



In a recent Bible study on the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5) I received several questions about prayer. Prayer seems to be one of those things people have lots of questions about. Here are just a couple questions and their answers.

Is it ok to talk to God when I'm walking?

The question comes from a sincere desire to pray in a way that is acceptable to God. That's a good desire. From the time we were young, how were most of us were instructed from parents or grandparents or pastors or Sunday school teachers before a prayer was offered? "Fold your hands and close your eyes." When we hear that before almost every prayer it's easy to get the idea that's the only way we can come to God in prayer. But in fact it's not. It's simply one way, not the only way.

I actually like the idea of talking to God while walking. It reinforces the truth that you can (and should) talk to God anywhere, anytime. It also reinforces the truth that you can talk to God like you would talk to someone walking alongside of you - because He truly is "with you always to the very end of the age." It seems to come easy to think of God as "way out there somewhere" and hard to think of Him as being someone who is close enough to walk beside you. Talking while walking can be a good way to pray.

That's not to say that folding your hands and closing your eyes isn't a good posture for prayer. It is. Maybe, especially good for children. It helps us focus our attention on God and not get distracted while talking to Him.

When I pray before bed do I need to kneel by my bed?

How many paintings or movies have you seen of where someone is kneeling beside a bed praying? I know I've seen more than a few. The impression can be given that this is the only way to pray before bed.

Kneeling while praying is a great posture for prayer. Kneeling is naturally humbling. It's a posture that says, "I don't deserve to be coming to you with this request. I don't deserve to be in your Presence. I acknowledge you as my King and appreciate you listening to me." Humility, respect and acknowledgment of God as King are essential attitudes to have when we approach Him. Kneeling can help with that, but it's never been prescribed by God as the only posture we must have before praying - let alone praying before bed.

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net