

1. QUESTIONS ABOUT PRAYER

Part 1 11/27/11 PM

In recent years we have witnessed an increasing emphasis on the value of deep interpersonal communication.

We are encouraged to verbalize our feelings.

We are urged to go to friends, relatives and counselors to share our deepest hurts and fears.

But we aren't hearing much about talking with God.

Many people's prayer tends to be restricted to a ritual before a meal or at bedtime.

Why do so many have an ineffective prayer life?

This evening we will begin to look at a number of questions and problem that I believe lie behind so many Christians pray so little.

2. How could a great God have time to be interested in the prayers of an insignificant person like me?

We tend to feel small and unimportant in the midst of a vast universe.

I am only one person out of 6 billion on a tiny speck of dust going around one star on the edge on one galaxy in the midst of 100 million galaxies.

God knows how we feel and verbalizes it in the Bible through the Psalmist.

Psalm 8:3-4 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained; ⁴ What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him?

But you are important to God!!

Psalm 8:5-9 Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You *crown him with glory and majesty!* ⁶ You *make him to rule over the works of Your hands;* You have *put all things under his feet,* ⁷ All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, ⁸ The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes

through the paths of the seas. ⁹ O LORD, our Lord,
How majestic is Your name in all the earth!

God has chosen to create you, adopt you, and ultimately
appoint you to rule and reign with Him.

You don't have to be some great saint, pastor, or
missionary.

You are His child.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave
the right to become children of God, *even* to those who
believe in His name

1 John 3:1-2 See how great a love the Father has bestowed
on us, that we would be called children of God; and
such we are. . . ² Beloved, now we are children of God,
and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We
know that when He appears, we will be like Him,
because we will see Him just as He is.

1 John 5:1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is
born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the
child born of Him.

Romans 8:16-17 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit
that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, heirs
also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if
indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be
glorified with *Him*.

Since God is infinite, He can focus deal on an infinite number
of people and situations at the same time.

He can focus His attention on you.

Luke 12:6-7 "Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? *Yet*
not one of them is forgotten before God. ⁷ "Indeed, the
very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear;
you are more valuable than many sparrows.

Matthew 6:25 "For this reason I say to you, do not be
worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what
you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will
put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more
than clothing?

Matthew 6:32 "For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

Psalm 139:17-18 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them! ¹⁸ If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand. When I awake, I am still with You.

3. If God already knows everything, why pray?

Matthew 6:7-8 "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸ "So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

Psalm 139:1-6 . . . O LORD, You have searched me and known *me*. ² You know *when I sit down and when I rise up*; You understand *my thought* from afar. ³ You scrutinize *my path and my lying down*, And are intimately acquainted with *all my ways*. ⁴ Even *before there is a word on my tongue*, Behold, O LORD, You know it all. ⁵ You have enclosed me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. ⁶ *Such* knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is *too* high, I cannot attain to it.

Since God knows everything, why is it necessary to express our needs, give thanks, or confess our sins to Him?

After all He already knows our situation, our feelings, our pain and our gratitude.

Why pray?

a. God desires *fellowship* with you.

John 17:21 that they may all be one; even as You, Father, *are* in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us . . .

1 Corinthians 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were *called into fellowship* with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but *Christ lives in me*; and the *life*

which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Ephesians 2:20-21 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, *Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together,* is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

1 John 1:3 what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed *our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.*

Fellowship means to share in common.

God desires a relationship with you.

He has made you a coworker with Himself.

God desires fellowship with you.

God delights in your prayers.

b. We need to talk with God.

As a son often benefits from talking with his father

A son hurts when he is:

Cut from a team

Dumped by a girlfriend

Failing in school

A father sees the discouragement and tries to get his son to talk

Assures him of his father's love

Helps him get a clearer perspective

Helps him make needed adjustments

Provides encouragement and help for the future

c. God won't do certain things without us and we can't do it without Him.

John 15:4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so

neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

God has made us co-laborers with Himself.

We need to stay close to Him.

Prayer is drawing near and communicating with our Heavenly Father.

Prayer is the primary human means of accomplishing God's plan on this planet!

Prayer Time