
Elisha Samuel Dih
Department of Systematic Theology,
Theological College of Northern Nigeria, Bukuru
P. O. Box, 64, Bukuru, Plateau State
elishadih@tcnn.edu.ng&elishadih05@gmail.com
0803-499-1772

Theology of Prayer and the Nigeria Contemporary Misconceptions

The practice of prayer in contemporary Nigeria has received different expressions. Some believers pray irreverently, misguidedly, and selfishly. The focus of their prayer is more anthropocentric rather than Theocentric. The growing misconceptions of the theology are causing believers to pray unscriptural prayers, thereby influencing and teaching other believers' wrong theology that is repugnant to the sound theology of the Word of God. Therefore, this paper argues and points at some misconceptions considered theologically erroneous and are currently trending among believers. Returning to the Scriptures is the indispensable means of correcting the informal theology to help believers have the correct perspective of God in prayer. This paper aims to see Nigerian Christians becoming vibrant in praying scripturally. Thus, it recommends that the return to the Bible, the primary document for doing theology, will ensure the transformation of Nigerian Christian space. The research adopts critical theological analysis as the method to achieve this.

Key Terms: Theology, Prayer, blood, God, Father, Jesus.

Introduction

The practice of prayer in contemporary Nigeria has received different expressions. Different persons approach God in prayers with diverse motives, intents, and prospects. Some believers pray irreverently, misguidedly, and inconsiderately. Each articulation of prayer points to the orientation and traditions of the person praying, sometimes accurately and sometimes erroneously. This situation has presented two concerns: *First*, those that pray erroneously and never knew they are wrong, and *second*, those that concede their inability but depend on God to help them. The researcher highlights the second category below, but the entire paper focuses on the first category.

The second concern points at people that admit their deficiency and rely on God to help them pray correctly. Stuart Allen stresses the centrality of prayer in the life of a believer but admits to the poverty of prayer life sometimes believers are faced. For instance, the Apostles pleaded with Christ to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1) and, Paul the Apostle concedes that “we know not what we should pray for as we ought” (Rom.8:26). Similarly, David Otis Fuller adds in his foreword in *A Treasury of Prayer* of a cry of an average Christian: “If I falter-push me on. If I stumble-pick me up. If I retreat-shoot me!” (7). In the same way, Andre Louf states that “We know so very little about praying” (1). These expressions describe blunt hearts that seek

accuracy in approaching the Father in prayer (Allen).

However, the first concern is the motivation for this study. It is observable that there are growing misconceptions of the theology of prayer, making believers pray unscriptural prayers, thereby influencing and indoctrinating other believers with wrong theology. It conflicts with the urge of St. Augustine (354-430) that “prayer must be always Scriptural in content, and as much as possible scriptural in form... It is as we learn to pray scripturally that God teaches us how to pray” (Brentnall 5-6). Most unscriptural prayers are *anthropocentric* rather than *Theocentric*. They should have been in the reverse order without neglecting the former. Wayne Grudem upholds this view that God wants us to pray but not essentially for supplications since He is perfect in knowledge concerning what we need. He wants us to pray because “prayer expresses *our trust in God* and is a means whereby *our trust in Him can increase*” (376). But the self-centered persons pray when they need God only, they always want to use God to achieve their purposes and not to yield unto him in fellowship and worship.

The paper argues and identifies the reigning misconceptions of the theology of prayer in Nigeria context. The misconstructions are classified and evaluated in the light of scriptures and the views of some strong analytical Christian theologians to communicate sound theology that enables believers to approach God with confidence and teach other believers sound theology of prayer.

Biblical Foundation of Prayer

Old Testament foundation of Prayer

Prayer is a biblical practice. The Old Testament (henceforth, OT) gives the grounds and perspective for it. Edmund P. Clowney posits that “the Bible does not present an art of prayer, it presents the God of prayer, the God who calls before we answer and answer before we call” (Isaiah 65:24) (1). The Compendium of Catechism affirms that OT presents God as a relational God that sometimes initiates communication with his people, and in other times his people initiate interaction with him. The interactions brought intimacy and a great relationship with God, enabling them to intercede on behalf of others (537).

The claim above presents God as one that converses with his own. He talked with Adam, and Adam also Spoke with Him. In the OT, Abraham and Moses demonstrated a great relationship with God on the grounds of communication. Abraham presented himself as a model of prayer. He walked in the presence of God, listened and obeyed the will of God. The father of faith engaged God in a respected dialogue of the number of people God can consider not to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Also, Moses often stood in the gap before God and his people. Moses gained his grounds from his intimate relationship with God. God called and directly talked to Moses during the burning bush and Mount Sinai encounter (Exodus 3:1-15, 19:1-25). Moses maintained constant intimate communication with God, which qualified him as a model of contemplative prayer (Compendium 537). Elisha also prayed that God should open the eyes of his servant (2 Kings 6:17). Clowney states that “the deeds of God that both invite and answer prayer are, above all, his deeds of deliverance and salvation” (2). God heard the cry of the

enslaved and oppressed Israelites, and he came and delivered them (Exodus 3:7,9). Clowney went further to say, the disclosure of the divine name to men was a wonder of the grace of God, which made himself “addressable, opens the door to prayer, provides a bond that calls to fellowship” (3).

Walter A. Elwell maintains that biblical prayer is a 'gift' and a 'task,' God takes the lead (Eze. 2:1-2; Ps. 50:3-4), and the man responds. “This kind of prayer is personalistic and dialogic” (867). It reveals our innermost selves to God but also God's revelation of his desires to us (Proverb 1:23). Elwell argues further that in all forms of prayer, whether petition, intercession, adoration, thanksgiving, and confession, the element of the petition cannot be absent. Sometimes biblical prayer involves crying to God (1 Sam. 1:15; Ps.88:1-2; 130:1-2; 142:1-2; Lam. 2:19; Mt. 7:7-8; Phil. 4:6; Heb. 5:7). It could be a passionate appeal, persistence, and or wrestling with God (867), with the goal of prayer is to transform the world for the glory of God.

