

PLAIN SPEECH

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“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)

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IS IT OKAY TO LIFT A PRAYER TO JESUS?

No. Inspiration teaches us to pray to the Father.

“But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father...” (Mt. 6:6).

“And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father...” (Lk. 11:1-2a).

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 3:14).

“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 5:20).

Despite these clear scriptures (and others I did not list), I’ve met many people down through the years – both in the denominational world and also in the Lord’s church – who see no problem whatsoever in lifting a prayer to Christ. They offer many arguments to justify such. I will deal with a few of those arguments below.

Argument #1

“Prayers sometimes include praise (1 Chron. 29:13). Jesus is praiseworthy (1 Pet. 4:11). Thus, we can rightfully pray to Jesus.”

This argument ignores the clear teaching of scripture; i.e. pray to the Father in the name of Christ. Moreover, it assumes that anyone worthy of praise may be prayed to. This brings ridiculous conclusions. The word translated ‘praise’ in 1 Pet. 4:11 is the Greek word **δόξα**. Thus, using the innovators logic we may pray to Solomon (Mt. 6:29), long dead Israelites (Rom. 9:4) or even any woman with long hair (1 Cor. 11:15) as each are connected to **δόξα**.

Argument #2

“Jesus is God; i.e. Divine (Rom. 9:5). Therefore, we can pray to Him if we like.”

This argument also ignores the clear teaching of scripture; i.e. pray to the Father in the name of Christ. If we may pray to Jesus because He is God (which He is) then consistency demands that we are also able to pray to the Holy Ghost since He is God as well (Ax. 5:3-4). I would really like to see the innovators who claim to be members of the church do this in the assembly some Sunday morning. I really doubt anyone who claims to be sound in the faith that would do so. The innovators do not even believe their own argument.

Argument #3

“Stephen prayed to Jesus (Ax. 7:59); thus, we can pray to Jesus also.”

This argument also ignores the clear teaching of scripture; i.e. pray to the Father in the name of Christ. Secondly, did Stephen “pray” to Jesus like the innovators do today? No. Stephen miraculously saw Jesus in person and uttered words to Him. I suppose when one actually sees Jesus in the same way in which Stephen did (which will not happen – 1 Cor. 13:8-10), then they will have finally found an authorized time to “pray” to Jesus. Until then, let them do what the head of the church said to do (Lk. 11:1-2).

Argument #4

“Paul prayed to Jesus (2 Cor. 12:7-9). We are to follow Paul (1 Cor. 11:1). Therefore, we can pray to Jesus.”

Once again, this argument also ignores the clear teaching of scripture; i.e. pray to the Father in the name of Christ. 2 Cor. 12:7-9 may be referring to Paul in a miraculous setting. Moreover, where is the concrete proof that the term “Lord” in vs. 8 is Jesus (cf. Ax. 4:29-30)? This account does not help the innovators in their quest to find authority to pray to Jesus.

Other arguments are often offered. However, none of them hold water. Let’s be content to do what Jesus instructed (Lk. 11:1-2).