

The ANSWER to UNANSWERED Prayer

Why doesn't God intervene and answer your prayers? How can you be SURE of getting an answer? Do you know the SEVEN conditions God has set?

by Roderick C. Meredith

HAS GOD gone "way off" somewhere? Why do the polished prayers of the preachers and politicians seem so *empty* and futile? Why don't they get RESULTS?

The fundamental reason why the prayers of most people — yes, even *ministers* — are *not* being answered today, is that they do not really *know* the true God. They think of God as a sort of vague, far-off, indefinable something. They know not the *true* God who is the *active, law-giving* RULER of the universe. They seem to forget that God *reveals* Himself in His Word, the Bible, and that He shows us the *kind* of God He is — that God informs us *how* we should OBEY Him, and what He has PROMISED to do for us.

Believe the Bible

Can we take *God's* Word literally? Does God *mean* what He says in it?

Jesus thought so. He said, "Thy word is TRUTH" (John 17:17). The apostles constantly taught and acted as if God's word were *literally true*.

Who is right? Are you going to follow the differing ideas of *men*, or do you want to obey Jesus and live by *every word of God*? (Matt. 4:4.)

To get RESULTS in your prayers, you should *believe in the God of the Bible*. Believe His Word is *truth*. And be willing to *act* on God's Word and His commands.

Free yourself from the hidebound traditions of this confused world and its "churchianity." *Seek* the true God in prayer. *Study* God's Word to find out His commandments and His promises. Then, *take God at His word!*

The Bible reveals *seven basic condi-*

tions which you should fulfill to be certain of *answered prayers*.

What are they?

Seek God's Will

In James 4:1-4, the apostle showed that the children of this world — fighting and warring as they do — fail to receive help because they often neglect to ask God's help. And when they do, it is only to ask for their own selfish ends. To ask *selfishly* is to "ask amiss." You can expect *no answer* to such a prayer.

To get an answer, follow Jesus' example when He said, "I seek *not* mine own will, *but the will of the Father* which hath sent me" (John 5:30). But can you *know* God's will? "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but *understanding* what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17).

STUDY God's Word as Paul commanded Timothy (II Tim. 2:15). Then you will begin to think more as God thinks. You will come to *know* what God's will is in every circumstance. If you believe and know that God is *love*, that His will is for *our good*, then you will want to pray according to God's will.

You need not always have a specific promise in the Bible to know that something is God's will. Through experience and guidance, you will learn how to apply the *principles* of God's revealed will to any situation which may arise.

The point is that you must pray according to *God's* will to receive an answer. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing *according to his will*, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we *know* that we have the petitions that we desired of

him" (I John 5:14-15). God's Word reveals that by fulfilling this *condition* you KNOW that God will answer your prayers!

Asking according to God's will is the *overall, fundamental condition* of answered prayer. All other conditions could be grouped under this one because they are the specific points of *God's will* in regard to prayer. The following six, together with and magnifying this first condition, will ensure *answered* prayers.

Believe God

Most people do not realize that a *lack of faith* is simply a *disbelief* that God will keep His promises or back up His Word. Have you ever thought of it that way?

God has *promised* to heal His children through the prayers of His ministers (James 5:14).

Real FAITH is not an emotional "feeling" that you generate by thinking certain thoughts over and over. You don't "talk yourself into," or "think yourself into" real, believing faith. Godly faith is simply your willingness — through *God's* help — to quietly, patiently *trust* God to perform His Word. Abraham had that kind of faith. The Apostle Paul wrote of him: "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in *faith*, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:20-21).

Abraham relied *completely* on God to perform His promises. Do you?

If you lack real *faith*, ask God to give it to you. Faith is one of the *gifts* of God's Holy Spirit.

James was inspired to write that a man *must* have faith to receive answers to his prayers (James 1:5-7). A man who *wavers* will not receive an answer. "For let not *that* man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord" (verse 7).

God has made hundreds of promises in His Word which we can claim. Healing is just one of them. When you are sick, do you obey God's command to "call for the elders of the church"?

