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SEARCH FOR TRUTH
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Comments/questions: _____

WHY ARE WE ESPECIALLY ADMONISHED TO PRAY NOW?

1 Peter 4:7 “The end of all things is at _____: be ye therefore _____, and watch unto _____.”

If we are to stand in the time of trouble just ahead we must get the daily prayer habit and pray always. Morning, noon, and night we should lift our hearts to God.

“Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. . . . Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man” (Luke 21:34-36).

Each morning and evening, if at all possible, gather your family together and read a few texts of Scripture, and then kneel together and pray to God for His divine guidance in your family, and with your friends and relatives.

Do you have questions you would like answers to?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Name _____

Search for Truth

YOU CAN TALK WITH GOD

INTRODUCTION

Napoleon once said, “Do you wish to find out the really sublime?” He answered his own question by saying, “Repeat the Lord’s Prayer.” And apparently repeating it was all he did. But those who live that prayer have spiritual power.

Prayer is really communion with God and therefore a personal and intimate experience with the Lord. Let us see if we cannot find the secret to this great power.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

Prayer has been described as “the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven’s storehouse.” This is true. Think of it two ways:

1. As the cry of a soul in need.

“Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly.” **(Ps. 31:9.)**

Ps. 46:1 “God is our _____ and _____, a very present _____ in trouble.”

Many years ago Sir John Gayre, Lord Mayor of London, was shipwrecked. Finding himself on a dangerous shore he knelt in prayer. Then a lion approached him. Fervently the Christian prayed for help. The lion sniffed at him and walked off. God had saved the mayor.

However, such prayers, after the danger passes, generally fade away, and men forget God. Prayer is the cry of a soul in need, but it is much more than that.

2. As the opening of the heart to God.

It isn’t all talking on man’s or on God’s part. It is some of each, and more. It may be communion in utter silence at times, just a sacred sense of His holy presence. “Be still, and know that I am God” **(Ps.46:10)**.

a. What did God say we should call Him?

Luke 11:2. _____ . He wants us to

freely come to Him with our problems and our joys.

b. Who does the Scriptures say may come to Jesus?

Matt. 11:28. _____

c. What kind of a Priest do we have?

Heb. 4:15, 16. “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points _____ as we are, yet without _____. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain _____, and find grace to help in time of need,”

WHAT PRAYER IS NOT.

Prayer is not an act of merit that earns God’s favor, for as Jesus said: “He . . . sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” Matt. 5:45.

If the Christian farmer always had good crops and his atheist neighbor poor crops, the atheist would probably join the church, but that would make him a hypocrite. If the Christian never got sick, the churches would be crowded, the whole world would profess Christianity.

If prayer would get us anything we wanted, we probably would pray not so much for holiness as for temporal benefits. which would not be used to our good or God’s glory.

WHY DO WE PRAY?

Four questions will help to find the answer:

1. Is it to give God information?

Ps. 139:1-4. _____.

Does God need information? No! “Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him” (**Matt. 6:8**). Still He never wearies of our coming to Him in sincere prayer. Unburden your heart. Take all the time you need. Don’t rush. Think when you pray. Be alert and reverent when you talk to God, and your prayers will be heard in heaven.

2. Is it to make God willing?

Luke 11:13._____.

Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance; it is taking hold of God’s willingness. Prayer does not make Him willing, for He is always willing help us.

3. Is it to change God?

Mal. 3:6._____.

Do we pray to change God? No! With Him “is no variableness, neither shadow of turning”(James 1:17.) God’s promises are all conditional; therefore answers vary. But God never changes. “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever” (**Heb. 13:8**). His invitation is, “Come now, and let us reason together” (**Isaiah 1:18**).

4. Is it to change us?

Prayer is the greatest unused force in the universe to change what most needs to be changed, men. We pray “in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him.” Read Paul’s experience in **Acts 9:10-18**.

WHAT MUST WE DO TO GET OUR PRAYERS ANSWERED?

Before you go one step farther read the story of the Pharisee and the publican in the Temple (**Luke 18:10-14**). This will help you to see that sincerity of purpose means much with God. Now go on and note carefully these eight points:

1. Recognize your need of God.

“I will pour water upon him that is thirsty” (**Isa. 44:3**). “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (**Matt. 5:6**).

We must recognize our need. That’s what the publican did and what the Pharisee did not do.

2. Recognize God as your indispensable helper.

“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing” (**John 15:5**). “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights” (**James 1:17**).

As young children and babies look to their parents for all their needs, we should look to our Father in heaven. “it is only at the altar of God that we can kindle our tapers with divine fire.” (See **Isa.50:10, 11.**)

3. Pray in faith.

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering” (**James 1:5,6**).

Prayer without faith is like a key with no hand to turn it in the lock.

4. Confess and forsake all your sins.

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy”(**Prov. 28:13**) Also verse 9.

“Sin is the transgression of the law” (**1 John 3:4**). We must forsake sin, which is lawlessness. Obedience must be the rule of our lives. It is the fruit of true faith.

5. Pray according to God’s will.

“He went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt” (Matt. 26:39).

If it was fitting for Jesus to pray , “Thy will be done,” how much more appropriate for us. No wise parent will give a child everything he asks for. We must trust God to do what is best for us. Always!

6. Persevere with God.

Read **Luke 18:1-8**, the story of the importunate widow.

So many times we rush through the circle of prayer and scarcely remember what we prayed for. Perseverance in prayer is not so much urging our wills upon God as it is being “instant in prayer” - keeping the attitude. Yet it does mean earnestness, as in the case of Elijah praying for rain and sending his servant seven times to the hilltop to look for signs of rain.

7. Pray in Jesus’ name.

“Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (**John 14:13**.)

An elderly lady was living in poverty. Investigation revealed that she had a son. “Does he not help you?” she was asked. “No, he only writes and send strange little pieces of paper with his name signed.” They were checks for her support, but she had never made use of them. Jesus’ name is good in Heaven’s bank for the things we most need. Always close your prayers with the words, “for Jesus’ sake,” or “in His name.”

To pray in the name of Jesus “is to pray in the mind and spirit of Jesus, while we believe His promises, rely upon His grace, and work His works.”

8. Listen as well as talk.

“I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved” (**Hab. 2:1**).

Waiting for God to speak in prayer sometimes provides the only answer we need to our petitions.

WHY ARE SOME PRAYERS NOT ANSWERED?

1. Is it very important for us to forgive others?
Matt. 6:14,15. _____. Read also Matt. 18:21-35.

2. Should we include others in our prayers?
Matt. 5:44._____.

A man whose prayer is always, “O Lord, bless me,” can never become like God in character. We must have not only the inward look, but the outward look.

If we do not pray for those who despitefully use us, we shall surely despise them. Sincere prayer for them is essential for our own sakes.

3. Should we speak to one another concerning our faults?
James 5:16. _____. Read also Matt. 5:44.

We must confess faults to others we have injured. This is simple decency. If you break a man’s leg, do your best to fix it. If you break his heart, you are the only human being who can help patch it up. Do it with words of kindness and sincerity.

4. Should we restore things taken by fraud or robbery?
Ez. 33:15. _____ See also Luke 19:1-9.

WHAT EXAMPLE OF PRAYER DID JESUS GIVE?

“In the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (Mark 1:35).

Shall weak mortals neglect to pray when we have available to us through Christ, our divine Mediator, all power in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18)?