



teach us to pray
re-imagining our idea of prayer



Examen - A Practice of Prayer

1. Welcome the Presence of God
2. How do you respond to Jesus' question: "What do you want me to do for you?"

3. Jesus question in two perspectives

Mark 10:35-45, 46-52 (CSB)

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approached him and said, "Teacher, we want you to do whatever we ask you."

36 "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked them.

37 They answered him, "Allow us to sit at your right and at your left in your glory."

38 Jesus said to them, "You don't know what you're asking. Are you able to drink the cup I drink or to be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"

39 "We are able," they told him.

Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink, and you will be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with. 40 But to sit at my right or left is not mine to give; instead, it is for those for whom it has been prepared."

41 When the ten disciples heard this, they began to be indignant with James and John.

42 Jesus called them over and said to them, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in high positions act as tyrants over them. 43 But it is not so among you. On the contrary, whoever wants to become great among you will be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first among you will be a slave to all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

They came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a large crowd, Bartimaeus (the son of Timaeus), a blind beggar, was sitting by the road. 47 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 48 Many warned him to keep quiet, but he was crying out all the more, "Have mercy on me, Son of David!"

49 Jesus stopped and said, "Call him."

So they called the blind man and said to him, "Have courage! Get up; he's calling for you." 50 He threw off his coat, jumped up, and came to Jesus.

51 Then Jesus answered him, "What do you want me to do for you?"

"Rabboni," the blind man said to him, "I want to see."

52 Jesus said to him, "Go, your faith has saved you." Immediately he could see and began to follow Jesus on the road.

What category do your prayers fit in - glory or mercy?

As you consider your list in these categories, are there new prayers that emerge?



4. Prayers for mercy

From the Tyndale Bible Dictionary:

Mercy is [a] divine quality by which God faithfully keeps his promises and maintains his covenant relationship with his chosen people despite their unworthiness and unfaithfulness (Dt 30:1–6; Is 14:1; Ez 39:25–29; Rom 9:15–16, 23; 11:32; Eph 2:4). The biblical meaning of mercy is exceedingly rich and complex ... there are many synonyms employed in translation to express the dimensions of meaning involved, such as "kindness," "lovingkindness," "goodness," "grace," "favor," "pity," "compassion," and "steadfast love." Prominent in the concept of mercy is the compassionate disposition to forgive offenders or adversaries and to help or spare them in their sorry plight.

At the heart of the concept of mercy is the love of God, which is freely manifested in his gracious saving acts on behalf of those to whom he has pledged himself in covenant relationship.... God persistently puts up with his disobedient and wayward people and continuously seeks them out to draw them back to himself. The psalmist describes God as a father who [takes pity on] his children who revere and trust him (Ps 103:13). Hosea pictures God as a loving father who looks down from heaven with a yearning heart of compassion upon his rebellious and wayward people (Hos 11; cf. Jer 31:20). ... Isaiah depicts God as a mother who has compassion on the son of her womb (Is 49:15).

Because of what Israel as a covenant nation had learned about the steadfast love and faithfulness of God, devout Jews instinctively lifted their voices in petition for divine mercy and forgiveness in times of need, eloquently expressed in the penitential psalms (Pss 6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; 143), as well as other OT passages (Ex 34:6; Neh 9:17; Pss 57; 79; 86; 123; Is 33:1–6; Dn 9:3–19; Jl 2:13). It is the remembrance of God's mercy that gives the repentant person the hope and assurance of divine favor and of reconciliation with the offended Lord.

In the NT a very descriptive Greek word is used for Jesus' mercy toward the needy (Mt 9:36; 14:14; 20:34). It expresses his pity and compassion by means of an intense verb literally translated "to be moved in one's bowels." The Hebrews regarded the bowels as the center of the affections, especially that of the most tender kindness. Jesus was described as being deeply moved in his inner feeling of benevolence toward the needy and spontaneously acting to relieve their suffering—to heal (Mt 20:34; Mk 1:41), to raise the dead (Lk 7:13), and to feed the hungry (Mt 15:32).

The most characteristic use of mercy in the NT is that of God's provision of salvation for mankind in Jesus Christ (Rom 11:30–32; Eph 2:4). God is "the Father of mercies" (2 Cor 1:3), which he bestows on those who believe in his Son. It is because he is "so rich in





mercy" that he saved those who are spiritually dead and doomed by their sins (Eph 2:4–6). It is out of God's mercy that [we are] forgiven and granted eternal life (1 Tm 1:13–16).

Because God has freely extended his mercy irrespective of worthiness or faithfulness, people are to respond by showing mercy to others, even though they do not deserve it or seek it. Indeed, people are commanded to be merciful, especially to the poor, the needy, widows, and orphans (Prv 14:31; 19:17; Mi 6:8; Zec 7:9–10; Col 3:12). God regards mercy more than the ritual sacrifice (Mt 9:13). God's mercy in Christ actually puts people under obligation to act toward others as God himself has acted toward them. The Lord made mercy a foundation for his teaching (Mt 5:7; 9:13; 12:7; 23:23; Lk 6:36; 10:37; Jas 3:17). His coming was anticipated and announced in the context of the mercy that would characterize his mission (Lk 1:50, 54, 72, 78).

Members of the Christian church are to show compassion and practical concern for each other. They are to give aid and relief, love and comfort to one another, as Christ freely gave to them in their need. The apostle James teaches the essential nature of such good works as being of the very essence of genuine faith (Jas 2:14–26). It was the mercy that the good Samaritan had toward the man who was beaten and robbed that was singled out by the Lord for special commendation (Lk 10:36–37). To be full of mercy is a distinguishing virtue of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven (Mt 5:7).

Pray together prayers for mercy.

