

“My House Is the House of Prayer”

Text: Luke 19:46; 1 Timothy 2:1-7

Introduction:

1. Prayer is important to God – and must be important to every Christian.
2. In order to discuss and understand prayer, there are certain implied truths that we must acknowledge.
 - a. First, man has needs that cannot be met by human means (cf. 1 Kings 3:7; Jeremiah 10:23; Philippians 4:7; James 1:5).
 - b. Second, the One to whom man prays is personal (One with whom man may communicate) and powerful (able to hear and answer).
 - c. Third, the One to whom weak and sinful man prays is compassionate and loving.
 - d. Finally, man must submit to the will of the infinite God who hears his cry (cf. Ecclesiastes 6:12).
3. There are two extreme views that man often has about prayer.
 - a. One view is that prayer is simply a means of wish fulfillment – getting from God whatever we ask for or desire. *{This view often sees God’s answers to prayers as miraculous.}*
 - b. The other extreme view is that prayer is unnecessary because the future is determined and God does not intervene at all. *{This view focuses only on God’s “natural laws” and sees prayer as nothing more than an emotional crutch.}*
 - c. The truth about prayer is in between these two extremes.
 - d. God’s providence is His working in the guiding of natural law; and, often, this is how He answers prayer.
4. Knowing that prayer is not an exercise in futility, let us consider the four types of prayer mentioned in Scripture...

I. The Deep Reverence of Prayer

- A. The Greek words used for prayer imply an attitude of deep reverence toward God.
 1. Compare 1 Tim. 2:1 with Luke 19:46 – “house of prayer” (cf. Gen. 35:1-4).
 2. Acts 3:1 – “hour of prayer”
 3. Luke 6:12 – “place of prayer” (cf. 22:45; Acts 16:13, 16)
 4. Romans 12:12 – “sacrifice of prayer” (cf. 1 Cor. 7:5; Acts 2:42; Col 4:12)
- B. To come before the throne of the Almighty, one must have an attitude of deep reverence (Psalm 89:7; 111:9; Hebrews 12:28).
- C. Though prayer involves the precepts of communication and fellowship, these must be approached with reverence toward God.

II. The Deep Need of Supplication

- A. Supplication is a request or entreaty made due to one’s deep need.
 1. Thayer defines it as “need, privation; a seeking, asking, entreating.”
 2. Strong says it is a “petition, request or prayer.”
 3. In the New Testament, this word is used exclusively for a request made of God.
- B. Christians not only can, but also should make their needs known to God through prayer (Philippians 4:6; cf. Matthew 6:8).
- C. In times of deep need, we have a Savior who is our Mediator (cf. Rom. 8:26-28).

1. Luke 1:13 – Zacharias and Elisabeth had a deep need.
 2. Hebrews 5:7-8 – Jesus had a deep need.
 3. Philippians 1:19 – Paul had a deep need.
 4. James 5:16 – All Christians have deep needs.
- D. God will hear our petitions (1 Peter 3:12).

III. The Deep Concern of Intercession

- A. Intercession is to make petition or request on behalf of another due to a deep concern for them.
 1. The word literally refers to an interview.
 2. Thayer says it is “a coming together, a conference or conversation”
 3. Thus, it is a supplication made to God by one on behalf of another.
- B. Intercession grows out of a relationship with God and with our fellow man.
- C. For whom should Christians pray?
 1. All men
 2. All the saints (Ephesians 6:20)
 3. Our enemies (Matthew 5:44-45)
 4. Erring brethren (1 John 5:16; James 5:19-20)
- D. For what should Christians pray?
 1. Salvation – *spiritual needs and open doors* (Colossians 4:2-4)
 2. Peace
 3. Godliness
- E. We **must** pray for our nation and our leaders!

IV. The Deep Gratitude of Thanksgiving

- A. Thanksgiving is an expression of deep gratitude to God for His many blessings.
 1. When God is our Shepherd, our cups overflow with blessings (Psa. 23:5).
 2. Who is able to count the blessings of God?
- B. Every Christian should be thankful every day (Colossians 3:15; 1 Thes. 5:16-18).
- C. The ungrateful are displeasing to God and deplorable to society (cf. Deut. 6:10-12; Luke 17:11-19; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Romans 1:21).
- D. An attitude of gratitude would solve many of the Christian’s and the church’s problems.

Conclusion: *May we strive to make God’s house a house of prayer.*