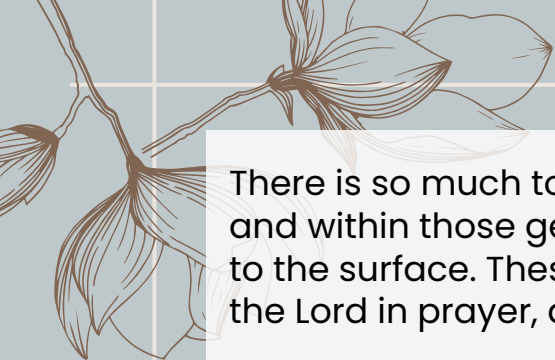


# I WILL ARISE AND GO TO JESUS

BY CYNTHIA MCFARLAND



**BibleEquipping**



There is so much to learn about prayer as we study the Scriptures and within those gems, there are three principles we see bubbling to the surface. These principles are helpful for us as we approach the Lord in prayer, and as we teach others about prayer.

### **Three Principles for Praying the Scriptures**

- **Dependence** - In John 15, Jesus describes himself as the vine and those who believe in him as the branches, teaching us that we who have placed our faith in Jesus are dependent on Him for our nourishment. Prayer is a confession of that dependence, and when we pray, we humbly submit ourselves to the Lord for Him to act in accordance with His will.
- **Boldness** - In the Scriptures we learn that in prayer, we are to come boldly (Heb 4:16), present everything to the Lord (Phil. 4:6), and pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:16-17). We can approach with great boldness not out of our own merit (good works we have done), but because in having placed our faith in Jesus, our standing is secure. Jesus is "good enough", to put it plainly, for us who might hold back because we look at ourselves and don't feel like we measure up. Therefore, the throne of grace is open to us to come with all of our joys, sorrows, failures and foibles.
- **Honesty about Distress** - Contained in the narrative of Jesus praying in the garden of Gethsemane, we get a beautiful window into prayer we can apply to our own lives. Matthew 26:39 says, "And going a little farther he (Jesus) fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." We observe in Jesus' prayer during a time of great distress that he prays honestly and demonstrates humility by ultimately submitting Himself to the Father's will. Just as our Savior modeled prior to his death, you and I are to arise and come to Jesus bearing our hearts to Him without pretense and submitting ourselves ultimately, to what He deems best for us.

From general principles, we move into passages which we can look at specifically to help us pray, starting with Jesus' direct teaching to his disciples.




## Three Passages to Start Praying

- **Lean into the Lord's Prayer** – In Luke 11:1-4, in what is commonly referred to as the Lord's Prayer, Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray. In this prayer, God is exalted, needs for sustenance and provision are expressed, forgiveness of sins is sought, gratitude is expressed, and a request to be kept from giving into temptation. There's a popular acronym ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication) that provides a helpful framework for application.
- **Look to Paul as a Mentor** – Paul also gives us insight into prayer by what we see him praying for in his letters (epistles) to various Churches. I'd highly recommend reading through the epistles (Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Titus, Philemon) and noting Paul's prayers. Have you considered studying and applying his prayers to your own Church or those your Church is in partnership?

*Colossians 1:9-13: And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, The words in italics are what fills Paul's prayers for the Colossians. Prayers which we too can pray for our own congregations.*

- **Be the Next Generation to Pray the Psalms** – Finally, but definitely not of least importance, the Psalms. In the Psalms are words of thanksgiving, lament, praise, and penitence, among others. One practice saints through the ages have applied and found useful, especially when their own words fail, is to use the language of the psalms as they pray. I commend you incorporating a practice of reading a Psalm a day and having the words penned by the Psalmist as a guide in what you pray for that day.





You have no doubt encountered trials which have rendered you numb when you come to the Lord in prayer, not knowing where to even begin. This has definitely been my experience in the decades of following Jesus. In those instances, the Psalms have been a balm and I've used the words like those found in Psalm 42 as my own prayer to the Lord: "As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all the day long, 'Where is your God?'" (Ps. 42: 3). The psalms give us language we can express back to the Lord, whether personal lament as is expressed like Psalm 42 or when we are seeking words of praise, "Make a joyful noise to the LORD all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!" (Ps. 100: 1-2).

In all seasons, for all reasons, we can come boldly and often to Jesus whose delight it is to hear and respond to our prayers.

### **Recommended Resources**

- Praying the Bible by Donald Whitney
- Praying Like Paul by D.A. Carson