

## Powerful Prayer

In Luke 7:44-46, Jesus had a lesson to teach Simon who brought Him in for a meal. The verse says, "Then Jesus turned to the woman and said to Simon, 'Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil.'" If our love for God were to be evaluated based on the intensity and the persistence of our praying, how apparent would it be that we are grateful for our blessings? The woman who washed Jesus' feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head had a love for Jesus that was very obvious. She was not afraid to show just how much she loved the Messiah. As she literally clung to the Lord, her actions showed that she appreciated what forgiveness meant, and how incredible it was to be separated from her sins. On the other hand, Simon, the Lord's host, paid far less personal attention to Jesus. He failed to see the depth of his need for what Jesus had to offer.

The scriptures teach us that we are not only to pray, but to do so with persistence, fervently expressing our desires. Jesus teaches His disciples about prayer in Luke 18:1-5: "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: 'There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'" The judge had no fear of God, but because of this woman's request, the judge did as she requested. Persistence in prayer is not for God's benefit, but ours. We need, as famous poet Charles Wesley said, to "Batter the very gates of heaven with storms of prayer." It must be with conviction of the heart that we approach our King: "Alone to God with faith draw near, approach His courts, besiege His throne with all the power of prayer."

Undoubtedly, one of the biggest reasons we get so little out of prayer must be that we put so little effort into it. The God who we worship will not be manipulated or coerced by prayers that are vain and come only from a place of curiosity. The Hebrew writer in 11:6 declares God to be "a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him," not of those who seek Him when it is convenient.

Out of all the things we do, praying is one of the most significant. In prayer we are actually speaking to our Creator. And the manner in which we pray, perhaps more than anything else, indicates how diligent we are in our love for God.

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