

prayer & fasting

Reasons We Should Pray –Part 3

1 Thess. 5:16-18

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Objective Sentence: Everyone should pray because the basic essentials of spiritual life are provided through prayer.

Introduction: A little girl named Suzie finished her prayer and said: Dear God, “Before I finish, I want you to take care of mommy, take care of daddy, take care of my sister and my brother and please, God, take care of yourself, because if you don’t we’ll all sunk. Amen!”

E. Stanley Jones: Anything that is right is possible!!! (1 John 5:14--This is the confidence that we have in God; that if we anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us then we have the petitions we have desired of Him.” *Jones:* God has left open certain things that are contingent upon the human will ... and upon our prayers—there are certain things that will never happen or be accomplished unless we pray. *Pastor Dan:* All that you need, in order to become the person you are capable of becoming and do what you are capable of doing in your walk with God, has been placed in the hands of your prayer life.

Thomas Aquinas: God bestows many things on us out of his liberality, even without our asking for them. But that he wishes to bestow certain things on us at our asking is for the sake of our good, that we may acquire confidence in having recourse to God, and that we may recognize in him the Author of our goods.

#1. God openly rewards those who pray (Matt. 7:7-11 *Ask and you will receive, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened to you. If you ... know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him.*)

A. E. M. Bounds: *The purpose of asking is to receive. The aim of seeking is to find. The goal of knocking is to arouse attention and get in. The answer to prayer is the part of prayer that glorifies God. Unanswered prayers are dumb oracles that leave the praying ones in darkness, doubt, and bewilderment. It is the answer that brings glory to God’s name.*

1. God’s Blessings Flow Through the Avenue of Prayer

- a. **Is. 55:10-11** For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it.
- b. **2 Corinthians 1:20** God says yes to all He promises

- c. **1 Jn. 3:20-22** Beloved if your heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart. If our heart condemns us not than we have confidence towards God, that whatever we ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. ...
- d. *Dr. John G. Lake, February 27, 1923:* It is not long prayers, but believing God that gets the answer. Sometimes you have to lay hold of God, and stay before Him through the blackness and through the darkness and through the night of it, until the faith of God prevails and the work is done.
- e. **Ja. 4:2** Ask Not And You Have Not **Jn. 14:13-14**
 - f. *George Mueller:* It is not enough to begin to pray, nor to pray aright; nor is it enough to continue for a time to pray; but we must patiently, believingly, continue in prayer until we obtain an answer; and ... not only to continue in prayer ... but ... to believe that God does hear us, and will answer Most frequently we fail in prayer by not continuing until the blessing is obtained, and in not expecting to receive the answer we seek.
 - g. **Jn. 15:7; Eph. 3:20; 1 Jn. 5:14-15**
 - h. *English Proverb:* Many things are lost for the want of asking.
 - i. *C.H. Spurgeon:* Whether we like it or not, asking is the rule of the kingdom. If you may have everything by asking in His name, and nothing without asking, prayer is an absolute necessity for receiving God's best.
 - j. *E. M. Bounds:* Prayer can do anything that God can do. And perhaps little praying is worse than no praying. Little praying is a kind of make-believe, a salve for the conscience, a farce and a delusion.

2. God's blessing flow through ones sense of lack and need

- a. **Ja. 1:5-8** If anyone lack wisdom let that person ask God who gives to all liberally for He will not rebuke you for asking.
- b. *Ole Hallesby:* Prayer and helplessness are inseparable. Only he who is helpless can truly pray. Your helplessness is your best prayer. It calls from your heart to the heart of God with greater effect than all your uttered pleas.
- c. **Pro. 15:8** The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord but the prayer of the upright is His delight.
- d. **Ps. 145:8** The Lord is near to all who call on Him to all to call on Him in truth.
- e. *Adam Clarke:* Those who pray not, know nothing of God, and know nothing of the state of their own souls.
- f. *Madame Guyon:* The only way to heaven is prayer.
- g. **Revelation 3:16-17, 20** I ... have need of nothing ... you are poor miserable wretched and blind ... if anyone hears my voice
- h. *J. C. Ryle:* One of the surest marks of a true Christian is a habit of prayer. Prayer is absolutely necessary to a man's salvation.
- i. *Leonard Ravenhill:* A man may study because his brain is hungry for knowledge, even Bible knowledge. But He prays because His soul is hungry for God.
- j. *Matthew Henry:* Prayer is the soul's blood.

Closing and Invitation: On September 16, 2004 Hurricane Ivan, the third major storm to rip through Florida in six weeks, hit the Panhandle, destroying on everything in the path of its fury. Lieutenant Dan, a National Guardsman, was called up and sent to Milton, Florida to help with

relief efforts. There he met with Pastor Lowery of Pace Assembly and was granted permission to use their facilities as a barracks and distribution center. Volunteers from the church and its staff worked with the soldiers, providing the basic essentials for thousands of desperate people in need. One of the volunteers and Lieutenant Dan developed a close friendship. They had a lot in common, they were both young and beginning their careers, the Lieutenant was a high school history teacher and Travis a commercial airline pilot. They were both involved in church and were into fitness, running and working out religiously.

Travis rented a plane and wanted to take Pastor Lowery and Dan up to view Ivan's damage from the air. They were scheduled to meet early Wednesday morning. The bus that transported Dan's men to their duty stations was supposed to pick them up at eight each morning, but it never arrived until after ten. So Dan had plenty of time to take a quick flight and get back to work before the bus arrived.

Wednesday morning Pastor Lowery received an emergency call and for the first time ever the Lieutenant's bus arrived on time. Both were both disappointed and canceled their appointments. Two other people from the church took their places on the plane. Travis taxied down the runway and took off, but as soon as they were airborne the plane began experiencing engine trouble. Travis attempted to turn around but his efforts were futile. The engine lost power and the plane crashed killing everyone on board. The church and community, already suffering because of Ivan, were shaken by the loss.

Two nights before the crash Lieutenant Dan's mother was awakened in the middle of the night, hearing one of her boys crying out for help. She checked on her youngest but he was resting peacefully. She was troubled and began praying for Dan and her other son, Issac. She went back to bed after a couple of hours. A few days later when Dan called and told her about what happened, she was certain about one thing—God had given her a premonition to pray. Oswald Chambers said, "A great many people do not pray because they do not feel any sense of need." But it is imperative that we call on the Lord constantly because it is prayer that moves the hand of Him who moves the world.