Do you TRUST God to keep His promise to *heal*, although consulting a doctor for help and advice as to *what physical law you are breaking?* If you really believe God will heal, then *trust* Him to do it! Faith without works is *dead* (James 2:20). To have answered prayers, you must have *faith*.

Be Fervent

It is common in our day for parents to teach their children memorized prayers. The father often mumbles a hurried, routine prayer of thanks at the table. The minister either reads or recites from memory an eloquent prayer which *sounds* very impressive.

But is God impressed?

The "fruits" show that God rarely hears such prayers, for they are usually *not answered*.

This is so because people don't put their *hearts* into their prayers (Hosea 7:14). They don't "cry out" to God with their whole being as the ancient prophets did — and as Christ did when He prayed.

On the evening before His crucifixion, Jesus needed strength from God for the coming ordeal. He needed to get really close to God. He knelt down and began to pray that *God's* will, not His own, would be done. "And being in an agony he prayed more *earnestly*; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44). He prayed *earnestly* — with all His heart.

In James 5:16, we read, "The effectual FERVENT prayer of a righteous man availeth much." We have to pray *fervently, earnestly, zealously*, if we expect God to hear.

Put your *whole heart* into your prayers!

Fear and Humility

Modern man has a cocksure, self-sufficient attitude and thinks he can get along fine without God. He neither fears God nor respects God's Word as an *authority* in his life. He is vain, egotistical, self-important.

Is it a wonder that God fails to answer the prayers of such men?

The very *first* prerequisite to a knowledge of God is to fear Him and respect His Word. "The *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm 111:10).

Carnal man needs to realize that he is only *dust* and shall return to the dust unless and until he receives the Spirit of God, which is the begettal to eternal life. Eternal life is a *gift* from God (Rom. 6:23), not something we already have. "For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then *vanisheth away*" (James 4:14).

We need to *fear* God, realizing that our lives are in His hands. We should be humble, realizing that any gifts or talents we may have are ours *because God gave them to us*.

When we can approach our Creator in *that* attitude — respecting His power and authority over our lives — then He will hear our prayers.

When Christ was in the human flesh, even He feared God as we should. "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that *he feared*" (Heb. 5:7). When we fully realize our own *helplessness*, then we will cry out to God as we should.

Peter wrote "be clothed with *humility*: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (I Peter 5:5).

The attitude of *humility* and *godly fear* is vital in prayers, and at *all times*.

Be Persistent

In Luke 18:1-8, Jesus spoke a parable to teach us that we should always pray, and never give up hope. He showed that even an unrighteous judge would finally hear the pleas of a widow who *kept coming to him*. So we should keep

praying to God, *even though He doesn't answer right away*.

God has made many promises in His Word. But He has *nowhere* said that He will perform them at the *time*, or in the *way* that we choose. Sometimes it is very good for *us* not to have our prayers answered immediately. God is building patient *faith* into our characters.

James was inspired to write, "the trying of your faith worketh patience" (James 1:3). If God doesn't answer your prayers immediately, exercise *patience* and keep praying until He does answer.

Don't nag at God. He has supreme wisdom to know *when* and *how* would be best to answer your prayers. But if you have prayed as you should, He *WILL* answer. God *always* keeps His promises! So be *persistent*. Keep praying in faith, and God is *bound* to perform His part.

Obedience

A sixth condition of answered prayer is one which is neglected and violated consistently by most professing "Christians." This hinges directly on the before-mentioned fact that very few people today really know the true God. People do not look to God as the *AUTHORITY* in their lives. Instead, they make a "god" out of this world's society and its customs, traditions, and religious practices.

God inspired Paul to write, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to *obey*, his servants ye are to whom ye obey" (Rom. 6:16). If you obey the ways of sin practiced in this world, you are putting this society and its pagan customs *in place of the true God!*

God wants more than "lip service." He requires *OBEDIENCE!*

If you haven't learned to fear the true God and accept His word as the *authority* in your life, then you don't even really *know* God. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a *liar*, and the truth is not in him" (I John 2:4).

