

**Prayer: What Should I Say?****Today's Reading**  
**Matthew 6:5-15**

My wife and I began dating at a time before twitter, texting, cell phones, or e-mail. We relied on letters. Do you remember those things? They include paper, handwriting, envelopes, and stamps. Even though all of that may seem antiquated, those letters provided a means of communication through which our relationship was able to grow.

Your relationship with God is no different. If it is to grow, it will require communication... you listening to God talking to you through the words of the Bible and you talking to God through prayer. Having examined in the last couple of days the contribution that the Bible makes to your growth, Matthew 6 points to the discipline of prayer.

Before talking about the content of your prayers, Jesus gives two general warnings. First, you must understand that prayer is a conversation with God. Though there is room for public prayer, its purpose is not to attract public attention! In other words, you are talking to God. Secondly, longwinded prayers are not necessarily more influential. Though repetition

can be used, it should not be mindless babbling. In other words, mean what you say.

As to the content of your prayers, the acrostic A-C-T-S serves as a good summary of this and other biblical instruction of what kind of things to address in prayer.

- **A**doration - Give heartfelt expression to praise and worship of God for His exalted position and His characteristics (faithfulness, holiness, love, etc...).
- **C**onfession - Owning/ admitting your sin to God is critical. Do it as soon as you become aware of your sin.
- **T**hanksgiving - God does so much for you. Pausing to express your gratitude to Him is vital.
- **S**upplication - Yes, God wants to hear your requests too. Make sure that your requests are in keeping with His will and a reflection of His priorities.

If those elements represent a balanced prayer life, would you say that you are balanced? Do you need to give more attention to one area? While you are thinking about prayer, check out this video clip: <http://www.vimeo.com/3662818>.