



**31 August/
1 September 2019**
Vol. 41, No. 35

Prayer That Pleases God (The Altar of Incense)

Exodus 30:1-10, 34-38

English Services

(8 & 10:30 a.m., & 5:30 p.m.)

Prelude
Call to Worship
Worship through Praise
Worship through Fellowship
Community Prayer
Anthem
Scripture Reading
Worship in the Word
Elder Ed Trono
The Lord's Supper
Worship through Giving
Response Song
Benediction

Filipino Service

(3 n.h.)

Paghahanda
Tawag sa Pagsamba
Pagsamba sa Pag-aawitan
Pagkilala sa mga Bisita
Panalangin ng Komunidad
Pagbasa ng Salita ng Diyos
Pakikinig sa Salita ng Diyos
Pastor BJ Sebastian
Banal na Hapunan
Pagsamba sa Pagbibigay
Tugon na Awit
Bendisyon

*See inset inside for the **Traditional Service (Sat., 6 p.m.)** program.*



Prayer That Pleases God (The Altar of Incense)

Today's Message (31 August/1 September 2019)
/ Exodus 30:1-10, 34-38

THERE IS A
PRESCRIBED
WAY BY
WHICH WE
CAN PRAY TO
THE FATHER:
THROUGH
CHRIST
AND IN THE
SPIRIT.

Have we at times become too casual in the way we relate to and approach God? The altar of incense, which symbolizes the prayers of God's people, reminds us there is nothing casual about prayer. Prayer has a God-prescribed place and way. It is a high and holy privilege available only to God's humble, grateful and needy people. *God is pleased when those in Christ pray with a spirit of submission to His ways and will.*

1. THE ALTAR FOR THE INCENSE (vv. 1-10)

- a. The construction of the altar: only God's way following His instruction regarding materials and design.
- b. The position of the altar: prescribed by God. Near the Holy of Holies into which the wafting incense enter above the veil, near the golden lamp stands, approached going through the altar of the burnt offering.
- c. The utilization of the altar: as directed by God. Incense burned day and night, every time lamp stands were dressed. No strange incense and any other offering will be used. Once a year, the altar of incense is atoned for by the blood of the sinner-offering. The altar is set apart, holy, only for the LORD.

God has prescribed a place and a way where and how the prayers of His people are to be offered. Altars are places where God interacts with man. Christians are temples of the Holy Spirit. We carry God's altar with us. The place where God interacts with us is where our will and His will intersect.

The proper place for prayer is anywhere our wills are submitted to God. It is the place where we humbly approach God His way and on His terms. The proper way to approach God in prayer is through Christ and in the Spirit. Prayers that please God are uttered for Christ's sake in submission to the Spirit.

Traditional Service

(August 31, Saturday, 6 p.m.)

Prelude

Call to Worship

Worship through Praise

Worship through Fellowship

Worship through Giving

Community Prayer

Preparatory Hymn

Scripture Reading

Worship in the Word

Elder Ed Trono

The Lord's Supper

Benediction



Prayer That Pleases God (The Altar of Incense)

Today's Message (31 August/1 September 2019)
/ Exodus 30:1-10, 34-38

Believers have submitted to the only way of righteousness that will allow them to approach God. This way is through the atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross for our sins. In Christ, the great eternal High Priest, believers, with their will submitted in faith to the Spirit who dwells in them, can come near to God in prayer. We are nearest to God where we are most submitted to Him. The light of God's word, the lamp to our feet, directs our submission and teaches us how and what to pray.

2. THE INCENSE ON THE ALTAR (vv. 34-38)

- a. The composition of the incense: God's prescribed mixture. Made up of sweet-smelling, precious ingredients. Seasoned with salt, pure and holy. A fragrant, pleasant and sweet aroma of spices and resins rising up to God. An incense fit for royalty. Covers any unwelcome odor coming from sacrificial animals.
- b. The function of the incense: symbolizes the prayer (*Psalm 141:2*) of God's people. Fragrant and pleasing prayer to God, regular and continuing, sacrificial, and acceptable coming from people with sins atoned. Needed to be able to meet with God (v. 36).
- c. The restriction with the incense: God imposed limitations. Holy to the LORD. Can't be produced for private use. Disobedience means being cut off from God's people.