How can men persistently refuse to keep God's commandments, and then expect Him to answer their prayers? Peter answers, "For the eyes of the

Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (I Peter 3:12).

Sin is simply breaking God's Law (I John 3:4). God will *not* hear the prayers of those who persist in sin — in evil. If people would obey God, they would get *answers* when they pray. Then God wouldn't seem so far away, so unreal — as He probably does to most of *you!* Think it over. Then *do something about it.*

Does God ever hear the prayers of the unconverted? Yes, He does. God Himself has blinded the eyes of many to the truth at this time (Rom. 11:7-8). It is His *responsibility* that they don't know the truth yet. So God does sometimes hear and answer the prayers of those who *obey as far as they know.*

The lepers and cripples who came to Jesus to be healed didn't know all of God's truth. But they did realize that Jesus was sent from God and could heal. And *they acted on what they knew.*

So it is a matter of your *heart* or *attitude.* If you come to God in a humble, repentant spirit and are determined to obey Him *to the best of your knowledge,* He will hear your prayers. But this is *no excuse* for anyone who knows the truth to disobey God!

True Christians can have a special confidence that God *will answer* their prayers *if* they are OBEDIENT. "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, *because we keep his commandments,* and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (I John 3:22).

If you want to know how to become a true Christian, request our free booklets *What Is a Real Christian?* and *Just What Do You Mean — Conversion?*

Use Christ's Name

The seventh condition of answered prayer is the correct use of Christ's name. This is a greatly misunderstood subject, and the use of Christ's name is often abused.

After Jesus had been with His disciples for over three years, and had taught them *God's will* and how to obey it, He said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father *in my name,* he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing *in my name: ask,* and *ye shall receive,* that

your joy may be full" (John 16:23-24). These verses give us the privilege of employing Christ's name — asking by His authority — when we pray to God. But most people misunderstand *how* we can ask "in Jesus' name."

When our government sends an ambassador to another country, he is given *authority* to carry out certain business *in the name* of the United States Government. He can act *in the name* of our government because it has conferred on him the *authority* as its chosen representative to carry on certain business on its behalf. His authority is *limited* to do only what the government has specifically authorized him. If he exceeds his delegated authority, his actions are *null* and *void* and will *not* be backed up by this government.

That is the *way* we are to ask things "in Jesus' name." Christ has given His ministers the duty of performing certain functions in His name — or *by His authority.* We can rightfully ask for things "in Jesus' name" only when we know that it is His will — that His *authority* stands back of it.

Those who abide in Christ and are God's children have the privilege of praying in Christ's name. Jesus explained, "If ye abide in me, and *my words abide in you,* ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7).

Just rattling off the words "in Jesus' name" to a prayer that is contrary to God's will and Christ's will is of *no avail whatsoever.*

Yes, Jesus' *words* must abide in you. You must ask according to *His Will.* You must abide in Him — *belong to Him.* "Now if any man have *not* the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9). And God gives His Holy Spirit to them that OBEY Him (Acts 5:32).

So to pray in Jesus' name, you must at the same time be *yielding* to His will to the best of your knowledge. "In Jesus' name" means *by His authority.* You are praying through Him as your High Priest (Heb. 4:14-16).

Christ — our High Priest — was tempted in all points like we are (verse 15). He understands our weaknesses. It is His revealed will to give us of His

Spirit (Luke 11:13) and to help us live a more abundant life (John 10:10). You need to *study* God's Word to know the principles of His will, that you may ask by His authority.

Praying in Jesus' name is a great privilege. Use Jesus' name *correctly,* and your prayers will be *answered* because of the authority conferred through Him.

Action Will Follow

If you faithfully conform to these seven *conditions of answered prayer* — with God's help, you may then have *absolute confidence* that God will hear and answer your prayers. You will be changing, growing closer to God each day. You will be actively seeking and doing His will.

