

Just Between You and Me

Prayer is our personal communication with God. When one prays, he utters verbally or mentally his praise for God, his thanks for God's blessings, and also his petition to God for himself and for others. Prayers are an offering to God; they are described as incense stored in golden bowls before God's throne (Revelation 5:8). Prayers are not mere repetitions imposed or stylized, but rather heartfelt, personal communication with the Creator, equivalent to communication with an intimate personal friend. In prayer, we share our hopes, dreams, frustrations, needs, and desires with God, as we would with our physical father.

In fact, this is a glimpse of how much God loves us. He tells us He is our *Father!* That is truly an amazing thing! We belong to Him. The Creator God is the Supreme Father, and as a father He loves His children. Whether spiritually young or physically young, He watches how His children are treated.

He gives us a way to talk to Him, and get to know Him. We are to talk to Him through prayer, and get to know Him through reading the Bible. He wants our fellowship.

When we pray it should be a combination of reverence, thankfulness, willing confession and surrender, appeal, confidence, and trust. Prayer is the communication between "You and me, Parent and child, Friend and friend, Master and servant, King and subject, Creator and creature" (*The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, subject "Prayer"). We put ourselves in His hands.

Jesus' instructions in Matthew 6:5-15 are the clearest in the Bible regarding prayer. We are told to pray to our Father privately, not to be seen of men; not to heap up empty phrases and ritualistic repetitions; to address God as our Father; to *revere* His name; to yearn and pray for the Kingdom to come; to ask that His Way be followed and His will be done; to thank Him for our



sustenance and other blessings; to forgive us for our sins; to help us forgive those who sin against us; to keep us from temptation; to deliver us from Satan; and to help us understand, appreciate, and look forward to the majesty, power, and glory of God. It was Christ's own approach and example of effective prayer.

If it sounds complicated it is not. Our *attitude* is pivotal in determining how God reacts to our prayers.

God states that it is our iniquities and sins which separate us from Him, so that He will neither hear nor answer our prayers (Isaiah 59:21). A heart hardened by sin doesn't feel sorry or want to change.

On the other hand, when we go to God in faith, with a humble and contrite spirit, He will both

hear and spiritually revive us (Isaiah 57:15). God is happiest when we turn from sin and want to do what is right.

God would rather restore us than destroy us. He would rather lift us up than knock us down. He would rather we choose life than death! But He will always give us the choice. Prayer gives us the chance to make better choices by looking to Him for guidance.

In teaching our children the importance of prayer we give them foundational information that is the best and wisest we could ever offer. It will last them their lifetime.

In this ever-changing world there is the solid foundation of God. There is refuge, wisdom, and hope in the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, the Wonderful Counselor, our Mighty God. *Excerpt from the Teachers Bible Study in "Sshh, Who's That Talking?", SKY StoryTime. AG*