Clarifying the periods of prayer, Geoffrey Wigoder *et al.*, observes that in the OT, the concept of prayer is largely uniform. Differences are traceable in the sources, schools, and periods. In the Pentateuch, prayer a conversation between God and man (Gen. 3:8-19; 4:9-15; 15:1-16; 18:2-5; 20:3-7; 28:12-16; Ex. 3:1-12). The response of man is in the following ways; building a shrine (Gen. 12:7), obedience (Gen. 12:1-4), faith (Gen. 15:1-16), verbally by way of question and or requests (Gen. 15:2,8; 18:23). Reminding God of past acts of mercy forms the ground of the prayer (Gen. 32:9-12; Ex. 32:13). For the Deuteronomic school, prayer focuses on the reminiscence of historical deeds of God, which serves as inspiration for the prayer (Deut. 9:25-29; 4:9; 32-39; 1Kings 8:23-27) (Elwell 815).

From the OT, there was communication between God and his people, sometimes initiated by God but sometimes by his people. When God begins, a response is required obediently. This form of communication enhanced the relationship of the people of God to the point of dialoguing with God on averting impending judgment.

New Testament foundation of Prayer

The New Testament (henceforth, NT) features prayer and people of prayer. James W. Garrett posits that John the Baptist and Jesus did not just pray but trained their followers to pray (1). Mathew distinguishes a model of prayer from that of the Pharisees. Jesus prohibits anthropocentric prayer, which attracts no reward but admonished *Theocentric* prayer. Its focus is on God and brings reward, and further urged them to have meaningful communication with the Father because he knows their needs before they pray. So, in their prayers, they should direct it to God the Father, “Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name...” (Matthew 6:5-9) (Garrett 2-3 see also Luke 11:1-2, John 15:16). Some have perceived that Jesus instructed the disciples to pray this way (say, our Father, hallowed be thy name) because he was on earth, then, and the Father in heaven. The perception is obscure because the Father, not the Son, is the object of prayer. He added that, on his departure, the disciples would have sufficient privileges and endowments, one of which is access to (pray) communicate to the Father (John 16:23-27). The pattern is clear and consistent that prayer should be addressable to the Father (Garrett 3). But he observed a misconception of some contemporary prayers that

say “Come Holy Spirit” or “Holy Spirit, you are welcome in this place” Garrett opined that these kinds of statements “have no precedent in the New Testament and to a degree violate the New Testament” (4). But Garrett observed an exception in 1 Timothy 1:12 that Paul thanked Christ Jesus (7).

Furthermore, Garrett states the NT formula for prayer by basing on Romans, “First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all...” (Romans 1:8). He noted that Jesus is the Great High Priest that we pray through him, but the object of our prayer is God the Father. Garrett added an aspect to the NT formula, which is, “*faith*” a requirement for those that seek the Lord. The author of Hebrews says, “without faith, it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6). Faith is on the ground that; God exists, and he rewards those that seek him diligently. Faith works concurrently with the knowledge of God's *will*. John Wimber, quoted by Garrett, posits that “praying first for a knowledge of what the Father is doing” forms the ground for supplication. Hence, John avers that “And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to *His will*, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him” (1 John 5:14-15) (13).

The NT prayer pattern suggests praying to the Father through the Son by the enablement of the Holy Spirit. It adds that the prayer should be in faith and according to the will of God.

Conceptualization of Prayer: Survey of Scholarship

What is prayer? Scholarly Views of Prayer

Some scholarly discourses are considered here with the view of having comprehensive rudiments of what prayer refers to, more so, that the Bible does not clearly and logically define what prayer stands for. It leaves individuals to articulate their thoughts about its teaching from the Scriptures. Thomas L. Constable affirms that there is no explicit definition of prayer in the Bible (7). Many Christian theologians maintain that prayer refers to communication with God that births intimation relationship between the divine and humanity. Constable defines prayer essentially as “talking to God. It is expressing our thoughts and feelings to the deity” (7). Sometimes the prayers are directed to the true God (2 Chro. 6:14; Eph. 3:14) and few times to false gods and or idols (Isa. 45:20) (7).

Besides, D. W. Ekstrand holds that prayer is a communion with God, the core of the Christian life. It is a communion that involves walking and dialoguing with God, which defines a continuing experience of the reality of the presence of God in the lives of believers. Ekstrand went further to say, the place of prayer is higher than just considering God as running errands for us. It involves turning our soul to Him (Ps. 25:1) in fellowship and communion, which leads to building up a relationship with him, thereby transforming us to his image (*cf.* 2 Cor. 3:18) (1). In the same line of thought, Bruce Ellis Benson aligns with Philip Yancey that prayer is all about communing with God, which takes the outlook of wrestling, pleading, and even exhibiting one's exasperation to God (90). Benson adds dimensions on how humanity pours its heart to him. Likewise, Robert Longman defines prayer as “at its heart, the communication that is the fabric of the human being's (and human species) relationship with its Father”

(Longman). He observed that different faiths pray to God, such as Jews, Muslims, and or Christians. The three religions approach God differently. Islam starts by cleansing themselves by washing the water, whereas Christians rely on the imputed righteousness of Christ, knowing that our best holiness is a filthy rag. So, Christians approach God “as we are,” sometimes unwashed, at times, sacred, in some cases needy, other times empty, screaming, and at times furious seeking revenge. Christians approach God because he first called them (Longman).

Some theologians emphasize the personality of God in their conception of prayers as a conscious center that listens, speaks, and acts. Geoffrey Wigoder *and others* maintain that the fundamental factor in prayer is the perception that the sovereign God, a personal deity, hears and answers prayer. It creates a medium of the relationship between the Creator and the creatures (Gen. 1:26-27), which is dependable on the required moral requirement (Isa. 1:1-11; Hos.6:6; 8:11-13; 9:4; Amos 4:4-5; 5:21-25; Mic. 6:6-8 etc.) (815). Clowney defined prayer as a “personal address to a *personal God*” (1). He emphasized '*personal*' which talks about the nature of the Being of God, while Wayne Grudem defines prayer as a “personal communication with God” (24). He avers that the rationale for prayers includes, first, a means of exemplifying our dependence and trust in God, and second, a means that brings us into deep-rooted fellowship with God. Lastly, it permits us to be part of his activities. Grudem holds that prayer changes the acts of God (Ex. 32:9-10, 2Chro. 7:14, 1Jh. 1:9) and declining to pray means denying yourself what God has for you (Jm. 4:2) (24).

