



# THE EXHORTER

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***“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Acts 2:40***

The Palmer Road church of Christ, Westland, Mi. ([prchurchofchrist.org](http://prchurchofchrist.org))  
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## JUMP START #295

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***Luke 11:1- “It happened while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.’”***

The disciples followed Jesus for three years. They heard Jesus teach and they witnessed his miracles. They were curious and often didn't understand things and they asked Jesus numerous questions. But this is the only time that they specifically asked Jesus to teach them something. Teach us to pray is what they asked.

I've often wondered if I could have spent time with Jesus what I would want him to teach me? As a preacher I'd like to know how I ought to preach. His understanding of the Bible is amazing as the two men on the road to Emmaus found out. (Luke 24:13-27) Jesus had such compassion, especially for the hurting and the outcast. To learn to see these people as Jesus saw them would be incredible. The disciples wanted to learn how to pray.

You must understand that the people asking Jesus this are Jewish men who were acquainted with the prayers in the temple and the synagogue. In fact, they surely had grown up in homes where their fathers said prayers on the Sabbath day. They had heard prayers all their life. They had seen the Rabbi's pray and possibly even the priests. So, their question involves more than just the mechanics of prayer, such as: pray to God; talk reverently and humbly. Those are things they knew. They understood that you don't pray to people, living or dead, but only to God.

Our passage indicates that this request came after Jesus had prayed. What they were asking was 'teach us to pray' as you pray. Jesus prayed often. Jesus prayed all night. Jesus prayed specifically. Prayer was as natural to Jesus as breathing. Before the apostles were chosen, Jesus prayed. Before many miracles, Jesus prayed. Before his arrest, he prayed. Upon the cross, he prayed. Jesus was a man of prayer. He called the temple 'the house of prayer.'

The disciples saw in Jesus what they hadn't seen elsewhere and that prayer stayed with Jesus. He just didn't pray in synagogues and in the temple, but in boats, mountain tops, in houses and before he ate. Jesus found every setting as a place to pray.

Praying this much and often does something. First, it keeps you very close to God. You are constantly reaching up to God. God isn't confined to a building. It also has a way of reminding you that it is God's will that is to be accomplished, not ours. We can sometimes forget about God when we have a desk full of papers and a mountain of phone calls to return and there are meetings we have to attend to and then

there are the kids and doctor appointments and bills to pay and the dog has to go to the vet and it's time for an oil change and on and on our days go, so filled with this world that God isn't on our radar. With Jesus it was different. God was ever present. Prayer does that. A prayer before work begins. A prayer as you enter a meeting. A prayer for the kids. A prayer for this and a prayer for that. All of this will bring God back into your world where he needs to be.

Following this request, the Lord showed them how to pray. Many call it the Lord's prayer, more accurately, it's a model prayer. Jesus would not have prayed for forgiveness since he never sinned. This is not what I would expect Jesus to deliver as a prayer.

First, the prayer is very short. It is made up of 37 words. A person can say this in a couple of minutes. Next, note that the words are very simple. There are no "big" words in this prayer. Thirdly, the prayer is saturated with God. It begins with God but sprinkled all through this are thoughts of God. God's name is hallowed. It is God's kingdom. It is God who gives the daily bread. It is God who forgives. It is God who leads. The prayer is concerning God in our lives. Fourthly, the prayer combines the physical and the spiritual. Praying for daily bread and forgiveness of sins within the same breath.

This prayer isn't one size fits all. This is not intended to be the one prayer that we pray throughout our life. This is an example. This is a model. Years ago in some dictionaries a person would find an example of a model letter. These letters were not to be copied word for word and sent, but used as a format to follow. This is what prayer is.

Now, let's think a moment about our prayers. Do we only pray about physical things? Do you only ask God for things in our prayers? Do we bring God into our world through our prayers? The number one thing that most Christians admit that they need to improve upon is their prayer life. We need to pray more, pray deeper, and above all, pray like Jesus.

Roger Shouse

**Some additional thoughts on this subject:**

**Monday-** Psalm 145:18

**Tuesday-** Proverbs 15:8

**Wednesday-** Matt. 6:5-8

**Thursday-** Matt. 7:7,8

**Friday-** 1 Thess. 5:17,18

**Saturday-** James 5:16