



Are We As Effective In Our Prayer Time As We Would Like To Be?

"Whatever you ask the Father, in My name, He will give you" (John 16:23)
by Dennis Ward

When my son and daughter were young, somewhere around seven and nine years old, my dad called to ask our son if he would like to go fishing. He said yes, of course, and they had a great day together, bonding and bringing home a small catch of fish. When the pictures were back from being developed, my daughter saw her brother holding up his prize catch, and she said, "dad, I wish I could catch a fish." Don't know why my dad didn't think of taking her at the time, but I was more than willing to get in some fun time with my cute pigtailed little daughter. Only thing was, where could we go close-by, and catch fish?

Living in Huntington Beach, California, we took off, gear in hand, and got set-up on the local pier. I told my daughter we needed to pray first if we expected to catch anything, because there just weren't that many "keeper" fish around piers these days. It was about 11:00 AM in the late morning, we prayed together, and set a "pack up, and go home" time of 2:30 PM in the afternoon.

PRAYING IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Well, we had a lot of fun joking around, but our fishing was turning out to be completely unfruitful. We had both reeled in our lines, and I could sense my daughter beginning to get a little antsy. It was already 2:20 PM, and she looked up at me and said, "dad, we haven't caught anything yet." I responded, "it isn't 2:30, and we prayed, right?" She agreed, and we just turned around and threw our lines in again. Well, between 2:25, and 2:30, PTL! We caught three fish!

I remember praying my first 20 years as a religious Protestant, and the following 20 years praying as a confirmed Roman Catholic. To be honest, up to that point, I don't remember having a single prayer answered that I could actually identify as being miraculous. Then one day, the Lord sent a believer to me who said: "if you know how to pray, you can do anything." Boy, that got my attention! There is far more to prayer than could be put into a single article, but at least we can explore a few points I feel are important. After three decades, I am still learning. From this new friend's teaching, it was evident that the receiving of, and praying in the Holy Spirit, was vital to effective prayer time. Now I can say without hesitation, from that point on when I prayed, things happened. Many times, the answers were unquestionably, of miraculous intervention. I felt for the first time, I was connecting with God!

TAKE THE TIME TO LISTEN

Another lesson I learned about myself was that I would set aside my prayer time and ask God questions. Unfortunately I did not give God much chance to answer. I was too much in a hurry, I guess. If you think about it, it's like calling someone on the phone, asking a question, and hanging up while they are sitting there with their mouth open, unable to answer in time. God will talk to each of us, and give us the answer to our questions, but we must be in tune spiritually, and take the time to listen. We live in quite a fast world, spend the majority of our time in the flesh, and just a smidgen in the Spirit. My contention is that all this time in the flesh, and very little in the spirit, we are somewhat out-of-balance spiritually. The good thing is, we can change that out-of-balance situation simply by praying more in the Spirit, building up our spirit man, and get our spirit in tune with God.

Long ago, I heard a message on praying out loud, instead of "praying silently." This study concluded that silent prayer is no more than meditation, and not prayer at all. Could this be? In Luke Chapter 11:1-2, we see the disciples asking Jesus to teach them how to pray. "Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. So He said to them, "when you pray say:"

WHEN YOU PRAY SAY

Have you ever heard someone say "we've done all we can do, now all we can do is pray?" Prayer is the most powerful tool we have as believers, certainly **NOT** a last resort. Let's remember that prayer actually allows us to tap into God, and with Him, all things are possible.

Let's study, share, and continue to learn all we can about "effective" prayer.



Discipline

(continued)

earlier tomorrow but go to bed at the same time tonight. Third – Be strategic. Look at the things you need to get control over. List your three weakest area's (if you are not sure, ask someone you trust). Which one would you benefit the most from if you became disciplined? Fourth – Have someone hold you accountable and really let them in. Fifth – chart your progress. You need to see that God keeps His promises just as much as you need to see if you are co-laboring with Him. Sixth – Start today. We procrastinators know who we are. Do it NOW.

Before I close I need to say this to those of us who are prone to self-condemnation. God convicts us through His Holy Spirit, He does not condemn us, Satan does, so take any condemning thoughts captive immediately on your road to victory. So, that being said, which will it be, discipline or mediocrity? The choice is yours.

Remember these words from Jim Rohn, "We suffer one of two things. Either the pain of discipline or the pain of regret. You've got to choose discipline, versus regret, because discipline weighs ounces and regret weighs tons."

The Choice Is Yours

Dear Heavenly Father, I see my need for a better disciplined life. You said in your Word, that if I acknowledge You in all my ways, You would direct my path. I ask, LORD, today, that You would direct my path and help me become more disciplined in the areas that I need to be. I ask the Holy Spirit, my teacher, to teach me to learn to delight in discipline and to see its good rewards. I pray this from the depths of my heart, in the precious name of Jesus. Amen.



Food For Thought

"To be conscience that you are ignorant is a great step to knowledge." Benjamin Disraeli

"Parenthood has two stages: when your children ask all the questions, and when they think they know all the answers."

"Humility is to receive praise and to pass it on to God, untouched." J John

"Anger is only one letter short of danger."

"Victory belongs to the most persevering." Napoleon Bonaparte

"It is better to deserve honors and not have them, then to have them and not deserve them." Mark Twain

"Try to fix the mistake, not the blame."

"Kindness pays most when you don't do it for pay."

"I find doing the will of God leaves me with no time for disputing about His plans." George MacDonald

"Tact is changing the subject without changing your mind."

"Kindness is the oil that takes the friction out of life."

"Strange how much you've got to know, before you know how little you know."

"God has no problems, only plans." Corrie Ten Boom

"God has a big eraser."