Equally, Paul L. Brown posits that “A common and hallowed way to describe the divine is as a person or personal being. Not only worshippers, but many theologians and some philosophers employ this terminology” (320). Cornelius Plantinga conceives the modern “concept of person” as a “self-conscious subject, a center of action, knowledge, love, and purpose” (26). Rene Descartes states his consciousness and ability to know by attesting that “I think, therefore I am” (Augustyn). Knowing that the Father in heaven is not a mode, Jesus was consistent in an unbroken prayer communion with his Father (Ferguson 526). This virtue of prayer characterized his life and public ministry (Lk. 3:21), his seclusion moments (Mk. 1:35), before the trying moments (Mt. 26:36-44), and in intercession (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:24-25; 1Jh. 2:1).

Sinclair B. Ferguson and others posit that “Prayer is communication with God in worship. Prayer is possible because the triune *God is personal* and has so revealed himself that men and women, made in his image, may address him by the name” (526). It is unlike pantheism that proposes that “everything is a part of God and that everything other than God is a proper part of God” (3). To them, everything is divine, and they deny that God is a person. However, Ferguson and others, Wigoder and others, Grudem, and Clowney emphasized '*God as a person*. Herbert C. Wolf asserts that the history of Christian theology regards God from the ontological perspective, that is, from the nature of his being, that God is a Person, a view that aid the understanding of relations in Trinity (26).

Eugene H. Peterson holds that “Prayer is language used in relation to God. It is the most universal of all languages, the lingua franca of the human heart” (616). He holds that the revelation of God is foundational that presents God as a person using language. God used words in the creation and gave humanity language to speak to him, and God responds. He also

communicates to us using words, great wonder, and not less that he also listens to us (616). Peterson added that:

The Scriptures, read and prayed, are our primary and normative access to God as he reveals himself to us. The Scriptures are our listening post for learning the language of the soul, the ways God speaks to us, and the vocabulary and grammar that are appropriate as we in our turn speak to God. Prayer detached from Scripture, that is, from listening to God, is no longer biblical prayer. Our words to God disconnected from God's words to us short-circuit the relational language that is prayer. Christians acquire this personal and relational practice of prayer primarily under the shaping influence of the Psalms and J e s u s (616- 617).

Allen viewed prayer a little differently from Constable and Yancey, that prayer is not only asking for certain things, *it is praise and thanksgiving*, and if we constantly maintain a thankful spirit, we shall not go far wrong (Allen). The term 'prayer' from the original languages of Hebrew and Greek entails a specific kind of speech directed to God. But generally, it "refers to any and every expression of our thoughts and feelings to God, audible or inaudible. Specifically, the words refer to petitions or requests of God" (James 5:13-18) (Constable 7). This understanding seems to reduce prayers to just requesting God rather than trusting and depending on him without neglecting the petition. Prayer is offering ourselves to God and accessing everything our Lord is for us. It consists of reflections, explanations, anxiety and annoyance, guilt and iniquity, interrogations and worries, wants and wishes, admiration and appreciation, misery and death (617).

Paul Helm aligns his thought of prayer with the Westminster Shorter Catechism that "Christian prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies" (1745). Helm maintains that the model of Christ and instructions on prayer dominates the NT. Jesus prayed continually to exemplify his dependence on the Father (1746). According to Ladislaus Boros, a Prayer enables a believer to break out of his ordinary existence to become open to God (3).

According to Kent Crockett, Prayer is an honor that God grants his own to be involved in fulfilling his will on earth (Matt. 6:10). However, only getting involved in prayer guarantees accessibility, but inaccessibility to the blessings of God results when there is failure to pray. He further states that understanding the purposes of prayer is the motivation his own have to pray. Crockett outlines the motivation of prayer. First, prayer enables the development of human/divine relationships. Second, it makes us have what may not just come our way. Third, it reveals to God the extent to which a need is needed (James 5:16). Fourth, Prayer refers to the means we pour our burdens into God, and when we pray, God acts and transforms lives (Luke 6:28) (1-3). In an excerpt from William E. Lori of Baltimore, he adopts a definition of prayer from the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church as "raising one's mind and heart to God or the petition of good things from him in accord with his will." (534). In prayer, attention is turned to God in praise, seeking his will and supplications. Prayer reflects our growing process in friendship with Christ through the Holy Spirit to the mercies of the Father (49).

According to Dick Eastman, “prayer is power,” it brings power (145). He aligns with Gordon that “prayer is power, the time of prayer is the time of power. The place of prayer is the place of power. Prayer is tightening the connections with the divine dynamo so power may flow freely without loss or interruption. It defines true prayer. It is the power to defeat Satan's hellish demons any place, any time, no matter what odds” (145).

Critical Theological Reflections to Some Contemporary Misconceptions of Prayer in Nigeria

This aspect of the study addresses some dominant misconceptions of prayer among Christians. The misunderstandings are observed and are judiciously contemplated upon theologically and in the light of the scriptures.

Misconception one: Praying to Jesus instead of the Father.

Some Christians hold that Jesus and the Father are one (John 10:30). Therefore, addressing either Jesus or the Father in prayer means the same thing. To them, the Father and Son are one person. Thinking in this manner expresses a vague understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. Robert Letham posits that “Prayer is distinctively Trinitarian” (414). Kevin Giles holds that “God revealed in Scripture is by nature Trinitarian” (21). Likewise, J. Neville Ward avers that God is referred to in personal terms in the Trinitarian context (Ward 26). So, understanding the theology of prayer requires insight into the Social view of the Trinity. It states that within the Godhead, there are three persons. The Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. One divinity unites the three persons (Letham 340). Millard Erickson adds on the modern understanding of Trinity as the “communion of three persons, three centers of consciousness, who exist and always have existed in union with one another” (331). Stephen R. Holmes cites St. Augustine's that “... each divine person is himself the fulness of deity, and the three together are no more than the fullness of deity...and who are therefore eternal co-equal with the Father” (134).

