

26-0816p - Detailed Summary

26-0816p - Lord, Teach Us to Pray, Tom Freed

Bible Reader: Mike Mathis

This detailed summary by Grok, xAI, (Transcription by TurboScribe.ai)

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Lord, Teach Us to Pray

Scripture Reading

Scripture Reader (0:04 - 1:22): Mike Mathis

Luke 11:1-4: Mike read from Luke chapter 11, verses 1 through 4. The passage records that as Jesus was praying in a certain place, one of His disciples asked Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” Jesus responded by giving them the model prayer: “When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom

Scripture Continued

come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” The reading concluded at that point.

Summary of Transcript (0:04 - 15:10), Preacher: Tom Freed

(1:27-2:43) Greeting and Introduction to the Sermon

Tom began by welcoming the congregation, noting that it was good to see everyone back and that Steve was present again to help with the singing. He made a light comment about Scott’s regular role in leading singing and expressed appreciation for other voices. He then announced the title of the evening sermon, “Lord, Teach Us to Pray,” explaining that it connected directly with the morning lesson on the power of prayer. In the morning he had emphasized that prayer is not the least we can do but the most. After that sermon, a member named Joe had asked a practical question about whom believers are supposed to address in prayer—the Father, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit. Tom acknowledged the question as a helpful prompt that shaped the opening of the evening message and noted that he had done additional study on the subject.

(2:44-4:40) Who Do We Pray To?

Tom first addressed the question of the proper recipient of prayer. Jesus taught His disciples to pray “Our Father in heaven,” citing both Matthew 6:9 and Luke 11:2. The normal and primary pattern in Scripture is therefore prayer directed to the Father, and the New Testament contains many examples of this practice. At the same time, it is also scriptural to pray to Jesus. Stephen, while being stoned, prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” (Acts 7:59). Paul likewise pleaded with the Lord three times concerning his thorn in the flesh and received an answer that spoke of the power of Christ (2 Corinthians 12:8-9). Praying to Jesus is therefore not out of bounds. Regarding the Holy Spirit, however, the Bible never records a clear example of anyone praying directly to the Spirit, nor does it give a command to do so. Instead, believers are instructed to pray “in the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:18) and are assured that the Spirit helps them in their weakness when they pray

(Romans 8:26). The consistent New Testament pattern is therefore to pray to the Father, through the Son or in Jesus' name, and in the Holy Spirit. Tom admitted that after many years as a Christian he still found the distinctions confusing at times and that he himself had often prayed to Jesus, yet he affirmed that addressing the Father remains the most scriptural approach.

(4:40-5:30) What Should We Pray About? Five Foundational Areas

Having clarified the proper direction of prayer, Tom turned to the content of prayer. The disciples' request in Luke 11:1—"Lord, teach us to pray"—is significant because they did not ask Jesus to teach them how to preach or how to perform miracles; they asked specifically to be taught to pray. That request still matters today. Tom stated that the evening message would examine five specific things the Bible instructs believers to pray about. These are not the only legitimate subjects of prayer, but they are foundational. If these five areas become regular parts of a Christian's prayer life, the result will be prayer that honors God and strengthens His people.

(5:30-7:25) Pray for the Lost

The first area is prayer for the lost. First Timothy 2:1-4 begins with an exhortation that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, because this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. God's heart is clearly for those outside of Christ. If a believer's prayers never include the names of people who are lost, something essential is missing. Jesus Himself looked on the crowds with compassion because they were like sheep without a shepherd (Matthew 9:36) and then instructed the disciples to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send out laborers into His harvest. The order is important: first pray, then go. Tom urged the congregation to identify the lost people in their own circles—family members, co-workers, neighbors, and old friends—and to write their names down and pray for them by name. He connected this emphasis with the classes the church had been studying for several years under Dale Tackett and with the teaching Scott had been giving about going to neighbors and building relationships in the community for the sake of the gospel. Prayer must come first. Evangelism begins on one's knees as believers ask God to open eyes, to send someone (perhaps themselves) into the path of the lost, and to grant a response to the gospel.

