of the Lord...

[Congregation prays as they are led... When Dr Anderson closes the time of prayer, he guides the congregation in praying the Lord's Prayer together...]

IV. CLOSING & PRAYER OF COVERING

I have asked one of our younger adults (Jonathan Adejo @ 10 AM service / Asia Anderson @ 11 AM service) to come and pray over the congregation.

After their prayer, we will end with an upbeat and celebratory song to round off our **Hispanic Heritage Month** and our **Homecoming Service!** Together we will sing "Grano De Mostaza," which declares: *If you have the faith of a mustard seed, you will be able to move mountains!*

[Invite Ronald and the worship team out to close us by declaring our faith through a song of praise...]