

CHURCHRIGHT

Doing church right



AI Policy

In our society that leans heavily on technology, the BAP recognizes the need for a policy on using artificial intelligence in our publications.

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Praying in Jesus' Name

More than historic and ancient, a Christ-centered church is a defining aim and personal pursuit of our fellowship (Ephesians 2:20; Philippians 2:15, 16). For nearly three decades, a Christ-centered church has served as the foundation of our two-joint vision. It has marked our unity, shaped our present (Ephesians 2:20), and guided our future (Revelation 17).

But how do we, individually and as the Church of God, ensure and continue in this holy pursuit? Focus on Jesus and follow His guidance? Yes, and *amen!* Specifically, consider how Jesus taught us to pray. When we pray, our name should be to pray to the Father in Jesus' name. While no prayer addressed to Jesus is a bad prayer and is wholly appropriate at times (Acts 7:59), the normative pattern Jesus gave us reveals this order: "When you pray, say our Father . . ." (Luke 11:2, NKJV).

This call to pray to the Father in Jesus' name is not a move toward legalism. Rather, emphasizing the agency of Christ in prayer reveals and reminds us of something glorious, and, in turn, releases a renewed passion for both the Christ-centered life and the church.

Remember, we pray in Jesus' name to the Father because, apart from Christ, we have no right, no access, and no ability to come before God (John 14:6). But as we pray this way, receiving Christ as our great High Priest and only Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5), we glorify Jesus and the Father.

For those demonstrating Christ, prayer in His name to the Father does the opposite. As the church prays this way, an incredible effort unfolds: 1) Passion for our great High Priest is ignited as we, by faith, understand that we have access to the One who is holy through Christ alone. 2) Unity comes clearly into focus as we understand that each of us enters the presence of God the same way — in Christ alone. 3) As we continually come into communion with the One who is eternal — by Christ alone — our present and future become inextricably linked to Jesus.

Yes, Church, we are able to remember this glorious order in prayer wholly related to our pursuit of being a Christ-centered church.

In His Name,
Gregory Smith
GC President