

CHAPTER 1 WHAT IS PRAYER

Philippians 4:6-7 (KJV) ⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

In this chapter, we will be going through several things that actually make up what prayer is. In doing so, we need to remember, if something is important to us, it is also important to God. We should never fail to bring our most cherished and private thoughts to Him in prayer.

Even though I was raised in the home of an alcoholic, and I did not get saved until I was 12 years of age; I remember when I was a child I had a plaque on the wall of my bedroom. That plaque was my first introduction to prayer. The words on that plaque said, "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." I do not remember the first time I read those words, but they were my first introduction to prayer.

If there is anything the Bible clearly and plainly teaches, it is prayer and the fact that God answers prayer. But, did you know it is actually possible to pray a prayer that is heard by people around you, but it is not heard in Heaven? Prayer is also one of the most self-revealing acts of a human being. It is simply communion with God.

Prayer is spiritual communication between man and God, a two-way relationship in which man should not only talk to God but also listen to Him. It is not simply asking God for something. It is two-way communication between you and your Heavenly Father. It is a two-way relationship. Man should not only talk to God, but he should also listen to what God has to say! There are different ways to listen to Him. God will speak to us with a still small voice in our hearts, and He also speaks to us as we read and study His Word.

As we pray, we should keep our spiritual ear open, so we can have that direct communion with God that we need. Prayer to God is like a child's conversation with his father. It is natural for a child to ask his father for the things he needs. God wants a better conversation from us than just that. Prayer is communion with God. It is the closest, most intimate relationship with the Creator you any of us can have, and God wants us to have it!

Luke 18:1 (KJV) ¹ And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

It is very clear there, Jesus said, "Men ought always to pray." Now, always means "all the

time". But, what do the two words "not faint" mean? They mean, "do not lose heart, believe and keep praying!"

Luke 18:2-7 (KJV) ² Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: ³ And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. ⁴ And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; ⁵ Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. ⁶ And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. ⁷ And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

This little woman kept bringing her petition to this judge. He kept turning her down, but she kept coming back. She was persistent, she would not stop. She did not lose heart. She kept coming back. She had faith that he would grant her request someday. Finally, she started wearing him down, and it wasn't long until he granted her petition. God wants us to be like this little woman. He wants us to continue bringing our requests to Him until He provides the answer. We need to be persistent with our prayers! Sometimes our prayers are not answered the first day. Sometimes they are not answered the first week or even the first year. Why is this? I do not have the answer to that except sometimes God wants us to keep praying about a particular matter.

Jesus Himself advocated prayer, but WHAT DID HE MEAN? When all is said and done, WHAT IS PRAYER? What does the word mean? If we are to understand the secrets of PRAYER, we must first understand what PRAYER is.

Psalms 25:1 (KJV) ¹ Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.

The bottom line is: PRAYER is the turning of the human SOUL and SPIRIT to the Living God. Just think about that for a moment. Simply put, PRAYER is the turning of the human personality, the human mind upward toward God. When one truly prays he does not lift up his heart to saints, to denominations, or to people, but to God. Prayer is the turning of the immortal spirit of man toward the Mighty Creator of the universe. Prayer, then, is communion with God. God wants us to have communion with Him!

Psalms 65:2 (KJV) ² O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.

Prayer is the communing between your spirit and the Great Spirit of the universe, which is the Living God.

Genesis 3:8 (KJV) ⁸ And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

Adam communed with God in the cool of the day in the Garden of Eden. The two of them communicated with each other. Fellowship is another word for communing or communication. When you are in fellowship with another person, you are keeping the lines of communication open. We can have that communion or fellowship with God if we desire to have it. But, if we do not want to have that fellowship with God, we are not going to have our prayers answered!

So prayer is relating to and communing with God. When you are in a position to commune with God, you do not fear Him. You do not approach Him to accuse Him but to love Him through fellowship with Him. This communion, this communication, this fellowship with God, is prayer.

Prayer Is a Heart Study.

I am not talking about that muscle in our chest that pumps blood, I am talking about our spiritual heart. In prayer, your heart is revealed to you as God sees it. Prayer is a school in which we learn the truth that is not available anywhere else.

Isaiah 6:5 (KJV) ⁵ Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

As Isaiah experienced, when you begin getting closer to God, you begin to see yourself as God sees you. When we are in fellowship with God, He speaks to us and begins to share with us ways we can improve our relationship with Him. Then we can begin to see ourselves as God sees us. Then we desire to straighten up those things in our life that are not pleasing to God. If we are not in fellowship with God, then we are in rebellion against Him.

When you don't have the answer to a problem or issue which arises, instead of wasting a lot of time worrying, why not stop and pray, and just talk it over with God? We are all tempted to worry, but God wants us to come to Him in prayer about every situation we face. As you pray, God will reveal the decision or the answer to the situation you need. We need to always realize, whatever the question is, God is the answer! He actually provided that answer 2,000 years ago on the Cross of Calvary. That act of shedding His blood on Calvary answers any question that can be asked.

Often God reveals myself to me as I pray. A case in point. Several years ago someone did something to me that really heart me. I couldn't get over it, for I did not ever expect something like that to happen. Undetected by me, I began to resent that person because of the hurt I was feeling. One day in prayer God opened this up to me, and let me know I had to go to this person and apologize, which I did. If God had not revealed this to me, I might

not have done anything about it. But when God shows me my heart, my attitude, I can go immediately and take care of what God is speaking to me about. If you are having true fellowship with God, you can do this also.

Prayer is an Intensive Desire.

Prayer is a serious desire to see something happen or come to pass. It may be a yearning that God has placed within you, or it may be some other desire.

