

Is Praying to Jesus OK?

Are some sidelining God's Word

By Philip Shields

www.LightontheRock.org

Summary: *Some believe we are to only pray directly to God the Father and never to Jesus Christ. If you believe that, or if that is your practice – not to ever pray to Jesus -- I encourage you to listen to this teaching. Does Christ's teaching us to pray to our Father in the "Lord's Prayer," command us not to ever pray to HIM? Who did Abraham, David, the prophets and others pray to in the Old Testament? Are we never to pray to our Betrothed?*

*** ***** **

A man told me that in one of the opening prayers at his church, the man praying mentioned Jesus, clearly speaking to him during the prayer. At some point afterwards, the pastor told the whole congregation that we are not to ever pray to Jesus, but just to God the Father. He **cited the "Lord's Prayer" that Jesus/Yeshua himself taught his disciples to pray by starting with "Our Father in heaven..." (Matthew 6:9) Some take that to be a command to speak only to Father, and not ever to Jesus himself. Let's examine that.**

Are many of us sidelining the Son of God in our prayers? Most of you DO end your prayers with "In Jesus' Name" – but what about actually praying TO him? Is that wrong – or are you missing something?

Many of you who check out my sermons online have heard me speak, or pray, to both our Father and to our Brother and Lord Jesus in the same prayer. Am I wrong to do that? We'll talk about it today. I am not wrong. I'm following examples from both the Old and New Testaments. But I'll speculate that many of you never actually pray to Jesus because that's what you've been taught.

I've been on a campaign to be sure we're never sidelining either Father or Son by our beliefs or actions. We must include both in our worship and our beliefs. So I've shown in sermons online that scriptures is so crystal clear for example that BOTH God the Father and Jesus Christ are called "the creator" (Ephesians 3:9b) . BOTH are called our Savior. BOTH are called the "God of Israel." BOTH. If you're not clear on all that, be sure to hear my sermons on it.

Here's the link to the full sermon Part 1 – Is it Father, Son, or both

<https://lightontherock.org/index.php/sermons/message/which-one-is-it-father-son-or-both-new>

And here's part 2 –

<https://lightontherock.org/index.php/sermons/message/is-it-the-father-the-son-of-god-or-both-part-2-new>

So now also when we PRAY: We must not SIDELINE Jesus Christ and ignore him as you talk only to Father – as I'll clearly show you.

But can we pray to Jesus?

Now how about praying to Jesus? When I heard that a group was instructed to never talk to Jesus in prayer, I found it shocking. Let's talk about that.

I think a lot of the source of this issue lies in the words of Yeshua when he was asked to teach his disciples how to pray. He said when you pray, "say 'our Father in heaven..." (**Matthew 6:9**). And people use that then as proof from Jesus himself that we pray ONLY to our Father.

But is that the case? Let me say up front: almost every time I start my prayers by addressing my Father in heaven. Then 80-90% of my prayer time is spent talking to Father. That's what I'm used to doing but I've learned over the past decade that we *can*, and we *should*, speak to Jesus as well. And therefore I do and hope you'll ponder this study with me.

Of course I know a lot of Protestants regularly pray to Jesus. You'll hear in their prayers, "Lord, thank you for ..." and we understand that is to Jesus. But some sabbath-keeping groups do not seem to ever pray to Jesus (Yeshua). They talk about him but won't pray to him.

Prayer, in its simplest terms, is speaking to, or talking to God. We can be on our knees praying, or talking to him as we go for a walk, or deeply beseeching, repenting, interceding or supplicating in a more fervent prayer – but in the end, prayer is communicating with God. Keep that in mind. Prayer is communicating with God.

We pray to GOD. Is Jesus not also God? Of course he is, and I'll come back to that critical point. We pray ONLY to God – the Father and the Christ. We never pray to angels, or beloved ones who have died. Never.

But first let me ask this. Would any of you ever tell an engaged woman that she is to speak only to her fiancé's Father, but never to the Fiancé she loves?