Prayer is a precious privilege accessible anytime anywhere to pure hearts focused on God. The pure and honest prayers of the saints (Revelation 5:8, 8:4) are precious in God's eyes. These are the yearnings of God's people for their Father's will in heaven to be made manifest here on earth. These are the supplications of saints who ask with pure motives- only for what they need and with no greedy or selfish intentions (James 4:3). These are prayers raised by forgiven saints whose righteousness rests on Christ. They are keenly aware of their need to be forgiven of their sins and their obligation to forgive others. These are saints who pray to God that they will stand firm against temptation. These are the constant prayers by believers whose hearts and minds are focused on the sovereign God to whom belongs the kingdom, the absolute power, and majestic glory for all eternity.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Today, believers no longer need an altar for incense or incense to pray. We don't need a human priest to bring our incense or prayers to God. We don't need the blood of an animal for a sin offering to atone for the altar. Still, there is a prescribed way by which we can pray to the Father: through Christ and in the Spirit. Christ is our atoning sacrifice. He is our ever-living High Priest who has entered the Holy of Holies and who intercedes for us. With Christ living in us through the Holy Spirit, we can draw near to God with confidence and full assurance of faith that we will find mercy and grace in answer to our prayers. To pray in Christ, with wills submitted to the Spirit, is pleasing to God ■

A QUESTION BEGGING TO BE ANSWERED

Pastor, what do you think about those famous Christian personalities who publicly declared that they have lost their faith, or destroyed their testimony with unrepentant sin?

I must answer this because some of you keep asking me, and it isn't just the youth or young adults (or millennials, as most of them are). My answer may not satisfy all camps and schools of thought, but I would rather answer this now than later.

Whether it is Joshua Harris or Marty Sampson (recently) or others in the past, we can only pray for them to hopefully return to the Lord, and not stand in judgment over them.

Why? Because only God knows the human heart. Is it not possible that five, ten, 20 years or more from now, with their very last breath, they can still say "Lord Jesus, be merciful to me a sinner" (*Luke 18:13*)? Do you think that God will tell them that He has run out of forgiveness for people like them? God's arms of grace are wider open than many of us realize, my dear friends (*Luke 23:42-43*). I am glad that's true because it gives the sinner writing this, personal hope. And while it saddens me deeply how they are a bad testimony for now, I keep hoping they will turn back and more than redeem the Name of Christ that they have done a disfavor to.

Which brings me to what we can take away from all of this. 2 Corinthians 13:5 says, "Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!"

Let us not assume that because we are sitting in church Sunday after Sunday, that makes everyone here saved. Our speaker a few weeks ago and my seminary professor, Dr. Richard Wells, got saved when he was already a pastor. And he had to be re-baptized in front of his shocked, but appreciative congregation! Are you uncertain of how you stand before God? There is no shame in admitting it if you are, and seeking help. We are here for you. There is much more than your pride at stake—your eternal destiny. And there are no second chances once this life is over.

A COROLLARY QUESTION

So Pastor, do we continue to use the songs of people like Marty Sampson, Rey Boltz, etc., or read the books or listen to the sermons that people like Joshua Harris, Mark Driscoll, Bill Hybels, etc., made?

We must aim for a higher standard in our songs than "avoiding heresy." Our songs should help people think and act Biblically. Any song that communicates biblical truth in a clear, uncompromising, beautiful, and "singable" way, will be a blessing. If we're unsure if a song meets those standards, we have plenty of other songs to choose from. Same goes for songs, books, and sermons by people who seem to be in unrepentant sin. God used those songs, books and sermons to bless people in the past. If those who made them are no longer walking with the Lord, without having to ruthlessly keep slamming the authors and/or preachers, let's use other songs/books/sermons while praying for their return to the Lord. Christian life is hard as it is. Let's pull each other up, not tear each other down ■

Ministry Opportunities + Announcements



WORDBANK BS TRAINING

Precept training for banking and finance professionals with Elder Ave Gaspar
September 8 (Sun), 9:30-10:30 a.m. at the Fellowship Hall. Sign-up at the booth for your free material and snack!



