

**May Q & A:  
Can We Pray to Jesus?**

Franklin Church of Christ  
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**Introduction:**

When fifth Sunday's roll around, it has become our habit to have a brief lesson before our congregational meeting. This lesson usually covers a question that someone has asked. If you would like a question considered for one of these lessons, you can e-mail me or you can drop a note in the box outside my office with your name and the question. Today's question is one that I have heard often asked and people continue to ask:

Can we pray to Jesus or should we only pray to the Father?

**Discussion:**

- I. The general rule and example of Scripture.
  - A. The perspective of most people I have talked to says that we pray to the Father, through the Son. Therefore, we should not pray to the Son, or the Spirit for that matter.
  - B. Certainly, it is true that prayer in the Bible is generally offered to God, the Father. Just a handful of examples demonstrate this. In **Acts 16:25**, Paul and Silas prayed and sang to God in prison. In **Romans 10:1**, Paul's prayer was to God. In **Romans 15:30**, Paul asked for the brethren to pray to God on His behalf. According to **Philippians 4:6**, through prayer we let our requests be made known to God.
  - C. Since the example of prayer is almost universally offered to God, the Father, in the New Testament, I understand why so many believe that is all that is authorized. However, I would like to share some other principles.
  
- II. Worship is to be offered to deity, not simply to God the Father.
  - A. In **Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9**, John bowed down to worship an angel. The angel told him not to do that. The reason, he was merely a servant just like us. Instead, John was told to worship God. However, in **Hebrews 1:6**, all the angels are commanded to worship Jesus. In **Matthew 28:9**, the apostles worshipped Jesus without rebuke.
  - B. If we can worship Jesus because He is not merely a servant but is God, then we can pray and sing praises to Jesus as well. Remember, Jesus is the fullness of God (**Colossians 2:9**) and the exact representation of God (**Hebrews 1:3**). Jesus is just as much God as the Father is. Therefore, barring some prohibition, we are able to pray to Jesus as well as to the Father.
  
- III. There are examples of prayer to Jesus.
  - A. A few moments ago, I said the example of prayer in the New Testament is *almost* universally offered to God, the Father. However, it is not completely that way.
  - B. In **Acts 7:59-60**, Stephen prayed to Jesus saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." This is supposed to remind us of Jesus' cry to the Father on the cross, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (**Luke 23:46**).
  - C. Then in **Revelation 5:8-14**, we see Jesus as the Lamb and the Father sitting on the throne. The elders present golden bowls full of incense to the Lamb. We are told what these bowls represent. They represent the prayers of the saints. Then the elders, the living creatures, the angels and the myriad of hosts pray and sing to the Lamb just as they do to the Father.

**Conclusion:**

I certainly do not wish to encourage anyone to violate their conscience. If you feel you should only address prayer to the Father, then do so. I don't believe the members of the Godhead are going to fight jealously about the addressee of our prayers. However, I also encourage you to not discourage your brethren who see the Biblical principles and examples as authoritative. The weight of evidence suggests to me that we are allowed to pray to Jesus.