

# Five Parts of Prayer:

Prayer as we see it revealed in Scripture involves several parts, but the most important foundation of prayer is faith in God's power to accomplish what we ask Him to do. James says that the "prayer of faith will save the one who is sick." (James 5:13) James goes on to say that prayer said in faith can even cause rain to stop (like prayer of Elijah did for three and a half years). This faith is not our in ourselves, but in the God of heaven who has the power to create the world out of nothing and to raise people from the dead.

## 1. Praise

It is for this reason that the first part of prayer is praise. Praise is declaring who God is and giving him honor. We begin prayer by adoring God for who he is. He is worthy of our praise. The author of Hebrews asks us to "continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name." (Hebrews 13:15)

## 2. Thanksgiving

The second part of prayer is thanking God for what he has done. God has done so much for us: given us our breath, our food, our salvation, our community, parents and every other blessing that he has poured out on us. He has answered specific requests in the past. Thanking God increases our own joy in Him and it is good and right to give him thanks. Psalm 107:22 "And let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving, and tell of his deeds in songs of joy!"

## 3. Confession

Asking God for forgiveness for what we and our community have done to offend him and his commands, or what we have failed to do. God promises to heal the land of the people who are willing to humble themselves before him. (2nd Chronicles 7:14) Ps. 32:5 also says "I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,' and you forgave the iniquity of my sin."

## 4. Praying for Others

We have been invited and even commanded to lift up the needs of others before God. Paul asks for prayer from the Colossian church related to his ministry and valued the prayer of others to undergird his ministry (Col 4:3, I Thess. 5:25, 2 Thess. 3:1) Prayer for others can include our country, our leaders, our church, our family and intercession for those who we have never met across the world.

## 5. Praying for Ourselves

Often we have a tendency to think of prayer as only a way to ask for things for ourselves, and as we have seen, it is so much more for this. This is something that our loving, heavenly Father has invited us to do. He cares about our own needs even more than he cares for the birds (Matthew 6:25-30). This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us." 1 John 5:14