Romans 8:26 (KJV) ²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Isn't that beautiful? The Holy Ghost is constantly interceding for us. If you are looking for the will of God in your life, you can find it in prayer, even when you may not be able to find it in thought. You may be spending time thinking about it, or pondering about it without finding an answer, but if you take it to God in prayer, God will help you to know His will. By the intensive desire of the spirit within you, reaching up to the mighty Spirit of God, His will can be made plain to you. But, you must be reaching up to Him. You've got to be having communion with Him. You've got to be having fellowship with Him.

Prayer is a Spiritual Compass.

All ships and planes have compasses, which are vital pieces of navigational equipment. Among their several functions, compasses enable pilots and navigators to know their direction of travel and to pinpoint their exact position at any time. Prayer is to a Christian what a compass is to a navigator. Prayer will pinpoint our spiritual integrity and show us our weaknesses. Prayer will clarify our positional relationship with God. Even as a compass points the navigator to the North Pole, prayer always points us to our heavenly Father.

PRAYER IS THE MOST POWERFUL FORCE IN THE UNIVERSE.

When a Christian begins to realize the importance, the wonder, the excitement, and the effectiveness of prayer, he will no more deny himself of his regular daily prayer than a navigator would start a trip without a compass.

Prayer is Working With God.

Through the divine medium of prayer, we can reach right out of our human element to God Himself. We live in a physical world, but when we are in prayer, we are entering into the spiritual world.

Isaiah 59:16 (KJV) ¹⁶ And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it

sustained him.

God was seeking an intercessor to pray. God is still seeking intercessors, men, women, boys, and girls, who will commit themselves to intercessory prayer. You and I are prospects for this critically important work of God. IT'S THE WORK OF INTERCEDING FOR GOD'S PEOPLE.

It is exciting to realize that you and I can actually share in the work God is doing in our world. If you are elderly or disabled, and can't get out much, you can still be an important part of God's kingdom. By accepting this opportunity you can proudly say, "I am God's personal assistant. I assist God through prayer."

Isaiah 63:5 (KJV) ⁵ And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.

This is God's cry as He looks for someone to help Him. Not only do you and I need prayer on our own behalf we also have an obligation to pray for God's work in the world. We are God's hands. We are His voice. We are His witnesses. We are His intercessors. When we pray, we are working with God!

Ezekiel 22:30 (KJV) ³⁰ And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

Here again, God needed someone to stand in the gap. He needed someone to pray! But, He found no one to labor with Him. This should never happen! God tells us to pray for each other. When we help a brother or sister in prayer, we help God's cause. We are standing with God against the enemy of our souls.

Prayer is Divine Reverence.

If we are to be effective in our prayer, we must come to our Father in reverence. In today's world, we see irreverence everywhere. We see irreverence for our country and for our flag. We see irreverence for our leaders, and even for God Himself. If we are to become mighty in prayer, we can not allow a spirit of irreverence to overtake us! We must always be in reverence to God and others.

John 4:23 (KJV) ²³ But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

In order to pray effectively, one must "worship the Father in spirit and in truth." One must have the right spirit when he prays. That right spirit must be one of respect and honor and deep reverence. If you desire to learn the secrets of prayer and become a man or woman of

prayer, you must learn to reverence the One whom you direct your petitions.

Prayer is Divine Obedience.

Stop and ask yourself, “Do I have a spirit of disobedience within me?” Are you in a spirit of rebellion against your parents? Are you in a spirit of disobedience toward God? Are you in rebellion against the laws of our land?

You must ask yourself these questions because if you are in a state of rebellion, you can not receive from God what you desire. The opposite is also true.

1 John 3:21-22 (KJV) ²¹ Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. ²² And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

Simply put, obedience to God is related to success in prayer. If we cannot come to God in humble obedience to His divine will, we can not expect to receive His miracles.

1 John 3:23 (KJV) ²³ And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

If you are to see the manifestations of God’s power in your circumstances, you must obey Him. You must come to the place where you will speak to Him and say something like this, “Lord, I am being obedient to you in everything I know to do. I want You to know that I’ll do anything You want me to do,” By making such a commitment to God, you will find yourself well on the way to getting your prayers answered.

Prayer is the Key That Unlocks God’s Treasures.

Prayer is the key, the force, the energy, the power that unlocks Heaven’s treasures and makes them available on earth.

Matthew 7:7 (KJV) ⁷ Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

Some people need healing but don’t pray for it. They may be saying, “Why should I pray? God knows I need to be healed.” It’s true; God does know you need to be healed. But, He has given you the key that will unlock Heaven’s healing power for you. According to Jesus, that power is prayer!

Remember this, Need does Not Unlock God’s Treasures. Prayer does; Faith does; Intercession does. If you will come to God with the right spirit, using the right keys, you will see God move on your behalf as you have never seen Him move before.

Prayer is the First Step in knowing the Lord Jesus.

Romans 10:13 (KJV) ¹³ For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

The first step in knowing the Lord Jesus is meeting Him in prayer, and saying to Him, "Lord Jesus come into my heart, I am sorry for my sins. Cleanse me from unrighteousness. Make me a child of God." From that beginning, you get to know Jesus. You get to know God. You open and begin to receive the treasures of Heaven. The whole transaction begins and continues, through prayer.

Prayer is very simple, yet, at the same time very complex. Without a proper prayer life, faith cannot be truly exercised, regardless of how much it is claimed. You now have a better understanding of prayer. Now, begin to pray according to God's Word and He will give you the victory you Seek.

Life-Changing Prayer Manual

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