You can't speak or pray to your Fiancé? Really?

You and I are betrothed to Jesus. That is a step further than being engaged. It's our promise to marry someone; whereas being engaged is our stated intention to marry; Betrothed is our promise to marry. Look what Paul says:

2 Corinthians 11:2

"For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (See also Ephesians 5:22-32)

Elect believers will marry Christ. We're betrothed to Him, Paul says. *But there are people telling us we are not to ever talk to our Betrothed, who is also the Son of GOD? Or that somehow we are to speak only to our fiancé's Father, but not to our fiancé directly, our betrothed? Do you see how strange that is? Would you ever tell an engaged woman that – to speak only to her fiancé's father but not ever to him?*

I personally feel *that* is such a powerful, but obvious point, that this discussion of whether we can talk to Jesus or not, can be settled right here. But let's go on – but now you know you surely MUST be talking to, must be praying to, the One you are betrothed to, engaged

to, promised to! Look **at the Song of Solomon**: the 2 Betrothed to each other spoke often to each other. It's a picture of Christ and his Bride.

More on Praying to God – and therefore to Christ also

Back now to what I said earlier: prayer is talking to God. Who is God? Is “God” only our Father, and not Jesus as well? We know John 1:1-3 – and “the Word was GOD.”

Titus 2:13-14

“looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of **our great GOD and Savior Jesus Christ**, **14 who gave Himself for us**, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.”

And most of you reading this know by now that the one called “God” – or El or “Elohim” **in the Old Testament** – often times referred to the Word, or to the One who became flesh (John 1:14) – to Jesus the Christ, in other words.

So many verses also speak of praying “to the LORD.” Is Jesus not also “the LORD” or YHVH? And yes, I absolutely prove that – depending on context – YHVH applies to both the Father and to the Word. It's in those sermon links I just gave you. It is NOT correct to limit “YHWH” or “YHVH” to just God Most High.

For example, we know everything was created by God the Father *through* Christ (Ephesians 3:9b), who was the one who actually did the creating (John 1:1-3; Col 1:15-18). So the LORD – YHVH – who formed Adam from the dust of the Ground was the Christ (Gen 2:7). It wasn't the Father, because we're clearly told that the One who did the actual creating was Christ. *So when Adam and Eve spoke to the LORD in Genesis 3, they were praying to the one we now know as Jesus Christ. They prayed to the Word, YHVH who created them.*

Many of you believe that **“the God of the Old Testament was Christ”** – the God who appeared to men and women and spoke to them – many times was the One who became Christ. That's true in many cases.

So I do not see how anyone can believe Jesus was often the one referred to as “the LORD” or as “the God of Israel” – but don't see that it was this same “God” (Jesus) they PRAYED to, all through the Old Testament!

Please, don't ever, ever tell anyone they should never ever pray to Jesus, who is ONE with God the Father, or that no one should ever speak to their coming Husband Jesus Christ.

SO, when Abraham spoke to, prayed to, pleaded with YHVH in Genesis 18 – to not wipe out Sodom if there were enough righteous people in there, who was Abraham talking to, praying and speaking to in person? God the Father? Absolutely not. All of that was talking to/praying to the One we know as Jesus. We know that because NO ONE has ever seen the Father (John 1:18). Abraham definitely saw, ate with and spoke to this YHVH.

If Abraham could talk and pray to Jesus, surely we can also, because their lives were written down for our EXAMPLES (1 Cor. 10:11).

As I've shown many times before – the title “YHVH” (or also “YHWH,” V and W are interchangeable) applies to both the Father and the Word/the Son depending on context.

*So many times that David prayed fervently to Elohim (God) or YHWH (the LORD), he was actually speaking to and about the One we know as Jesus. The One whom David praised in that glorious **Psalm 23** as “the LORD is my shepherd” – that was Jesus, who claimed to be that Good Shepherd (**John 10:11, 14**).*

So, many of the prayers of David to “God” – were actually to Jesus. Many of you KNOW this – but somehow still believe we should never pray to God the Word? To Jesus? I hope you're seeing this.