PARENT AS A DISCIPLER

Following the biblical blueprint for parents to disciple their children
September 6, 13, 20 & 27 (Fri), 6:00-9:00 p.m. at the Fellowship Hall. Visit the info booth for more details or to sign-up.



BIBLICAL PORTRAIT OF MARRIAGE 2

For dating, engaged, and married couples
September 14, 21 & 28 (Sat), 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. a.m. at BM07-08 | Fee: P150 per person, registration is until September 8. Sign-up at the booth or contact 0917 532 7713 for more details.



TURNING ADVERSITY TO STRENGTH

3R's: Annual Retreat of GCF Women's Ministry
September 27-29 (Fri-Sun), at MMRC
Speaker: Grace Shangkuan Koo, Ph.D.
Early bird fee: P2,500 (until today)
Regular fee: P3,500 (until September 15)
For details, contact 0917 532 1921.



F3 MEN'S CONFERENCE

Topics: Finances, Family, Fitness
October 18-20 (Fri-Sun) at MMRC
Fee: P2,500. For more details, please visit the info booth or contact 0917 532 1921.

The flowers this week are given with praise and thanksgiving to God by anonymous donors and Cross Light Medical Clinic. Please call 632 1354 to 56 for inquiries on how to participate in this ministry.

Join a DISCIPLE-MAKING GROUP

Burning Hearts Chronicles GG
Group for couples
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Rm. B123

Jars of Clay GG
Group for women
Sundays, 9:30-11:00 a.m.
Rm. B512

Best Together in Christ
Group for couples
Sundays, 9:30-11:00 a.m.
Rm. B508

Sowers 2
Mixed group
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 nn.
Rm. B514

If you are interested in joining any of the small groups above, fill out the tear-off form of this bulletin, drop it in the offering bag, or submit it at the Growth Group booth at the lobby. For more information, you can text or call us at 0917 779 1549.

Growth Group Leaders Training 1
September 1, 8, 15, and 22 (Suns)
12:00-3:00 p.m. at A303

DMG Assembly
All small group leaders are invited
September 7 (Sat), 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the Fellowship Hall

STEWARDSHIP REPORT / August 2019

AUGUST	Projected	Rcvd., Aug 1-29	YEAR-TO-DATE	Projected	Rcvd., as of Aug 29
General Funds	7,448,848	6,810,815	General Funds	64,091,938	64,058,284
Mission Support Fund	1,317,698	1,106,901	Mission Support Fund	14,283,253	10,149,633
Others (Designated, etc.)	735,278	1,603,069	Others (Designated, etc.)	8,573,434	10,208,468
TOTAL	9,501,824	9,520,785	TOTAL	86,948,625	84,416,385

GCF Month of Prayer & Fasting

Prayer points for September 2-8



SEPTEMBER 2 | DAY 21 | Pray for our **ministry servants** (formerly “volunteers”). Pray that there will be enough ministry servants to cover all the ministries of the church. Pray that ministry servants will not be stretched thin and burned-out on serving, but will maintain a balance between serving and being served (*Acts 6:3-7*).

SEPTEMBER 3 | DAY 22 | Pray for our **elders, deacons, and Growth Group leaders**. These faithful men and women are entrusted with the task of helping other believers grow into a full measure of maturity. Pray that they will be strong in their own faith, and able to be sensitive and discerning when leading others (*Hebrews 13:17*).

SEPTEMBER 4 | DAY 23 | Pray for **those who lead in musical worship**. Pray especially that their preparation time will be a time of worship for them personally as they seek the leading of the Holy Spirit, and that the worship service will not be a ‘show,’ but will be an offering of praise (*Psalms 150*).