This intimate contact with the Creator of heaven and earth will give you a peace of mind and quiet confidence that *nothing* can destroy. But your confidence will not be in *self,* but in the greatest POWER there is. In *every* trial and problem, you have the right to call on the Supreme Power — the active, living God who reveals Himself in the Bible.

God has inspired an example of how He heard and *answered* even the prayers of an unconverted man *because* that man was in a *right spirit,* and had *obeyed* what he knew. In II Kings 20:1-11, we read the account of how King Hezekiah was about to die and sought God's deliverance.

God's own prophet, Isaiah, had told Hezekiah that he would die. But Hezekiah knew that God was an all-merciful God, and that he had obeyed God the best he knew how and could.

So Hezekiah "wept sore" and besought God's intervention (verse 3). He put his *heart* in his prayer!

In *spite* of the fact that He had previously told Isaiah that Hezekiah would die, God heard and *answered* Hezekiah's fervent prayer! He added *fifteen years* to Hezekiah's life!

What a *result* of prayer!

But was that all?

No indeed. Hezekiah did not *doubt* God's power to *intervene* and *act* as this world does. He made a *further* request that God would give him a special sign that he would be healed (verse 8).

God's servant, Isaiah, gave Hezekiah the choice of the sign — the shadow

would either go forward ten degrees, or backward ten degrees. Hezekiah said it would be *harder* for the shadow to go backward ten degrees. "And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord: and *he brought the shadow ten degrees backward*" (verse 11).

Because of Hezekiah's faith, obedi-

ence, and fervent prayers, God Almighty not only *healed* him and added *fifteen years* to his life, but *He actually caused the sun — from an onlooker's point of view — to reverse itself in the heavens!*

This was *not* an "optical illusion." God's miracles are *real!* "For with God NOTH-

ING SHALL BE IMPOSSIBLE" (Luke 1:37).

If you believe that God's Word *is truth*, this should inspire you to *pray* as never before! Pray for God's Work, for God's *servants*, for His people everywhere. Ask in *faith* for your own needs. *Rely* on God in every trouble. He is a God of *power!* □

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Why aren't your prayers ANSWERED? Do you know HOW to pray? Here are facts you need to understand!

by Roderick C. Meredith

WHEN you are sick or in trouble, you may pray about it. But do you have the faith and the understanding to leave it *completely* in God's hands — to absolutely *know* that He will deliver His children from sickness and trials of every kind? Very few people do.

When we don't seem to have the wisdom or the power to solve our problems we often become frustrated and unhappy. *Some commit suicide!*

We completely *forget* and *ignore* the fact that we have the *right* to call on the Supreme Creator of heaven and earth for help with all our problems. The greatest *wisdom* and *power* in all the universe will be with every one of us — IF we will only do our part.

Jesus Christ set a *perfect example* that we "should follow his steps" (I Peter 2:21). He lived a full and abundant life — a life filled with *love* and *power* from God. He knew how to keep in contact with, and draw upon, the *Supreme Power of the universe*.

Christ the Example

Can you imagine Christ acting as if God had "gone way off somewhere"?

Yet that is the *exact attitude* displayed by most "Christians" of today. Do they completely rely on God to *heal* them when they are sick, to *rescue* them from disaster, to *bless* them in material as well as spiritual things? Of

course not. But the disciples saw that Christ, unlike most people, actually *expected* God to intervene and heal the sick, cast out demons, and even to quiet a storm on the sea. They, too, wanted that kind of intimate contact with God.

By His fruits, they knew that Christ understood *the correct way* to draw close to the Eternal God, and to call upon His power to help in every pressing situation.

That *key*, that *correct way* to call upon God's power, is something you and I should be utilizing *every day of our lives!* Its use can put new *meaning* and *power* into our lives!

But this "key" has been *incorrectly* employed by many people of many different religions. Remember that Christ is *our example*. He knew how to use this "key" perfectly. His way *gets results!*

Christ Teaches How to Pray

In Luke 11:1-13, we read that the disciples came and asked Jesus *the way* to establish right contact with God. "Lord, *teach us to pray,*" they asked. People do not know *how* to pray until they are properly taught. That, probably, is *your* trouble.

