

The Family Time

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Luke 21:36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

As families, our worship and our connection with God is absolutely important. So we continue to take a look at the prayer lives of God's men whose record is preserved for our example. What an important lesson this is for us all. The work assigned will not be accomplished without prayer. The prayer is the request. There is no power in the request. The power comes from the one to whom the request is made.

1. Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend.
2. The eye of faith will discern God very near, and the suppliant may obtain precious evidence of the divine love and care for him.
3. But why is it that so many prayers are never answered? David says, "I cried unto Him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." [Psalm 66:17, 18.]
4. By another prophet the Lord gives us the promise, "Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." [Jeremiah 29:13.]
5. Again, he speaks of some who "have not cried unto me with their heart." [Hosea 7:14.]
6. Such petitions are prayers of form, lip-service only, which the Lord does not accept. *{GW92 35.1}*

The example of Jesus as he opened his heart to God, his father is a profound lesson. Christ maintained a close connection with his father. Take a look at the life of Christ, and his communication with His father.

Christ's disciples were much impressed by His prayers and by His habit of communion with God. One day after a short absence from their Lord, they found Him absorbed in supplication. Seeming unconscious of their presence, He continued praying aloud. The hearts of the disciples were deeply moved. As He ceased praying, they exclaimed, "Lord, teach us to pray." *{COL 140.1}*

How did Christ respond to his disciple's request?

In answer, Christ repeated the Lord's Prayer, as He had given it in the Sermon on the Mount. Then in a parable He illustrated the lesson He desired to teach them. *{COL 140.2}*

They had often witnessed the Master's communication with His Father.

The disciples had been for a short time absent from their Lord, when on their return they found Him absorbed in communion with God. Seeming unconscious of their presence, He continued praying aloud. The Savior's face was irradiated with a celestial brightness. He seemed to be in the very presence of the Unseen, and there was a living power in His words as of one who spoke with God. *{Mount of Blessing, Chap. 5 - The Lord's Prayer, page 102.1}*



The instruction regarding prayer given by Christ was specific and direct.

Luke 11:2 "When ye pray, say Our Father."

Jesus teaches us to call His Father our Father. He is not ashamed to call us brethren.

Hebrews 2:11 - For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified [are] all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

So ready, so eager, is the Savior's heart to welcome us as members of the family of God, that in the very first words we are to use in approaching God He places, the assurance of our divine relationship, "Our Father." {*Mount of Blessing, Chap. 5 - The Lord's Prayer, page 103.3*}

Notice to whom the prayer is addressed: The God of Heaven and earth, creator of the universe. Let me repeat: The prayer is the request. There is no power in the request. The power comes from the one to whom the request is made.

Shinto teaches that there is a sacredness of the whole universe and that humans can be in tune with this sacredness. Every mountain, river, plant, animal, and all the diverse phenomena of heaven and earth have spirits, or **kami**, which inhabit them. Reverence is paid to the ancestors through the practice of ancestor worship. **They pray, but their prayers are not heard by the mountains or the trees or the ancestors which they worship. If answers come, the answers are from beneath. They are not from God.**

Hindus believe in reincarnation. When one is born, they are given life by **Brahma**, as the pass through life, they are preserved by **Vishnu**, until finally **Shiva** claims you in death. **They pray but their prayers are not answered, Brahma, Vishnu Shiva cannot help them. If answers come, the answers are from beneath. They are not from God.**

Buddhists believe that one is reincarnated until they can achieve **nirvana**, best described as spiritual enlightenment. **They pray, but their prayers are not answered, if answers come, the answers are from beneath. They are not from God.**

Catholics pray to Mary, and a number of "saints", but Mary and the saints cannot help. If answers come, the answers are from beneath. They are not from God. Why is this so?

It is not that you pray, as sincere as your prayer might be, but rather it is from whom your request is made, that power is given in response. It is from God to whom our prayers are addressed, that the power comes. It is from Christ that the power of salvation comes. It is by the Holy Spirit that the work of transformation is accomplished.