The Father is not the Son or the Holy Spirit, and also, the Son is not the Father, or the Holy Spirit, same applies to the Holy Spirit. They are distinct, yet, one God and not three. Gerald O'Collins states that Jesus showed the decisive divine reality of his unique relationship with the Father (15). Their distinctions are traceable to their properties. Coppedge called their distinctiveness of the three persons the economy of Trinity (122). Vibrant Trinitarians will not say the Father incarnated or died on the cross but the Son. It is also theologically wrong to say, John the Baptist baptized the Holy Spirit. Apostle Paul in discussing Salvation, holds that the Father initiates, the Son executes and, the Holy Spirit seals the process. Again, the Father is mainly responsible for the creation, and Jesus (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:1-3) and the Spirit (2Corinthians 3:3-6) were co-participants in bringing creation to be. Likewise, the Son was responsible for the redemption the Father sends the Son, the Spirit conceives him in the incarnation. Differently, the Father and Holy Spirit ministered to Jesus at his baptism (Coppedge 125). McGrath cited Irenaeus that “...the whole process of salvation, from its beginning to its end, bore witness to the action of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” (251). The biblically defined roles of each person consist of their properties. Letham also asserts that the Holy Spirit makes the craving in us to pray while Jesus Christ grants us the access (John 14:6) to approach the Father (414). Apostle Paul says, “Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us” (Ephesians 2:18).



Given the distinctiveness of the persons of Godhead, Ferguson and others emphasize that the only accessibility of reaching the Father in prayer is through Son, Jesus Christ (John 14:6). And the Holy Spirit binds believers to Christ in saving faith and grants them the boldness to call God 'Abba', Father, just as Jesus did (Mark 14:36; Romans 8:14-17) (526). More so, the Holy Spirit helps believers to pray in their weakness when they do not know how God wills all things to work for their good. The Holy Spirit prays for believers with groanings (Romans 8:26-28). Robert Letham presented the manner of response to the Father in a reverse style, "by the Holy Spirit through Christ to the Father" (414). John Essick cites William H. Willimon and Stanley Hauerwas, that, praying the model of prayer taught by Jesus is that when you pray, say "Our Father who art in heaven..." (Matthew 6:5-9, Lk. 11: 2, 13) (84-88). With this model, it is theologically unfitting to address the Son or the Holy Spirit in prayer. It is an error to pray to Jesus instead of the Father. The model Jesus instructed us is to address the Father in heaven (Garrett 2-3, see also Luke 11:1-2, John 15:16). So, the perception that Jesus gave such instruction because he was here on earth is not theologically correct. His teaching made the Father the object of prayer. Their location was not the determining factor at that time. If the argument is on location, then the Holy Spirit could also be addressed in prayer, but there is no such evidence in the Bible. The Bible did not say we should direct our prayers to any of the three persons of Godhead in heaven; but the Father. It is a distinctive property of the Father.

Gary M. Burge misconstrued some Gospels and Johannine letters that deemphasize the place of the Father and emphasize the place of the Son, as suggesting that prayer should be addressed to the Son. Burge cites (John 14:13, 14; 15:7,16; 16:23, 24, 26 and 1John 3:21-22; 5:14-15). To him, prayer is done in the name of Jesus, according to the texts (394). For instance, "You can ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it so that the Son can bring glory to the Father" (John 14:13). Earlier, Jesus had taught the disciples that he is the only way to the Father (John 14:6), and he taught again that "...so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name" (John 15:17). George R. Beasley-Murray concludes from the text that "the fundamental factor is the role of Jesus as the mediator between God and his people" (255).

Jesus emphasized the use of the Father as the object of prayer from different perspectives. He taught that "Pray like this: Our Father in heaven..." (Mat. 6:9 NLT; see also Lk. 11:2). It is how Christians should pattern their prayers, our Father in heaven, who is our spiritual Father (Mat. 23:9). Prayer is directed to the Father because he listens and responds to prayers and gives good gifts to his own. Luke says, "Your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask" (Lk. 11:13 NLT, see also Mt. 7:11). James also affirms that "Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father" (Jm. 1:17 NLT). His good gifts sometimes extend to unrighteous ones (Mat. 5:45). Prayer is answered based on forgiveness of sin. It is the exclusive role of the Father. Mark says, forgive "...so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too" (Mk. 11:25 NLT), "when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too" (Mk. 11:26 NLT). If you decline to forgive, the Father will not forgive you (Mt. 18:35).

Misconception Two: Pleading the blood of Jesus

Pleading the blood of Jesus is a reigning prayer within the Christian space in Nigeria. The

prayer claims the power of the blood of Christ over concerns and problems; sometimes, it is over illness, cars, roads, job, family, body, thoughts, etc. (“Is Pleading the Blood of Jesus Biblical”). Jack Hayford pointed that OT Passover provides an understanding of the power of the blood. Pleading the blood of Jesus is not begging, desperation exercise, or the “application of the superstitious magical formula in words,” but the power of the blood saves, delivers, and neutralizes (Hayford). All Peoples Church maintains that a whisper of the name of Jesus and his shed blood comes with earth-shaking power. A person becomes untouchable when covered with the blood of Jesus (4). The blood enables believers to overcome the crisis of life (5). In the same line of thoughts, Michael Bradley argues that pleading the blood is used in *battle prayers* or *offensive prayers* to seek the manifestation of power. It seeks the protection of God from physical and or spiritual attacks to safeguard from adversity. Failure to leverage this kind of prayer exposes Christians to suffer robbery, abduction, or demonic attacks because of *lack of protection of God* which happens because of ignorance to use spiritual warfare techniques (Bradley).

Bradley went on to give the theology of pleading the blood of Jesus biblical support. He claims that his idea has scriptural backing and concede that his view is unpopular among some Christians that hold that the apostles did not apply the blood of Jesus in casting out demons, healing the sick, and or seek protection. Bradley insists that the blood of Jesus consists of *forgiveness*, *deliverance*, and *security*. But he pointed at four scriptures that speak on the function of blood, *first*, remission of sin (Mt. 26:28), *second*, redemption (Eph. 1:7), *third*, made near, and *fourth*, atonement (Lev. 17:11). Bradley expressed concern that Christians are not taking advantage of the blood, that the day Jesus died on the cross, he defeated Satan and the powers of darkness. He cites Heb. 2:14, Col. 1:13, Col. 2:15, 1John 3:8, and Revelation 12:11 to substantiate his claims. Bradley concludes that the death of Jesus on the cross defeated Satan, which was by shedding of blood. Therefore, he admonishes the pleading of the blood to combat situations and attacks (Bradley).

