

## HOW TO PRAY EFFICIENTLY, Pt 2

Let me ask you a question: do you believe your prayers are really making a difference? Think about it: deep in your heart, do you ever wonder if God is hearing you when you pray? When you finish praying, are you convinced that your prayers have accomplished something? Are you satisfied with your prayer life? Do you really know how to pray? Are you longing for a deeper, richer, more dynamic relationship with God through prayer?

If you are like thousands of others, you are saying “Yes! Yes!” People really want to pray; they want to know that God hears their prayers and that their prayers are being effective. People want to grow in their prayer lives and to see their prayers become more powerful as they pray for others and for themselves. Countless people are not satisfied with their prayer lives. They are not sure God is really listening when they talk to Him; they do not understand why some prayers seem to go unanswered; they wonder if they are praying “right” or praying enough. They are generally frustrated in their prayer lives, eager to know what to do to feel more connected with God and to gain confidence that their prayers really do make a difference.

One of the most important, most life changing prayers a person can ever utter is: “Lord, teach me to pray”. You see, knowing about prayer is really not enough; we have to know how to pray as individuals who are in an intimate, dynamic personal relationship with the God to Whom we pray. Although there are principles of prayer that apply to everyone, we are individuals and God will lead each of us individually.

God has a personalized plan for you, a way for you to communicate most effectively with Him. You can't depend on group prayers, on “ready-to-pray” prayers. If you go to God as an individual, He will answer you in a powerful way and bring wonderful improvements in your prayer life.

Then you will be able to move from praying panic based, carnal prayers (prayers that come from a person's mind, will, or emotions) in times of emergency, to praying Spirit filled, Spirit led, faith-based prayers, from a trusting heart.

You will no longer focus primarily on prayers for your “outer life” (your circumstances, the activities you are involved in, the things that happen around you). Instead, you will pray for your inner life (the condition of your heart, your spiritual growth, your attitudes, and your motives). Our priority should be to pray to be strengthened internally and to ask Him to help us live out of a pure heart from the right motives; then, He will help us by taking care of the externals.

Instead of feeling like you have to pray and striving to pray for a few minutes every day, trying to discipline yourself and being legalistic with your prayer time, you will enjoy and actually feel the need and desire to begin your day with prayer; you will also be led to praying throughout the day as things come to your heart, and you will finally end your day sweetly communicating with the Lord as you fall asleep.

From thinking you are fulfilling an obligation to God by praying, you will come to realize that you absolutely cannot survive a day and *be satisfied, content and peaceful* if you do not pray. You will realize that *prayer is a great privilege, not a duty.*

You will no longer approach God in fear, wondering if He will really hear you and send an answer to your prayers. You will be able to approach Him boldly, as His Word teaches to do, and with great expectation.

I believe if you will ask God to teach you to pray, that you will experience great changes in the way you pray, increased effectiveness in your prayers, tremendous satisfaction in your relationship with God, and a refreshing freedom and enjoyment in prayer. *(To be continued)*