*I find it curious that so many will understand the “God of Israel” was often actually Jesus – but still wonder if we can pray to Him. I say, “was often Jesus,” because **Peter** understood the “God of our Fathers” to be God the Father, who SENT Jesus.*

Acts 3:13

*“The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, **the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus**, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go.”*

Acts 5:30

*“**The God of our fathers raised up Jesus** whom you murdered by hanging on a tree.”*

*But other times and scriptures, it's clear that the God who spoke the 10 commandments was the Word Jesus. He was the Rock who followed them (**1 Cor. 10:4**). So YHVH applies to both of them. And our forefathers prayed to BOTH of them.*

So I teach – that both God the Father and God the Son were “the God of Israel.” That's easily proven if you check out my sermon “Was it the Father, the Son, or both?” Therefore when our forefathers prayed to “GOD” in the Old Covenant, many times they were praying to the Word, to the One we know as Yeshua, as Jesus.

I could write long CHAPTERS of examples of verbal discourses, or prayers, between God and man that were between God the Word (Jesus) and man in the Old Covenant. Abraham and YHVH (Jesus) in Genesis 18 is a prime example.

Genesis 20 – God appeared to Abimelech in a dream saying he was a dead man for taking Sarah to his harem. Surely since he “appeared”, that was the one who became Jesus. Later – that “God” is the LORD and Abraham prayed to God and God healed them all. Read it yourself. Abraham prayed to Jesus.

Numbers 21:7-9 – the bronze serpent incident and Moses' prayers to God. Jesus identified that bronze serpent with himself, showing HE took our sins upon himself and “became sin for us” (**2 Cor. 5:21**). Those were also prayers to Jesus – yes, that one who was God.

When “GOD” showed Moses his back, in glory, and Moses prayed fervently to God to show mercy after the gold calf debacle, to whom was he praying? That was also to the one

who became Jesus Christ. (**Exodus 33:19-23**). NO ONE has seen God in his glory, but this LORD allowed Moses to see at least the back of God in his glory. But minus the glory, YHVH and Moses spoke together as a man does his friend – face to face (Please read **Exodus 33:10-11**). That HAD to be the Word, the One who became Jesus to us -- whom Moses spoke to and prayed to face to face. That's our example.

The entirety of Deuteronomy 9 is a series of prayers Moses made to God – **which were clearly spoken to the Word, Jesus**, surely.

After the resurrection of Christ, we find Thomas exclaiming to Jesus, “My Lord and my GOD!” (**John 20:28**). ANY communication with God is a prayer. So even that exclamation was praying to Jesus, his Lord and his God.

Yeshua, the birth name of Jesus Christ, is also God, as we're so clearly told in **John 1:1-3**. This Word of God who was also GOD with God, came down to tabernacle among us in the flesh. GOD the Word became a man of flesh (**John 1:14**).

Hebrews 1:7-9

And of the angels He says:
"Who makes His angels spirits
And His ministers a flame of fire."

8 But to the SON He says:

"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever;
A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.
9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness;
Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You
With the oil of gladness more than Your companions."

This same Jesus is also called “**the eternally Blessed God**” (**Romans 9:5**). An angel told Joseph, husband of Mary, that her child will be known as Immanuel – “**GOD with us.**” (**Isa 7:14; Matthew 1:23**).

We pray to God. Jesus was God. Surely therefore we can pray to Jesus.

So are you all “getting this”? Of course we can, and of course we SHOULD pray to Jesus as well as God the Father, as our forefathers did. They also spoke to God Most High, over and over – and that's God the Father, just like we still do also.

New Testament EXAMPLES OF PRAYING TO Jesus

You might STILL be unconvinced so far. You're wanting New Testament examples.

