



The Privilege of Prayer - 12

(1) WHY IS CONTACT WITH GOD THROUGH PRAYER SO IMPORTANT?

Jeremiah 29:12

Related Texts: Jeremiah 31:9; Psalm 50:15; 102:17; Isaiah 65:24; Matthew 7:7, 8

Through nature, the Bible, His working in our lives, and by the power of His Spirit God speaks to us. But all this is not enough. We also need to pour out our hearts to Him. In order to have spiritual life and energy, we must have personal contact with our heavenly Father. Our minds may be drawn toward Him and we may think about His

works, His mercies, and His blessings, but this is not enough. In order for us to be fully in touch with God, we must share with Him the things that happen in our daily lives.

Prayer is opening up our hearts to God like we would to a friend. It is not needed as a way for us to make things known to Him; He already knows all things. The purpose is to allow us to receive Him. The act of prayer does not bring God down to us, it is the means by which we are brought up to Him.

(2) WHAT HAS JESUS INVITED US TO DO AS WE COME TO HIM IN PRAYER?

1 Peter 5:7

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Related Texts: Philippians 4:6, 7; Psalm 55:16-18; 34:5-8, 15-20; 62:8; Jeremiah 33:3; 2 Chronicles 7:14

When Jesus was here on earth He taught His followers how to pray. He told them to tell God what their daily needs were, and to “cast all their care upon Him.” The promise He gave them that their petitions will be heard is also for us.

(3) WHEN CHRIST DWELT ON EARTH, WHAT EXAMPLE DID HE GIVE REGARDING COMMUNION WITH THE FATHER IN PRAYER?

Mark 1:35

Related Texts: Mark 6:46; Matthew 6:6; 14:23; Luke 6:12; 1 Peter 2:21

While Jesus lived among men He prayed often. Jesus our Saviour saw first hand what our needs and weakness are. He became a prayer warrior asking His Father for fresh supplies of strength so that He could be ready for His duties and trials. He is our example in all things. He was “in all points tempted like as we are.” But as the One without sin, His nature pulled back from evil and He made it through the struggles and torture of His soul in this world full of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and a privilege. He found comfort and joy in communicating with His Father. If the Saviour of men who was the Son of God felt the need of prayer, just think how much more we, as weak and sinful mortals, should feel the need to always be praying earnestly.

(4) HOW SHOULD WE COME TO GOD IN PRAYER?

Hebrews 4:16

Related Texts: Philippians 4:6, 7; Ephesians 2:18; 3:12; Isaiah 55:6; Matthew 7:7-11; 1 Peter 5:7

Our heavenly Father is waiting to pour out on us the fullness of His blessings. It is our privilege to drink as much as we want from His fountain of endless love. Isn't it amazing that we choose to pray so little? God is ready and willing to hear the sincere prayer of the humblest of His children, but we stubbornly refuse to make known our needs to Him or give Him the praise He deserves. It makes you wonder what the angels of heaven think of us poor helpless, human beings. We are exposed to temptation and yet we pray so very little and have so little faith, when God's heart of infinite love yearns toward us, ready to give us more than they can ask or even imagine. The angels love to bow before God and they love to be near Him; they consider closeness with God their greatest joy. Isn't it amazing that His children on earth, who need so much more of the help that only God can give, seem satisfied to walk without the light of His Spirit and the companionship of His presence?

(5) WHAT ARE TWO KEYS TO OVERCOMING TEMPTATION?

Matthew 26:41

Related Texts: Luke 21:36; Mark 14:38; 13:37; Galatians 5:16; James 4:7, 8; 1:2-5; Romans 13:14; Matthew 7:7

The darkness of the evil one surrounds those who neglect to pray. They are drawn into sin by whispered

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temptations, and it is all because they do not use the privilege of prayer that God has given them. Why should we as sons and daughters of God be unwilling to pray when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse where there is an unlimited amount of power? If we do not continuously pray and carefully watch we are in danger of growing careless, causing us to leave the right path. The enemy is always trying to block the way to the mercy seat. He doesn't want us, by earnest prayer and faith, to receive the grace and power to resist when we are tempted.

(6) LIKE DAVID, WHAT MUST BE OUR SPIRITUAL CONDITION IN ORDER FOR GOD TO ANSWER OUR PRAYERS?

Psalm 63:1

Related Texts: Isaiah 44:3; 41:17; 48:21; John 4:10; 7:37-39; Revelation 21:6; 22:17

When we pray under certain conditions, we can know and expect that God will hear and answer our prayers. One of these conditions is that we must feel our need of His help. He has promised, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground" Isaiah 44:3. Those who hunger and thirst for what is right and who long after God can be sure that they will be filled. Our heart must be open to the Holy Spirit's power, or God's blessing cannot be received.

(7) WHAT THREE STEPS MUST WE TAKE TO RECEIVE ANSWERS TO OUR PRAYERS?

Luke 11:9

Related Texts: Jeremiah 33:3; Matthew 21:22; Psalm 50:15; 118:5; 91:14, 15; Isaiah 55:6

Our great need is itself an argument and a plea. We should go to the Lord and ask Him for the things we need. "Ask, and it shall be given you." And "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Matthew 7:7; Romans 8:32.