Refuting some of the claims above, Timothy Palmer holds that some people presuppose that the blood of Jesus has magical powers. As such, they spread and cover the roads, houses, cars with blood (94). “The blood of Jesus in Paul’s writings is not a magical power; instead, it is the sacrifice of Christ that pays for our sins” (Palmer 95). He further states that:

In five key texts Paul talks of the *blood of Jesus*. He says that there is *propitiation* through faith in his blood (Rom. 3:25); we are *justified* by his blood (Rom. 5:9); there is *redemption* through his blood (Eph. 1:7); we are *brought near* through his blood (Eph. 2:13); and there is *peace* through the blood of the cross (Col. 1:20) (93-99 see also Ladd 467).

Though some of the scriptures Bradley cited agree with Palmer, he fails to tell us the exact text that teaches pleading of blood on roads, cars, and the likes. And he could not refer to any apostle or Church father that pleads the blood of Jesus to seek protection from the defeated Satan.

Danny McCain observes those that refer to the Passover as their basis for sprinkling the blood of Jesus. “The incident is frequently used as an example of the blood being used to ward off

evil and provides some kind of Biblical justification for *sprinkling the blood of Jesus* on various people and objects to keep them safe” (14). McCain opines that *first*, “Passover lamb involved far more than just the blood on the doorpost...the Passover meal is the most thing about the ceremony...placing of the blood on the doorpost was a one-time event and was not to become a permanent part of the Passover ceremony” (14). *Second*, “the blood on the doorpost was more of a symbol of faith and obedience rather than a symbol of procreation” (14).

So, in applying the blood of Jesus, McCain holds that it is for *Atonement* (Acts 20:28; Romans 3:25; 1Peter 1:2), *New Covenant* (1Corinthians 11:25), *Justification* (Romans 5:9; Ephesians 2:13; Colossians 1:20; Hebrews 9:14; 10:19; 13:12; 1John 1:7; Revelation 1:5; 7:14), and *Victory/Overcoming* (Revelation 12:11) (13). He aligns with John Wesley that “the typical significance of the Passover blood is its relation to our forgiveness” (14).

Likewise, an online article argues that the theology of pleading the blood of Jesus has no clear scriptural basis. There is no record of any prophet, Apostles who prayed in that manner or have Jesus taught that doctrine. The proponents use the expression as if it has a magical power to make their prayers powerful. The article concluded that the proponents have a misguided view of prayer (“Is Pleading the Blood of Jesus Biblical?”). Also, Evelyn Oliver avers that:

The phrase “Pleading the Blood of Jesus” is not seen in scripture but is used in many Christian circles today. Why do Christians plead the blood of Jesus? Some Christians “plead the blood of Jesus” because they believe that if they say something paired with this phrase then God will work. However, God is already working in our lives. Saying “I plead the blood of Jesus” while praying does not make it more likely for God to fulfill that prayer (Oliver).

Praying to the Father and citing the blood of Jesus should aim at thanking and appreciating the Father for what the blood has done for us; the forgiveness of sin, reconciliation with the Father, and peace we have gained are theologically correct. But covering the roads, houses, cars, etc., with the blood of Jesus is theologically inappropriate. Christians should always commit their lives and properties in the safe hands of God (Psalms 34:7-9; 121:3-4). Protection and other benefits are guaranteed. The Psalmist says “The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them. Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him. Fear the Lord, you his holy people, for those who fear him lack nothing” (Ps. 34:7-9 NIV). Paul reminded that Thessalonians that “the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one” (2Thess. 3:3). Trust the protection of God and put on the armour to fight the rulers and authorities (Eph. 6: 11, 13).

Misconception Three: Praying in the name Jesus.

Many people have learned that 'singing' the name of Jesus in prayers is the correct theology of using the name of Jesus. Modern prayers repeat the name of Jesus several times in the same prayer, allotting the term to every single supplication. Some people that pray with such repetition sometimes look down on people that approach the Father without such repetitions. Singing the name of Jesus at intervals and having people answer amen sometimes turns to entertainment, a kind. As such, prayer is made lengthy to enjoy the complement of amen, which sometimes becomes a distraction. Charles Whiston avers that “Throughout the New

Testament runs the theme that our access...to God the Father is through Jesus Christ, his obedient Son” (Whiston 34). He observed the lip service we sometimes offer to God by concluding our prayers with “through Jesus Christ our Lord, or in Jesus name we pray” (Whiston 34). He poses a question that begs for an individual answer, thus; “But do we really believe that our only access to the Holy God is through him? Have we not allowed humanism to convince us that each of us has direct, unmediated access to God apart from Jesus Christ?” (Whiston 34).

Washington posits that “We have authority to use the name of Jesus, we have a covenant with the Father through Jesus. Jesus has sealed it with His blood, and God will honor the name of Jesus. That name is above every name” (6). The issue is, how do we use the name as we pray? Brad Long and Doug McMurry attest that “Only Jesus opens the way for us to know God” (54).

This article argues that Jesus did not teach that prayer should end with the phrase “in Jesus name” as a magic formula for requests to be granted; in his discourse in John 14:13-14. According to the article, it is unequivocally unbiblical and misapplication of the text. The article proposes that “Praying in Jesus' name means praying with His authority and asking God the Father to act upon our prayers because we come in the name of His Son, Jesus” (“what does it mean to pray in Jesus name”). Steppes of Faith conceives that the prayer model of Jesus of both Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:1-4 reveal Jesus ending his prayer abruptly, without mentioning “in My name, amen” (Steppes of Faith); He just windup. Jesus in Mathew discourses his authority in heaven and on earth (Mt. 28:18-20), which he transmits to the disciples to use and speak for him. It is because our righteousness and authority cannot qualify us to access the Father in prayer, only his righteousness and authority, which is available for the redeemed. Therefore, saying “in Jesus name” in prayer is not necessary, “it is ours through faith when we are his” (“What does it mean to pray in Jesus Name?”).

