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Praying Like Jesus: The Lord's Prayer in a Culture of Prosperity

James Mulholland

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Jabez got it wrong.

Praying is a central practice of spiritual life. Through prayer we turn our hearts and minds from our limited perspectives and concerns and begin to discern the divine will for the world. James Mulholland believes the self-correcting nature of prayer is being distorted by a culture of prosperity, which has refashioned prayer in its own image, making books such as *The Prayer of Jabez* huge bestsellers.

Prayer today bears little resemblance to the kind Jesus taught. For many, it has become a means of personal success and material gain, taking the form of a shopping list rather than a transforming spiritual discipline. Mulholland warns that we have forgotten the true purpose of prayer: He believes, "The point of prayer is not to tell God what you want, but to hear what you need. It is not approaching God with our demands, but listening for God's commands. It is not seeking our will, but learning to discern God's will. This is so important to understand in a culture that caters to our every whim. Prayer isn't about me. *It is about God."*

Jesus understood the nature of prayer and taught his disciples to pray the beloved Lord's Prayer. Offering a fresh and compelling reading of this "Prayer of Jesus," Mulholland calls us back to the true essence of prayer. He shows how authentic prayer will lead us away from the self-interest of the prevailing culture of greed and move us toward the compassion, sacrifice, and love that are the hallmarks of the kingdom of God.

Praying Like Jesus is an invitation to rediscover the life we are called to as Christians'a vow to transform our culture and world. The early Christians prayed like Jesus and were legendary for their acts of compassion and service. Mulholland believes this can and should be the commitment of Christians today.

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

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