

# Prayer Is A Special Blessing

**Introduction.** Prayer is a powerful blessing. With it, we can tap into the true power of God, and experience His awesome supremacy. With the power of prayer we can conquer all our enemies, and move God in a way that nothing else can. There are so many eminent prayers in the Bible, but the strength of our words in prayer need to be studied, for they indicate the strength of our relationship with God.

## I. ***What Entitles You To Prayer?***

### A. Fellowship with God.

1. Prayer is ineffective without God (1 Samuel 28:5-6, 15-18). If you were to appeal to a king or national leader, you must first be given the right to be heard (Esther 4:11).
2. How much more necessary would it be to have the right to be heard by the Almighty God. We are all, of course, God's creatures, but Christians are entitled to prayer through our special relationship to Him (Matthew 6:9).

### B. Prayer is a privilege that comes only in Christ.

1. To enjoy spiritual blessings, such as prayer, we must be in Christ (Ephesians 1:3; Philippians 4:6; Hebrews 4:16).
2. God does not hear the sinner's prayer (Psalm 66:18; John 9:31); therefore, we have no right to pray to God unless we are a part of God (John 14:23; James 4:8). We have to first come out of the world (James 4:4). Prayer is a blessing, not a right.

## II. ***What Is Prayer?***

### A. Prayer is a humble request.

1. For forgiveness (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9).
2. For physical and spiritual blessings.
  - a) Physical (Matthew 6:11; Philippians 4:18-19).
  - b) Spiritual (Acts 9:11; Philippians 4:7).
3. For wisdom (James 1:5; cf. 1 Kings 3:7-9).

### B. Prayer is a reverent expression.

1. In thankfulness (Colossians 1:9-12; 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:18).
2. In respect (1 Chronicles 29:10-13; Hebrews 12:28).
3. Showing your dependency on God (Psalm 86:1-7).
  - a) When we do not pray, we rely on ourselves.
  - b) When we pray, we rely on God.

### C. Prayer is a solemn appeal.

1. Righteous prayer can move God to act (James 5:16-18; cf. Luke 11:8-10; Acts 12:5).
2. "The power of prayer is that it activates the power of God."

### III. **Effective Prayer**

#### A. Prayers must include faith.

1. While approaching God, you must have faith that there is a God, and that He responds to your actions (Hebrews 11:6).
2. If we do not have faith, our prayers are ineffective (James 1:6-8). We need to expect prayer to prevail in our lives, even if the answer is not as we expect.
  - a) I have seen several t-shirts for breast cancer awareness quoting Matthew 21:22 on the back. This is a misconception that needs to desperately be addressed.
  - b) This promise was evidently a special one, given to the apostles in regard to working miracles. To them it was true. But it is clear that we have no right to turn it from its original meaning and apply this promise to ourselves.

#### B. Prayers must include humility.

1. In Jesus' parable the Pharisee did not have humility and went home less justified (Luke 18:9-14; cf. 2 Samuel 22:28).
2. The Lord will respond to those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit (Psalm 34:18; James 4:6).

#### C. Prayers must include obedience.

1. Our prayers being answered are on the basis that we are obedient to the will of God (1 John 3:21-22). Disobedience surrenders this privilege (1 Peter 3:7).
2. This is why God will not respond to a sinner, but does know those who are seeking, like Cornelius (Acts 10:2-4; cf. 2 Timothy 2:19).
  - a) What God did in Cornelius' case should serve as an encouragement to sinners today who would seek similar forgiveness.
  - b) However, the answer is very different from what people in a similar spiritual condition are taught to expect in our time. The angel did not bring him word that his sins were forgiven, nor did he tell him that his sins were forgiven because his prayers had been heard. The angel sent him to a man who could tell him what to do to be saved. Aside from the miraculous intervention of an angel, why would we expect God to answer in a different way today?

#### D. Prayers must be asked according to the will of God.

1. We must understand that where God has revealed His will, He will not answer a prayer in violation of it (1 John 5:14-15).
  - a) The sinner's prayer: When God said that baptism is necessary for salvation, He will not except a prayer by someone who wants to be saved by belief alone.

- b) Baptism for the dead: This is a popular practice of the Mormons; however will God accept a prayer for a soul that has already left this world, when God's word teaches that death ends our opportunity to be saved?
2. Most often, prayers are unanswered because they are motivated by selfishness and evil motives, instead of God's will (James 4:3; cf. Luke 22:42).

**Conclusion.** What we are now, surely is the result of prayer. If we have attained any measure of goodness, if we have resisted temptations, or if we have any aspirations beyond the common, it is because of prayer. However, like so much in the Bible, there is a pattern that needs to be upheld. Pray fervently (Colossians 4:12; James 5:16) and often (Psalm 55:17; Daniel 6:10).

Always keep in mind, that you wield a mighty power with prayer, the power of the Lord God Almighty, Creator of the Universe! Hopefully we can understand all of this with confidence, and apply these principles so our prayers will always be answered.