Then Christ gave them a type or pattern of a prayer that will *get results*.

Let us analyze this *perfect example*. The prayer is addressed to "Our Father

which art in heaven." When you pray, think first of all of God as your Father. Not *your* Father only, but "*Our Father.*" Remember that there are others who are trying to serve their Creator and Spiritual Father, and that God loves us all *far more* than a human father would be capable of doing.

Moreover, He has power to help you in ways that would be *impossible* for a human father. Would your earthly father let you rot away and die of disease if he could possibly help it? But God *can* help it, and He has *promised* to *heal* in a number of places including Psalm 103:3 and James 5:14.

Claim God's *promises* when you pray, and always think of Him as *your Father*.

"Which art in heaven," reminds us that God is not an ordinary father, but One who has all power and should be worshipped. We must be humble and reverent when we pray to the true God.

"Hallowed be thy name," shows that God's name — and *all that it stands for* — is to be held in reverence. God's name will someday be *our name* if we overcome and are *born of God*. THAT NAME CARRIES AUTHORITY TO RULE. It must always be respected.

What to Ask

"Thy kingdom come" is the first request of this perfect prayer. *First of all* we should learn to pray for God's king-

dom — God's government — God's RULE — to come on this earth. *How many* so-called "Christians" really want God to *rule* their lives? Most carnal-minded men use every imaginable device to hide their eyes from the fact that God is *Supreme Ruler*. Christians should PRAY that God will *rule this earth*. Only His rule will bring about the peace and happiness that this world is striving in *vain* to achieve (Isa. 11).

"Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth," teaches us to *surrender our wills* to God as we pray — to acknowledge His rule — *His authority*. Remember that *God knows what is best*. You need to *study* God's Word so that you will learn the principles of God's will — and can pray accordingly.

Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:17, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the *will of the Lord* is."

Drink in of God's Word so that you will begin to think as God thinks, and to have God's will made a part of your very character. "Let this *mind* be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). Then you will automatically pray according to God's will, as revealed in the Bible, and your *prayers will be answered*.

"Give us day by day our daily bread" certainly shows that God desires that we ask for our material needs. But notice that we are not to ask for great wealth, but our *daily bread*. God has *promised* to supply every *need* (Phil. 4:19). It is God's will that we prosper and be in health (III John 2), but being made wealthy might easily prove a stumbling block to our faith. So remember Christ's example of asking for only our *daily bread* — not necessarily the sustenance for several years in advance.

Forgive Others — Resist Devil

"And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us." You may ask God's forgiveness *only if you first forgive others*. When you kneel before God in prayer, never come before Him with feelings of bitterness, resentfulness, or hate. If you cannot first rid yourself of these feelings, ask God to *clean you up* and replace the spirit of *hate* with His Spirit of *love*.

And love is charitable, and patient with others.

It is a wonderful feeling to know that you hate no man, but in your way, however clumsily, are trying to show love for everyone.

God *bears* and *answers* the prayers of a man in this spirit.

"And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil." God Himself tempts no man (James 1:13). But He does permit us to be tempted by Satan and our own lusts. We should constantly pray that He would not permit us to be *brought into*, or *partake of*, any temptation — that He would give us the spiritual *power* to master any wrong desires.

"But deliver us from evil," should be translated, "but deliver us from the Evil One [Satan]." The original Greek means this and most commentaries give this as the correct translation. Ask God each day to give you the strength to "resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

"Be *sober*, be *vigilant*; because your adversary the *devil*, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8). Satan the devil will try his best to upset you day and night! Ask God for strength and faith.

Ask What You Need

Jesus continued teaching his disciples (Luke 11:5-13) about prayer by giving them a parable. It shows that if we are really in dire *need*, as the man who had an unexpected guest, we can be sure that God will answer our prayer if we throw ourselves completely on His mercy.