Charles Stanley admits the abundance of power in the name of Jesus. However, using his name in prayer does not suggest a magic charm to have a prayer answered. It is a way of submitting our desires and strategy to Christ. Doing so enables our discipleship and helps us to honor Him (1). Stanley aligns with Roger Barrier that concedes a misapplication of John 14: 13-14, that some theologians assume that “in Jesus' name” is a magic formula; he then clarifies that it means “praying with His authority and asking God the Father to act upon our prayers because we come in the name of His Son, Jesus. Praying in Jesus' name means praying in line with the will of God (1John 5:14-15)” (Stanley 1). He concludes that prayer in Jesus' name reminds us of *first*, depend on God's will and authority, and *second*, to bring glory to the Father.

Praying in the name of Jesus have been misunderstood. An online article “The Meaning of Praying “in the Name of Jesus”” observes the contemporary blunders to what constitute the theology prayer. The article opines that those that utters “the name of Jesus” or “in Jesus name” in prayer, do so with the view that the name has magical powers, and prayer is effective and answered. It implies that, prayers are not effective when the phrase is not inserted. The article regards those with this notion as having wrong view for misconstruing the Bible. Because it was not the intent of Jesus for his disciples to use his name for their prayers to be heard (1).

The article went further to argue that, “We get our interpretive 'lines crossed' when we casually apply Jesus words exactly in our own lives as it was intended for the disciples. This is not good hermeneutics. What Jesus intended for the disciples through these words simply does not necessarily apply to us today in the same way that it applies to the apostles and the early church” (“The Meaning of Praying “in the Name of Jesus”” 2). This stance calls for deeper reflection, if it is right for the timeless value of the word of God be said to be for a particular period and people and not for another. This is not to refute dispensations, but considering people that forms the new kingdom of Jesus Christ. Is there any explicit biblical text that affirms that the intent of Jesus then was different from his own today? His prayer in John 17 was for believers then, and those that will believe later. Jesus, while referring those that will believe says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, *whoever believes in me* will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father” (Jn. 14:12). But the article contends that it is false assumption to hold that “what counted for the apostles in their day is what also counts for us today” (“The Meaning of Praying “in the Name of Jesus”” 2).

The article presupposes that what Jesus had in mind by praying in Jesus name is not “that they should simply conclude every prayer they prayed with this phrase before they said amen... For the apostles to have prayed in Jesus' name, they had to acknowledge his authority in their lives and the fact that they were totally inept to handle anything in and of themselves” (2-3). So, to be precise, “to pray in Jesus name” means to *accept the sovereignty of Christ and our trust and reliance on his finished work* (“The Meaning of Praying “in the Name of Jesus”” 3-4).

The Concise Theology of Prayer

From the observations and discourse above, the theology of prayer describes the scriptural teaching on prayer. It teaches that when we pray, we should talk to the Father on the basis of our union with Christ as we pour our hearts to him. We are not to address the Son or the Holy Spirit in prayer but the Father. Mathew says, when you pray say, “Our *Father* who art in heaven.” This model developed by Jesus deserves to be respected and followed. Praying in Jesus name means more than “singing” name of Jesus in prayer. Praying in Jesus name means accessing the Father through the authority of Jesus Christ. Repeating the name Jesus over and over does not make God to answer, what makes God to answer is our union with Christ and our trust in him and his authority. Again, our submission to the leading of the Holy Spirit in prayer is crucial. The Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf and leads us on what to say before the Father. This calls for been sensitive to the Holy Spirit as we pray, only at this do we pray according to his will. John adds that, “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything *according to his will*, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us--whatever we ask--we know that *we have what we asked of him*” (1 John 5:14, 15). Believers have the assurances of answers to prayers when they are made according to the will of God. God has made such a promise to hear and answer (1John 5:14-15). Robert L. Simpson posits that “The efficacy of Christian prayer originates in the will of God” (116). Washington states that “The safest place in all the world is the will of God” (4), and Ekstrand echoed that “the essence of prayer is the alignment of our will with God's will” (1). The question the researcher anticipate is whether God the Father listens and answers prayers that are offered wrongly? The researcher will respond to this and other conceptions in the next edition.

The Benefits of offering the Bible based Prayers

1. Praying scripturally helps us to communicate with the Father in the manner he taught us. Praying in this way makes believers to access the Father in obedience with the teaching of Jesus Christ in his Word.
2. Praying according the will and design of the word, helps believers to do a sound informal theology and keep a distance from the wrongdoers. The theological space is characterized with faulty theology of prayer. Some believers have misconstrued the Bible and have been applying it wrongly in prayer.
3. Praying scripturally will motivate believers to be Bible students. It will inspire them to go beyond reading to studying the word to understand what God wants us know and how to approach him.
4. Praying scripturally enhances our union with Christ. John says, "...if a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing...if you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you"(John 15:5-7). Having the word in us assures us of fruitfulness and our prayers been answered.
5. Praying scripturally helps us to influence others positively with the correct theology. When we pray, we teach others the right way to talk to the Father correctly.
6. Praying scripturally will make God to be proud of his followers, who have conquered ignorance and are obediently adhering to his teachings as enshrined in the Bible.
7. Praying a sound theological prayer will help in correcting the wrong perspectives that characterized the Christian space.

Recommendations for a sound theology of prayer:

The researcher recommends that believers in Christ should take advantage of the rare privilege the Father has given his ardent followers to access him in prayer. The consideration deserves that believers should access the Father as it is stated in the Scriptures. We should not device ways of accessing the Father rather we should remain faithful to what he has taught us in his word.

Believers should employ critical lenses for appraising theology, both formal and informal in the light of the Scriptures and in the view of other strong Christian analysts. Critical reflections aim at weighing facts and accuracy to establish what is factual and truth. For instance, Acts of the Apostles records that "Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true" (Acts 17:11).

The Church should teach the correct theology to all believers. The pastors and other church

leaders are the spiritual custodians and whatever comes from them is mostly accepted without further findings. In view of that, the leaders should be committed to God and studying his word to communicate only what is right. Apostle Paul says “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” (2Timothy 3:16).

The church should reflect on hermeneutics and exegesis. Theology we have today are products of hermeneutics and exegesis. Therefore, our methods of interpreting Bible should be well understood to an extent that its conclusion is credible and sound, this will minimize the number of errors in circulation. Meticulous considerations should be given to literal expressions, metaphoric expressions, poems, psalms etc., and adopting right method of bringing out true meaning.

