

Three Eras of Prayer Posture



In John 16:23-28 we find that Jesus describes three eras of prayer... all in the same context. Each one of these eras requires a distinctly different posture based upon our spiritual position with our Father. Recognizing these three eras gives us yet another confirmation of the Kingdom era dawning upon us. With new 'lens', we find that Scripture is full of these insights about our unique transition into the new era. Let's take a look at where we have been and where we are transitioning to by reading this passage from the NIV: (I've highlighted the portions to focus on)

*²² So with you: Now is your time of grief, but **I will see you again** and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. ²³ **In that day you will no longer ask me anything.** Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.*

*²⁴ **Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive,** and your joy will be complete. ²⁵ "Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father.*

*²⁶ **In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf.** ²⁷ **No, the Father himself loves you** because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. ²⁸ I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father."*

Defining the three eras and the different prayer postures

1. **Prayer without Jesus** (before Jesus)
 - a. Under the law, we were always a failure, deserving of judgment.
 - b. To pray was to approach a fearsome God who struck terror in the hearts of His subjects.
 - c. Pre-Jesus we had no 'Advocate' after the order of Melchizedek
2. **Prayer through Jesus** (from Jesus till present day)
 - a. As 'sinners-barely-saved-by-grace' we knew we were undeserving and hugely sin-prone
 - b. Our only hope was to stay close to Jesus who was our 'ticket' into Heaven.
 - c. We had an 'Advocate' and could pray through Him.
 - d. We knew that Jesus would intercede for us and protect us from the justifiable wrath of Father.
 - e. As we got to know Jesus, we began to realize that Jesus was the exact representation of Father.
3. **Prayer directly to Father** (just like Jesus does)
 - a. Now, through the revelation of Grace we're becoming confident in Father's love and favor.
 - b. We realize that He has elevated us to being seated with Jesus.
 - c. We realize that we are co-heirs / co-inheritors and co-rulers along with Jesus.
 - d. Humbly, but with great confidence we go straight to the Father, just like our elder brother, Jesus.

Let's read the same passage in the Amplified Version now:

*²² So for the present you are also in sorrow (in distress and depressed); but **I will see you again** and [then] your hearts will rejoice, and no one can take from you your joy (gladness, delight). ²³ And **when that time comes, you will ask nothing of Me** [you will need to ask Me no questions]. I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, that My Father will grant you whatever you ask in My Name [as presenting all that I Am].*

*²⁴ **Up to this time you have not asked a [single] thing in My Name** [as presenting all that I Am]; **but now ask** and keep on asking and you will receive, so that your joy (gladness, delight) may be full and complete. ²⁵ I have told you these things in parables (veiled language, allegories, dark sayings); the hour is now coming when I shall no longer speak to you in figures of speech, but I shall tell you about the Father in plain words and openly (without reserve).*

*²⁶ **At that time you will ask (pray) in My Name; and I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf [for it will be unnecessary].** ²⁷ **For the Father Himself [tenderly] loves you** because you have loved Me and have believed that I came out from the Father. ²⁸ I came out from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and going to the Father.*

And just for fun, let's try the MEV (Mark's Expanded Version)

*Vs 22-23 - When I **appear to you again**, you will become so permanently happy that you will forget any sadness and grief... you will forget **your ache of longing for the 'more'** that you knew was available. **When I appear to you in my glory, you will also appear with me in that same glory** (Col 3:4) and never again will you feel the need to ask me anything, for **your heart will have unspeakable joy and unshakable confidence in the favor of my Father** who will delight to answer you every time you pray in my name. Of course, you will never question that it was my love for you and my work on the cross that afforded you this exalted place of favor... that will always be the foundation for your beloved position with Father. But in that time, **you will no longer even think of coming through me to the Father, for you will see yourself has also having all of my position of favor with Father... you will approach Him even as I approach Him.***

*Vs 24-25 - Up to now (33 AD) you were under the Law and you didn't have me as your Advocate to present you and your petitions to the Father. **But at this time** (33 AD and beyond) **I say, please ask of me that your joy may be made full...** that the heaviness of the Law would be superseded by the **delight of having access through me to the Father.** Right now, I am using veiled language because you don't have sufficient ability to handle the full understanding and favor that will be revealed to you someday. But I am eager for the day when **I will speak to you plainly, unveiled and face to face.** Then I will tell **you every detail of my Father's thoughts, perspectives and affections for you.***

*Vs 26-28 - In the day when I see you again, **you will come to the Father with exactly the same confidence as I come to the Father. In fact, as you realize that I am in you (Christ in you, the hope of glory – Col 1:27) you will come even AS ME to the Father.** With this higher revelation of who you are in my Father's eyes, **I will not even attempt to be your 'go-between', for you will need no 'go-between'.** In that day **you will be shocked to understand who you really are and how incredibly good your favored position is with my Father.** You will realize how much He loves you... all because you believed me and have learned to love me as your closest friend and brother. I came from our wonderful Father and have walked among you now for 33 years, but for **this next interim (the Church age) you will ask the Father through me that your joy may be made full.** I leave you now and go back to my Father.*

The Grace message and its inherent impact on us elevates us from beggarly plaintiffs to confident sons and kings. Here we understand and have experiential reality in the rich favor of our Father. Obviously, we do nothing apart from Him, but our secure position in His love launches us into unimaginable experience and exploits of co-rulership with Jesus over the kingdoms of this earth and beyond. And lest we think this is too grandiose and lofty, consider this:

*Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven **will be handed over to the holy people** of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him. This is the end of the matter. - Dan 7:27-28*

Obviously, we have much to learn about our amazing favored status with Father God. Yes, pride is a possibility on this journey in God's favor, but even more of a possibility, is false humility (which is just another form of pride). You see if we don't allow God's Word to wash and free us from our sin consciousness, we will always be tethered to beggar type praying.

So I offer this 'homework': For one week, try praying only confident, kingly prayers of declaration and proclamation of God's will and heart into your life situations. First, ask Father what His heart is, then begin to prophesy and release His life into the matter... like kings do.

-- MLH

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