The disciples were still unconverted, because the Holy Spirit had not yet been given. Jesus told them (verse 13), "If ye then, *being evil*, know how to give good gifts unto your children: *how much more* shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" God is *more than willing* to give us of His Spirit!

Do you need wisdom, knowledge, faith, love? These are all *gifts* of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12 and 13). *Ask* God for these gifts. He is more willing to give you these things than you are to feed *your own hungry child*.

This *is His will*. So ask in FAITH!

Two Things to Avoid

During His "Sermon on the Mount," Christ *assumed* (Matt. 6:5-8) that His true followers would pray. He did not say "If you pray," but "*when thou prayest*." He *knew* that anyone who was truly serving God would be *praying often*.

Are you?

He cautioned the disciples never to pray "to be seen of men," but to enter into a closet or "secret place," and there commune with their Heavenly Father. Christ taught that it was *wrong* to make long prayers in front of others to "show off" (Matt. 23:14). Preachers and "deacons" who delight in this sort of thing are *disobeying God*.

And have you ever heard certain denominations repeat prayers over and over again? Christ said, "But when ye pray, *use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Matt. 6:7).

Memorized prayers — including the "Lord's Prayer" — soon lose their meaning and sincerity.

Nowhere in the entire New Testament is the "Lord's Prayer" repeated. The apostles didn't repeat it over and over again. Jesus gave it only as a pattern or example after which we could fashion *our own* prayers.

This world's churches are in *error* when they practice repeating *any* prayer over and over again each week. Avoid this error. *And try not to return thanks in the same way at the table every meal*.

When you pray, don't just "rattle off" so many words. Think about your blessings, your needs, and pray from the *heart*.

Don't Be Ashamed

We should be careful not to pray "to be seen of men." *But* does this mean that we should be overly secretive — as if we were ashamed — when we pray?

Absolutely not!

Many "babes in Christ" are faced with this problem. Some of you are afraid to pray as often as you should *because you are afraid other people will know about it!* Have no such fear! Should the nearness of your wife, husband, or children prevent you from maintaining an

intimate contact with your Creator and God? Of course not!

In Luke 9:18 and 28, we find two examples of where Christ — our *perfect example* — prayed a short distance from His disciples and they knew *where* He was and *what* He was doing.

So *don't* be ashamed if anyone knows you are praying! Just be careful not to pray “to be seen of men,” and try hard to find a closet or “private place” where you will not be disturbed.

When Jesus was staying at Peter's home with His disciples, “rising up *a great while before day*, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there *prayed*” (Mark 1:35).

You *can* be alone with God if you will follow Christ's example and *make a way!*

Position in Prayer

The Bible records many different positions in prayer. But it *always* shows that in private, personal prayer, you should *kneel on both knees*. It has always been a custom to kneel on *one knee* to a king or other ruler as a sign of *respect and esteem*. But the Bible always records that we should bow *both knees* to God in *reverence and worship*:

I Kings 8:54 and Ezra 9:5 show an example of a very suitable position in prayer. Notice that Solomon and Ezra kneeled upon *both knees* and spread out their hands — upward — toward God. This is a position of humility and supplication. You will come more nearly praying *fervently* if you are in such a position.

God may not answer “sleepytime prayers” that you mumble to yourself in bed just before dropping off to sleep. If you want an answer, better GET OUT OF THAT BED and kneel before your Creator.

In public or at the dinner table, you may pray either standing or seated — whichever way you feel would honor God most in each situation. In Matthew 14:19, Christ commanded the people to sit down before He blessed the loaves and fishes.

But in private He “kneeled down, and prayed” (Luke 22:41). In your personal prayers, you should kneel before God and pray *fervently* (James 5:16).

Concentrate your WHOLE BEING ON

communing with the Creator of heaven and earth — and your own loving spiritual Father. A correct position in prayer will help you do this.

How Often to Pray

In Acts 13:22, we read that David was a *man after God's own heart*. Read some of the Psalms. Many of the Psalms are simply David's prayers. He prayed to God in time of trouble, for guidance, in thanksgiving. In *every circumstance* David went to God in prayer.