SEPTEMBER 5 | DAY 24 | Pray for the **children of the church**. Pray that those who teach and care for them will do so with love and patience so that parents are free to serve and worship as the Lord leads. Pray that as those children grow up in church, they will grow strong in faith, coming to know Jesus as Savior and Lord early in their life. Pray that they will continue the faithful testimony of the church as they become the adults and parents of the next generation (*Mark 10:14*).

SEPTEMBER 6 | DAY 25 | Pray for the **youth of the church**. They will need strong roots of faith to maintain a positive witness throughout high school and into college/career. Pray that their leaders will have the necessary wisdom to teach and lead in the 21st century in a way that connects with and attracts others of their generation (*1 Timothy 4:12*).

SEPTEMBER 7 | DAY 26 | Pray for **generosity**. Often a small percentage of attendees provide the largest amount of funds for the support of ministry. Pray that all worshipers in GCF become cheerful givers (*2 Corinthians 8:7-9, 9:7*).

SEPTEMBER 8 | DAY 27 | Pray that GCF will have a **positive testimony in the community**. Especially in this culture of thinly-veiled distaste towards all aspect of Christian faith, a clean testimony in the community is important. Be known for compassion, love, and grace, instead of self-righteousness and criticism (*John 3:21, 1 John 4:7,19*).

PRAYER
at the Chapel

The GCF Hour of Prayer
Tuesdays, 6-7 a.m.

Midweek Prayer Service
Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m.

Weeknight Prayer Gatherings
Except Wednesdays, 7-8 p.m.

ON THE COVER: And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel.—Revelation 8:4 (photo of burning incense from pixabay.com).



Greenhills Christian Fellowship
Know Christ and Make Him Known

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Tel. Nos. 632 1354 to 56, 635 0078 to 80, 635 0082 to 83 | Fax No. 632 1357
Mobile No. 0920 961 2964, Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
E-mail: email@gcf.org.ph • Website: www.gcf.org.ph

How may we
SERVE YOU BETTER?

Fill-out this tear off form and drop it in an offering bag/box or at the Ministry Information Booth. Please check all that is applicable:

- I am a first-time guest.
- I prayed to receive Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord for the first time today.
- I would like to know how to become a Christian.
- I am interested in becoming a member of this church.
- I want to join a Growth Group.**
(Specify age group: _____)
(Specify group composition: _____)
- I want to start a Growth Group.
- I want to host a Growth Group.

Please share with us some information about yourself:

Name: _____
Age: ____ Landline no.: _____
Mobile no.: _____
Address: _____

E-mail: _____
Year of membership: _____
Name of Growth Group (if you already have one): _____

*Today is **31 August/1 September 2019**, and I attended the 8 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 3:00 p.m., 5:30 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. (Sat) (encircle the time).*

Write below *any* inquiry or prayer item that you want to ask or share.

For hospital or house visitation, dedication service, or funeral service requests, please call or text 0917 532 7794.

God's Way to Heaven

THE GOSPEL

“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”
(1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God is holy and righteous: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty, the whole earth is full of his glory” *(Isaiah 6:3)*. **He requires holiness of us as well:** “Be holy, for I am holy” *(1 Peter 1:16)*.

THE TRUTH ABOUT MAN

Man is sinful: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” *(Romans 3:23)*.
Sin demands a penalty: “For the wages of sin is death” *(Romans 6:23)*.

THE TRUTH ABOUT CHRIST

Christ is the expression of God's love for us: “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” *(Romans 5:8)*. **Christ paid the penalty of our sins and died for sinners:** “For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God” *(1 Peter 3:18)*. **Through Christ, God offers man reconciliation:** “God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them” *(2 Corinthians 5:18)*.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

Believe and receive Jesus as Lord and Savior: “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” *(Romans 10:9)*.

PRAYER: *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner. I believe that you died on the cross in my place, to save me from my sins, and I accept you as my Savior, and the Master of my life forever. Amen.*

Need someone to talk to?

Visit the Emmaus Road Counseling Center at the GCF Mezzanine floor or contact 632 1354 to 56, 635 0078 to 80 or 0917 532 7794 for inquiries.