(8) HOW DOES REBELLION AFFECT OUR PRAYERS?

Proverbs 28:9

Related Texts: Isaiah 1:15, 16; Zechariah 7:11-13; Proverbs 15:8-10; Psalm 66:18; 109:7

If we hold evil in our hearts, if we hold on to any known sin, the Lord will not hear us. However, the prayer of someone who is really sorry for his sin is always accepted. When we have made right all the things we have done that we know are wrong, we can believe that God will answer our prayers. Our goodness will never bring us in favor with God. It is only the goodness of Jesus that will save us. It is only His blood that can make us clean, but we still have to do our part and meet the conditions of acceptance.

(9) WHAT IS THE NEXT CRITICAL ELEMENT IN RECEIVING ANSWERS TO OUR PRAYERS?

Mark 11:24

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Related Texts: James 1:6; Matthew 21:22; Mark 11:22-24; 1 Timothy 2:8

Faith is another important condition to answered prayer. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Hebrews 11:6. Do we take Him at His word?

The promise is broad and has no limit, and He is faithful who made the promise. When we do not receive the exact things we asked for, right at the time we ask, we should still believe that the Lord hears and that He will answer our prayers. We are so much in error and are so shortsighted that we sometimes ask for things that would not be a blessing to us. In love, our heavenly Father answers our prayers by giving us what will be for our best interest. He gives us what we would desire if, through heaven's eyes, we could see all things as they really are. When it seems as if our prayers have not been answered, we are to hold on to the promise because the time of answering will surely come. We shall receive the blessing we needed most. To claim that our prayers will always be answered in the exact way and for the exact thing that we desire is presumption. God is too wise to be wrong, and too good to keep any good thing from them that walk uprightly. Do not fear to trust Him, even though you do not see the instant answer to your prayers. Trust upon His sure promise.

(10) IF WE, IN HUMBLE AND TRUSTING FAITH, MAKE OUR NEEDS KNOWN TO GOD, WHAT GREAT PROMISE CAN WE CLAIM?

1 John 5:14, 15

Related Texts: Matthew 7:7-11; Ephesians 3:12-14; Hebrews 3:14; 10:35

If we keep dwelling on our doubts and fears, or try to explain everything that we cannot see clearly, doubt will only increase and grow deeper. It is better to come to God feeling helpless and dependent as we really are. In humble and trusting faith we can make known our needs to Him whose knowledge is unlimited. He is the One who sees everything in creation; who controls everything by His Will and Word and He will answer our cry and will let light shine into our hearts. Through sincere prayer we are brought into touch with the mind of the Infinite. We may have no obvious sign right at the time that the face of Jesus is bending over us in concern and love, but it is true. We may not feel His visible touch, but His hand is upon us in love and pitying tenderness.

(11) HOW IS OUR FORGIVENESS FROM GOD DETERMINED?

Matthew 6:14, 15

Related Texts: Matthew 6:12; 18:21-35; Luke 7:40-48; 11:4

When we come in prayer to ask mercy and blessings from God we should have a spirit of love and forgiveness in our own hearts. How can we pray, "Forgive

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us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” [Matthew 6:12], and keep within us an unforgiving spirit? If we expect our own prayers to be heard we must forgive others in the same way and to the same extent as we desire to be forgiven.

(12) HOW OFTEN SHOULD OUR HEARTS BE IN UNION WITH GOD IN THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER?

Colossians 4:2

Related Texts: Colossians 4:12; Luke 21:36; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Psalm 55:17; 86:3; Ephesians 6:18

Perseverance in prayer is also a condition of receiving our answer. We must always pray that we can grow in faith and experience. We are to be “instant in prayer.” Romans 12:12. Peter

tells believers to be “sober, and watch unto prayer.” 1 Peter 4:7. Paul directs, “In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” Philippians 4:6. “But ye, beloved,” says Jude, “praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God.” Jude 20,21. Unceasing prayer is the unbroken union of our soul with God, so that life from God flows into our life, and from our life, purity and holiness flow back to God.

There is a need for us to be diligent in prayer and not let anything hinder us. We should make every effort to keep contact between Jesus and ourselves. Look for any opportunity to go where prayer can be made. Those who are really seeking for communion with God will be seen in prayer meetings, faithful to do their duty and earnest and anxious to reap all the good they can gain. They will take any and every opportunity to place themselves where they can receive rays of light from heaven.

I am thankful for the awesome privilege God has granted me that I may come at anytime to Him, through Christ, in prayer.

Circle: Yes Undecided

I realize that contact with the Lord in prayer is our life-line to heaven. It is my desire to live in constant connection with Him and experience His abiding peace through the gift of prayer.

Circle: Yes Undecided

I trust and believe that God hears and answers my prayers in His perfect timing and according to His perfect will.

Circle: Yes Undecided

I accept God’s invitation to come “boldly before His throne of grace” in prayer so that I may obtain the help, grace, and the mercy I need in my daily walk with Him.

Circle: Yes Undecided