Don't think you are “bothering” God by sharing your joys and your problems with Him. *Talk to God often* — in *every circumstance*. That is undoubtedly one of the main reasons that David was a man after God's own heart.

If you want to be a child of God, then “get acquainted” with your Heavenly Father. Talk to Him *often*. *Share your life* with God. In Psalms 55:17, David wrote, “*Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.*” David went to God in prayer *three times a day*.

We read of God's prophet Daniel (Dan. 6:10), “. . . he kneeled upon his knees *three times a day*, and *prayed*, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.” These examples are not commands, but they certainly show that to kneel in prayer *three times a day* is a good way to bring God into our lives.

“He that hath an ear, *let him hear.*”

The Apostle Paul was inspired to write the Thessalonians (I Thes. 5:17), “*Pray without ceasing.*” This means that we are never to *discontinue* our prayer life. It also — with many other scriptures — shows that we should be *constantly* in an attitude or spirit of prayer. Talk to God as you go about your work or play. Ask Him to direct your *every thought and action*.

When you seem to be losing your temper, or when you are in doubt about a certain course of action — *stop and think*, “Would Jesus do that if He were here today?” Ask God to show you, and *study* your Bible so you will *know* what God would have you do. Then ask God for the *wisdom*, the *faith*, and the *power* to rightly carry out what you know is right.

This simple process will *change your life!* Your life will then have more *meaning*, and more *real happiness*, than you have ever before experienced.

How Long to Pray

Prayer should be one of the most important and *most enjoyable* activities of your life.

If you really love God as your Father, you will *want* to spend a great deal of time talking to Him.

Your spiritual food is obtained by contact with God through Bible study and prayer. Preparing and eating your material food takes at least two hours each day. Isn't your “spiritual food” *even more* important? Spend *more time* acquiring it.

Time is precious. Use your time where it *counts*. It's better to miss a few *physical* meals, better to *fast* once in a while, than to get “too busy” to drink in the spiritual things from God.

That is the very *purpose* of your life!

Sometimes you will need to spend a *long session* with God. Christ prayed *all night* before choosing His twelve disciples.

When you have a tremendous decision to make, or when facing serious trouble, remember that example. In such a crisis, spend a *long time* in God's presence. Pray with all your might. God *will hear*. And it will be an experience that you will never forget.

What to Pray

Do you have trouble knowing what to pray about? First of all, “count your blessings” and thank God for “every good and every perfect gift” (James 1:17). How little most appreciate God's boundless love!

Then *STUDY* your Bible and find what God's true servants prayed about. Get your mind *away from self* once in a while. Paul said to pray for the saints and for himself — God's servant (Eph. 6:17-20). He wrote that he remembered the Philippian church in every prayer (Phil. 1:4). Apply these principles to God's true ministers, His Work, and His true churches of today.

Are you separated from other true Christians but want to have a greater part in helping them and God's Work? Then read Colossians 4:12, 13. Paul describes one of his helpers, Epaphras, as,

“always labouring fervently for you in prayers...” This man’s LABOR was in prayer! That was *his part* in God’s Work that Paul referred to especially. It can be YOUR PART as well! Paul said (verse 13), “For I bear him record that he hath a great ZEAL for you...”

Do you have a *zeal* to help God’s children? Do you get down on your knees *every day* and ask God to help

and direct them? Do you pray for God’s ministers and His Work?

Your part in God’s great Work may be contributing what you should in tithes and offerings, and *crying out* to God day and night to guide and protect His servants. Mr. Armstrong and God’s other true ministers are only human. We have a job beyond our human power to perform. *We need your prayers!*

When a crisis comes, when you are sick or afflicted, KNOW that God is a God of *power!* You can tap the supreme source of all POWER *just by getting down on your knees in a private place and fervently beseeching God to intervene and help you.*

Learn to EXPECT an answer. God reveals Himself as a *real* God — a *living, acting* God. *Take God at His word!* □

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