- Every time a request was made of Jesus on earth – those were prayers to Jesus.
- When **Stephen** was dying as stones smashed into his head, what were his words, and to whom did he pray?

Acts 7:59-60

And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "**Lord JESUS, receive my spirit.**" 60 Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "**Lord,**

do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

1 Corinthians 1:2-3

"To the church of God, which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, **with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord**, both theirs and ours:

3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Corinthians 16:22

"If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. **O Lord, come!**"

Revelation 22:20

He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly."

Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

Learning and applying truth that is new to you can be difficult for some. If you've been taught not to pray to Jesus, it will be a new experience for you to include in your prayers: "And now Lord Jesus, I want to talk directly with you too...." And then go from there.

When I pray for healing, I speak with Father. Then I speak directly with Jesus, by whose stripes we are healed (**1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:5**). I make sure I call on him to act in response to my prayer and send the command from heaven to heal. And of course, in ALL our prayers, we end each and every prayer "IN Jesus' name, Amen."

ENDING PRAYERS "in Jesus' Name"

When we pray "IN Jesus' NAME," we are praying by the authority of Jesus Christ **and as if Jesus himself was the one praying your prayer. (Story in audio of grandson telling me to come in for dinner, in my wife's name)**. Now, don't overdo this. I see some African ministers ending every statement, every email almost and action almost – "in Jesus' name" – but be sure you really do have his authority! Don't overdo it.

But for those of you who don't ask in Jesus' name after your prayers, look at some of these:

John 14:13-14

"And **whatever you ask in My name**, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask anything in My name, I will do it."

John 15:16

"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that **whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.**"

John 16:23-24

"And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, **whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. 24 Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive**, that your joy may be full." (Repeated again in verse 26)

So we have an impressive opportunity now in the New Covenant –

- We can pray intimately with and to God Most High AND Jesus Christ
 - The Old Testament people did
 - Stephen did as he was being stoned
 - Paul and John pray directly to Yeshua/Jesus within their epistles
- We should our prayers “IN Jesus’ name,” as if He himself is the one praying
- And we *should* be talking frequently and directly to our soon to be Husband, Our Betrothed, our Fiancé, Jesus, Lord of Lords, Son of God.

Some of you have such a hard time being willing to unlearn some teachings you heard in the past that simply are not true. But please don't sideline Yeshua – or Jesus our Christ. Be willing to grow in the grace and truthful knowledge of our Lord Christ Jesus (2 Peter 3:18).

But it's hard to change – even when you are shown the truth, as in this case, about praying to Jesus some of the time. If you've never done this, it might take some getting used to. But write me or call me if you think I'm wrong. We have to educate our conscience and bank of knowledge.

Examples of applying new things as we learn them – but many find hard to do:

- Raising holy hands in prayer (1 Timothy 2:8; Psalm 134:2)
- A woman's long hair is their head covering (1 Cor 11:13-15, esp. v 15)

1 Corinthians 11:15

*“But if a woman has long HAIR, it is a glory to her; **for her HAIR is given to her for a covering.**”*

But it seems almost impossible for our women in Kenya and Tanzania to apply this.

- **Believing the understanding that if we are a new creation in Christ, God sees us as having HIS – GOD'S – very own righteousness by faith through Christ (2 Cor 5:21).** That is all over the end of **Romans 3, and 4, Phil 3:8-11 etc.**

Don't SIDELINE or minimize your betrothed! Talk to him. Ask him to be your life now. To be present in you by His spirit. Still talk primarily to our Father, yes. But don't leave out God's Messiah. (You all may also benefit from my two sermons on “Who/What is God's Holy Spirit?”)

Especially as we draw ever closer to the very last years and days – be praying more than you ever have before. Strengthen your spiritual muscles – spend time in prayer to God more than you do at the gym to build physical muscles – and more than your time spent on Facebook or social media!

Don't leave Jesus the Word of God – OUT of your prayers. Don't sideline Jesus any longer in your prayers. Include him. Pray directly to him too.

Closing prayer