(7:25-9:20) Pray for the Church

The second area is prayer for the church. Paul's letters are filled with intercession for the congregations. In Ephesians 1:15-19 he prayed that the believers would know the hope of their calling, the riches of their inheritance, and the exceeding greatness of God's power toward them. In Colossians 1:9-12 he asked that they would be filled with the knowledge of God's will, walk worthy of the Lord, and be strengthened with all might. The local church is not sustained merely by good programs or strong personalities; it is sustained by the prayers of its members. Tom encouraged specific prayer for the elders and leaders—that they would have wisdom, courage, and pure motives. He also called for prayer for the unity of the body, for a people who love and live the truth, for assemblies that are times of genuine worship and mutual encouragement rather than mere routine, and for the weak to be strengthened and the strong to be patient. A praying church is a powerful church; a prayerless church is little more than a club that happens to meet on Sundays. Tom expressed confidence that West Side is a praying church and that this is one of its strongest attributes. He reminded the congregation of the regular Sunday review of the prayer list and of the

practice of many members taking that list home for continued intercession, urging them to keep that habit strong.

(9:20-11:03) Pray for Those in Authority

The third area is prayer for those in authority. First Timothy 2:1-2 continues by instructing believers to pray for kings and all who are in authority so that they may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and reverence. This is not a suggestion limited to times when one happens to like the people in office. Paul wrote these words while living under the Roman Empire, an empire that would eventually execute him. Christians are therefore commanded to pray for leaders whether or not they voted for them. Tom acknowledged that it can be difficult to pray for a leader one does not like or whose policies seem wrong, yet Scripture still requires it. Believers should pray for wisdom for those who make and enforce laws, for justice to be done, for the gospel to have free course, and for God's people to be able to live peaceful and godly lives. They should also pray that those in authority would themselves come to know Christ. Political opinions may differ, but the responsibility to pray does not. Tom noted that the present political landscape is especially turbulent and that the need to pray for politicians to follow Jesus and obey God's word is particularly urgent.

(11:03-12:28) Pray for Personal Spiritual Growth

The fourth area is prayer for one's own spiritual growth. Jesus taught His disciples to ask for daily bread and to pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:11, 13). Believers need to pray about the condition of their own hearts—asking for a greater hunger for Scripture, for strength against the specific temptations that repeatedly trip them up, for humility when pride rises, for endurance when discouragement settles in, and for a softer heart toward God and a harder resistance toward sin. David's prayer in Psalm 139:23-24 serves as a model: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Tom described that petition as both dangerous and necessary. Spiritual growth does not come simply by trying harder; it comes by asking God to do in us what we cannot do in ourselves.

(12:28-14:50) Pray with Thanksgiving and for God's Will

The fifth and final area is prayer offered with thanksgiving and in submission to God's will. Philippians 4:6 instructs believers to pray with thanksgiving, and 1 Thessalonians 5:18 declares that giving thanks in everything is the will of God in Christ Jesus. Thanksgiving is not merely a closing line tacked onto a list of requests; it is a fundamental posture of prayer that reminds the believer that God has already done good long before any petition is voiced. At the same time, Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). The most mature prayer is the one that ends with open hands, saying, "Not my will, but Yours." Sometimes God's answer is yes, sometimes no, and sometimes wait. Thanksgiving and surrender keep the heart steady in all three responses. Tom summarized the five areas—praying for the lost, for the church, for those in authority, for personal spiritual growth, and with thanksgiving for God's will—as the means of keeping prayer from becoming a self-centered wish list. He confessed that one of his own faults is praying too often for himself and for what he wants rather than focusing on others, the church, or those in public office. Prayer is not primarily about getting God to do what we want; it is about aligning our hearts with what He wants and then watching Him work. He

encouraged the congregation to take these five areas and turn them into actual, specific, persistent prayers during the coming week, writing them down if helpful and setting aside deliberate time for them. The same God who invites believers to come boldly to the throne of grace is still listening.

(14:50-15:10) Conclusion and Invitation

Tom closed by reminding the hearers not to treat prayer as a privilege to be postponed. He extended the invitation: if anyone needed prayer that evening, if something was weighing on a heart, or if anyone needed to obey the gospel, the opportunity was open as the congregation stood to sing.