



Study 5

Praying Publicly

- Review last lesson's homework
- What to pray for in public
- How to inspire people with your prayer
- Considered praying
- Ways not to pray in public

WHAT TO PRAY FOR IN PUBLIC

Public praying is an important privilege. It can inspire or bore. Scripture records the public prayers of great leaders who were able to stir the hearts of their fellow countrymen and lead them into revival and victory. Like singing praise, public praying is not only talking to God it's also speaking to and for people (note Eph. 5:19). We will consider some of the great prayers of Scripture and see how these prayers can help us to pray better in public.

1. Read the public prayer of Moses in Deuteronomy 9:26-28. In what way is this prayer educational? In what way is it a challenge to this new generation of Israel?

Praying The Scriptures

Moses was a prophet. He prayed in the way a prophet prays. He prayed publicly in a way that reminded people of God's Word and challenged them to obey God.

When we pray in public we should be praying in a way that reminds those listening of what God's Word has said. We should also pray in a way that reminds people of God's glory and majesty, that is, His ability to help them get through whatever they are facing. Even when we bring before God a great problem or challenge in a public prayer, we are responsible to pray a prayer that will lift the faith of those joining in, not make them more depressed about our predicament!

2. Note what lessons for praying publicly can be learned from the prayer recorded in Acts 4:24-30?

When you pray publicly there are several very practical things you need to ensure.

1. Speak up!
 2. Think beforehand what you are going to pray.
 3. Don't mindless keep addressing your prayer to God (*"Oh God, Father, Lord, we, Oh God, Father, Lord Jesus, come to You Father, and we, Lord, oh God, acknowledge You, Father, Lord, God, Father, Amen"*).
 4. Don't use prayer to spread gossip or hearsay (*"I know You know oh God, that sister Berticia has really been struggling of late and could sure do with a call from someone from our church Lord..."*).
 5. Generally keep your public prayers short.
3. What do you notice about Christ's public prayer in John 11:41-42?

Praying The Scriptures

4. Based on Matthew 6:5, does it seem that Christ endorsed “public” praying?

It seems that Christ objected strongly to religious people praying in public in a way that attempted to impress others with how spiritual they were. Christ didn't condemn people praying in public, but he did condemn those prayed in public to big note themselves and try to impress others with how super-spiritual they were.

5. According to Mark 12:40, what did Christ find objectional about the way these people prayed publicly?

Praying well in public takes practice. Practice praying aloud privately. When you pray out loud in a public setting, don't feel you have to pray long prayers. The goal of public praying is not length, but appropriateness.

HOW TO INSPIRE PEOPLE WITH YOUR PRAYER

6. What inspires or motivates you?

Praying The Scriptures

7. The very first thing you must do to lead people in inspirational praying is to pray with-
- () Lots of information () Lots of groaning () Lots of passion!

A *passionate* person is an *interesting* person. Pray passionately in public! This doesn't mean you have to shout, yell, rant, or rave, but it does mean that you should pray in a way that conveys a sense of *urgency*, a great *reverence* for the One to whom you are praying, and an obvious *interest* in what you are praying for.

8. Based on some of the things that we have looked at so far regarding Public praying, read the prayer of Hezekiah in 2Kings 19:15-19, and note what made this an inspiring public prayer.

CONSIDERED PRAYING



When you know that you are going to have to pray in public, perhaps at an official or formal event, you would do well to listen well to what is happening and pray accordingly. Listen for people's names. Listen for hopes and dreams. Note the actual occasion and its purpose. Have you been doing this tonight?

I was asked to close in prayer at the Launceston Christian School end of year presentations a few years ago. Fortunately I was given a couple days notice which meant that I was able to attend the presentations with a pen, notepad, and a keen ear. By the time the presentations were over I had a list of things which I could pray for which sounded like I had been paying close attention throughout the night.

9. You might be at a family function where you are asked to say grace for the meal. You have several non-Christians at this meal. What would you pray?
-

Of course the idea of praying “considered prayers” also applies to praying with another person who may have just asked you to pray for them. Have you heard things that you could pray about for your Bible study group tonight?

WHAT NOT TO PRAY FOR IN PUBLIC

10. Read First Timothy 2:1-6 and note what Paul taught should be prayed for in public-
-
-



Using a public prayer to mock or criticise another person is not only poor form and a display of unchastened character, it is entirely inappropriate. Praying avariciously (greedily, note James 4:3) is to be avoided generally, but especially when praying in public. For example, praying in public for your

sporting team to win is completely out of order, while praying that they play well and be kept safe is in order.

11. Some people believe that praying prayers which tell God what to do is “faith”. But how does Matthew 6:10 seem to urge a different type of praying?
-

Thus, when praying in public for a terminally ill person it is inappropriate to tell God He *must* heal this person.

Praying The Scriptures

12. Instead, how might we pray in public for a terminally ill person?



Your homework for our next Bible study meeting is to do the following-

1. Attend a prayer meeting and pray publicly with a considered prayer.
2. Read the Model Prayer given by Christ in Matthew 6:9-13 and consider how this prayer should be prayed today.
3. Pray out loud with another person in a way that shows you have really heard them.

Amen.