The researcher recommends that the Church in Nigeria should not use prayer as a means of getting things done by God only. Some only pray when they need the intervention of God in their lives. But prayer should be desired fellowship with where Christians engage to enhance their union with the divine and also express their trust in God. In so doing, prayer ceased to be *anthropocentric* to becoming *Theocentric*.

Conclusion

The article seeks to appraise certain misconceptions of prayer that are currently trending in the Nigerian space. Obscure understanding has fueled the spread and acceptability of such kinds of prayers. Using *critical theological analysis*, the research observed three misconceptions, though, they are not exhaustive but because of space. They include, addressing prayer to Jesus instead of the Father; second, pleading the blood of Jesus and third praying in Jesus name. The research reveals that some Christians are wrong applying these items; which may be due to wrong interpretation of the Scriptures or copying the wrong idea from others. The Bible teaches that we should pray to the Father not to Jesus, and two, pleading the blood of Jesus is not biblical. The theology of the blood, Apostles and Jesus did not teach of pleading the blood, in fact, the Apostles did plead the blood. It is wrongly used as a typology of the Passover blood. Third, praying in Jesus name emphasizes approaching the Father on the basis of union with Christ, trusting his authority as the ground for our prayers to be answered. But some use the name as having magical powers. Returning to the basics is the recommendation of the study. Believers should study deeply using the tools of hermeneutics and exegesis to extract contextual meanings of texts, that alone will help in applying correctly. If these are diligently followed the study will benefit believers to pray correctly in accordance with the word of God and his teachings. It will also help to keep a distance from wrong theology but motivate us to become the students of the Bible, thereby enhancing our union with Christ. Finally, it will help in correcting the wrong perspectives that characterized the Christian space.

WORKS CITED

- Allen, Stuart. *What is the Meaning of Prayer?* The Berean Publishing Trust. n.y
- Augustyn, Adam et al. "Cogito, ergo sum: philosophy" in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/cogito-ergo-sum> Accessed 3/7/2021.
- Beasley-Murray, George R. *Word Biblical Commentary. Volume 36. Waco, Texas: Word Books Publishers, 1987.*
- Benson, Bruce Ellis. "Exploring the Forms of Prayer" in *Prayer: Christian Reflection, A Series in Faith and Ethics*. Robert B. Kruschwitz (Ed. et al) 90, 89-93.
- "The Bible Exposition Commentary" in *PC Study Bible V5*. Chariot Victor Publishing, 1989.
- Bounds, E. M. *A Treasury of Prayer*. Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship. Inc., 1961.
- Bradley, Michael. "How to Plead the Blood of Jesus for Deliverance and Protection" in *Bible Knowledge*. February, 2021.
<file:///C:/Users/mike/Desktop/PRAYER/Blood%20of%20Jesus%20%20How%20to%20Plead%20it%20for%20Deliverance%20and%20Protection.html> Accessed 7/6/2021.
- Brentnall, John M. *Augustine and Prayer*. SGU Pamphlet. Sovereign Grace Union. Ny.
[https://irpcdn.multiscreensite.com/81fb15b2/files/uploaded/Augustine%20and%20Prayer %20-%20John%20Brentnall.pdf](https://irpcdn.multiscreensite.com/81fb15b2/files/uploaded/Augustine%20and%20Prayer%20-%20John%20Brentnall.pdf) Accessed 7/6/2021.
- Brown, Paul L. "Is God a Person or Personal Being?" in *Wiley Online Library*. Volume 42, Issue 3, July 1961. 320, Pages: 290-464. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0114.1961.tb07216.x> Accessed 3/7/2021.
- Burge, Gary M. *John: The NIV Application Commentary*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2000.
- Chinedum, Ikechukwu. "30 Powerful Holy Ghost Fire Prayer Points" November 5, 2019.
<https://everydayprayerguide.com/2019/11/05/30-powerful-holy-ghost-fire-prayer-points/> Accessed 24/6/2021.
- C l o w n e y, E d m u n d P. *A Biblical Theology of Prayer*.
<http://www.beginningwithmoses.org/oldsite/articles/btprayer1.htm> Accessed 7/6/2021.
- Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005.
- Constable, Thomas L. *Talking to God: What the Bible Teaches about Prayer A Biblical Theology of Prayer*. Sonic Light, 2003. www.soniclight.com Accessed 7/6/2021.

- Coppedge, Allan. *The God Who is Triune*. Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2007.
- Crockett, Kent. "The Five Purposes of Prayer" 1-3. www.makinglifecount.net Accessed 7/6/2021.
- O'Collins SJ. "The Holy Trinity: The State of the Questions" in *The Trinity*. Gerral Davis, *et al* (Eds.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. Pp. 4-24
- Garrett, James W. *The Pattern of Prayer in the New Testament Church*. 1998. Doulos Press, 1998.
- Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Inter-Varsity Press, 1994.
- Grudem, Wayne. "What is Prayer" in *Christian Beliefs*. Week 4, Lesson # 4 – What is Prayer 4-3-13, 24 <https://aplaceforyou.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Lesson-4-What-is-Prayer.pdf> Accessed 7/6/2021.
- Eastman, Dick. *No Easy Road*. Chepstow: Bridge Publishing, 1984.
- E k s t r a n d , D . W . *T h e P r a y e r o f F a i t h .*
1 http://corecanvas.s3.amazonaws.com/thetransformedsoul-0ecb7a56/media/original/56f1a31bc8974_The%20Prayer%20of%20Faith.pdf
Accessed 27/6/2021.
- Elwell, Walter A. (Ed.) *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. Baker Book House, 1984.
- Erickson, Millard. *God in Three Persons: A Contemporary Interpretation of the Trinity*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1995.
- Essick, John. "Prayerful Intimacy", in *Christian Reflection: A Series in Faith and Ethics*. Robert Kruschwitz B. *et al*. Editors. Baylor: The Center for Christian Ethics, 2009, 86, pp.84-88.
- Ferguson, Sinclair B. David F. Wright, J.I. Packer. (Eds.) *New Dictionary of Theology*. Inter Varsity Press. 1988.
- Giles, Kevin. *The Trinity & Subordinationism*. Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2002.
- God is Not a Person (An Argument Via Pantheism) in *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*. Springer. 3 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11153-018-9678-x> Accessed 3/7/2021.
- Hayford, Jack. "Pleading the Blood of Jesus." Jack Hayford Ministries, 2013.
<https://www.jackhayford.org/teaching/articles/pleading-the-blood/> Accessed on 7/6/2021.
- Helm, Paul. "Prayer" in *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Volume 2. Walter A. Elwell and

Others. Editors. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1988. Pp.1744-1747.

Holmes, Stephen R. *The Quest for the Trinity: The Doctrine of God in Scripture, History and Modernity*. Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2012.

Johnson, Merle Allison. *Religious Roulette & Other Dangerous Games Christians Play*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975.

Judd, Carrie F. *The Prayer of Faith*. Buffalo: The Courier Company, Electrotypers, Printers and Binders, 1880.

Ladd, George Eldon. *A Theology of the New Testament*. Revised Edition. Donald A. Hagner (ed.). Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993.

Ladislaus Boros. *Christian Prayer*. Translated by David Smith. New York: The Seabury Press, 1976.

Letham, Robert. *The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology, and Worship*. New Jersey: P&R Publishing, 2004.

Long, Brad & Doug McMurry. *Prayer that Shapes the Future*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999.

Longman, Robert Jr. *What is Prayer?* 18th November 2009. <http://www.spirithome.com/prayer.pdf>. Accessed 7/6/2021.

Lori, William E. "Prayer: A Gift from God" in *What is Prayer?* 49 file:///C:/Users/mike/Desktop/what-is-prayer.pdf Accessed 7/6/2021.

Louf, Andre. *Teach us to Pray*. Translated by Hubert Hoskins. Boston: Cambridge, 1992.

Marshall, Catherine. *Beyond our Selves*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961.

McCain, Danny. "The Theology of the Phrase "Blood of Jesus"" in *TCNN Research Bulletin*. Number 41, March 2004. Pp. 4-16

McGrath, Alister E. *Christian theology: An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1994.

"The Meaning of Praying "in the Name of Jesus""

http://www.stellenboschbiblechurch.co.za/uploads/4/2/1/5/4215011/the_meaning_of_praying_%E2%80%9Cin_the_name_of_jesus%E2%80%9D.pdf. Accessed 24/7/2021.

Murray, Andrew. *With Christ in the School of Prayer*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: The Zondervan Corporation, 1983.

Oliver, Evelyn. "Why DO Christians Plead the Blood of Jesus? Explained" in *Christian Questions*. <https://justdisciple.com/chrisitans-plead-blood-jesus/> Accessed 7/6/2021.

Palmer, B.M. *Theology of Prayer as view in the Religion of Nature in the System of Grace*. Richmond, Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1894.

Timothy Palmer. *A Theology of New Testament*. Bukuru: African Christian Textbooks, 2012.

All Peoples Church. *The Triumph of the Cross*. All Peoples Church & World Outreach April, 2012. www.apcwo.org/contact@apcwo.org, 4, Accessed 7/6/2021.

Peterson, Eugene H. "Prayer" in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*. Craig G. Bartholomew, Daniel J. Treiter, and N.T. Wright. Editors. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2005. Pp. 616-617.

Plantinga, Cornelius.

"Is Pleading the Blood of Jesus Biblical?" <https://www.gotquestions.org/pleading-the-blood.html>. Accessed 7/6/2021.

Pray First: Prayer Guide. 45 <https://21days.churchofthehighlands.com/files/2021/2021-pray-first.pdf> Accessed 28/6/2021.

"A Prayer of Thanksgiving and Adoration to God (Father), Jesus Christ (Saviour), and the Holy Spirit (Sustainer)." Prayer Topic #6. <https://www.kingdombuilders.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/A-Prayer-of-Thanksgiving-and-Adoration-to-God-Father-Jesus-Christ-Savior-and-the-Holy-Spirit-Sustainer-PG042012.pdf> Accessed 24/4/2021.

Simpson, Robert L. *The Interpretation of Prayer in the Early Church*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1965.

Stanley, Charles. "What Does It Mean to Pray in Jesus' Name?" 2010.

<https://www.christianity.com/jesus/following-jesus/discipleship/asking-in-the-name-of-jesus.html>. Accessed 24/7/2021.

Steppes of Faith. "Does the Bible Tell Us to Pray in Jesus' Name?"

<http://www.stepssofffaith.com/faith/bible-pray-in-jesus-name>. Accessed 24/7.2021.

Stewart, Katie. "What is the Prayer of Faith?" December 3, 2020.

<https://www.whatsaiththescripture.com/Text.Only/pdfs/What.Is.Prayer.Faith.Text.pdf> Accessed 27/6/2021.

Torrey, R.A. *The Prayer of Faith*. R.A. Torrey Archived. <https://www.biblesnet.com/RA%20Torrey%20The%20Prayer%20of%20Faith.pdf> Accessed 27/6/2021.

Ward, J. Neville. *The Use of Praying*. Plymouth: Epworth Press, 1975.

Washington. "Releasing the Ability of God through Prayer. Session Two." 8

https://reidtemple.org/docs/default-source/bible-study-pdfs/070517_releasetheabilityofgodpart2.pdf?sfvrsn=2. Accessed 27/6/2021.

Ward, J. Neville. *The Use of Praying*. Plymouth: Epworth Press, 1975.

“What does it mean to pray in Jesus' Name?”

<https://www.jesusfilm.org/blog-and-stories/pray-jesus-name.html>. Accessed 24/7/2021

What does it mean to pray in Jesus name? 2021.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/pray-Jesus-name.html>. Accessed 24/7/2021.

Whiston, Charles. *Pray: A Study of Distinctive Christian Praying*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972.

“Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament” in PC Study Bible V5. Chariot Victor Publishing, 1992.

Wigoder, Geoffrey *et al.* (Eds.) *Illustrated Dictionary & Concordance of the Bible*. G.G.The Jerusalem Publishing House Ltd. 1986.

Wolf, Herbert C. “An Introduction to the Idea of God as a Person” in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Volume XXXII, Issue 1, January 1964, 26, Pages 26– 32 , <https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/XXXII.1.26> Accessed 7/3/2021.

Wood, James. *The Theology of Prayer and Intercession*. (NP).