

Prayer Is Partial

Text: Philippians 4:6-7

INTRODUCTION:

1. As important as prayer is, it is only part of living a faithful Christian life.
2. When we pray, we expect God to respond.
3. In like manner, when He speaks, God expects us to respond.
4. Communication involves the speaking and response of both parties.
5. How should we respond to God...

- I. THE RESPONSE OF **GRATITUDE** (PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7)
 - A. Prayer should be offered with an attitude of thankfulness – even in difficulties.
 - B. Gratitude is central to the life of a Christian (Colossians 3:15-17).
 - C. Prayer should be responded to with gratitude (2 Corinthians 1:8-11).
- II. THE RESPONSE OF **READING** (ACTS 10:1-6)
 - A. Man communicates with God through prayer; God communicates with man through Scripture.
 - B. Often, the answer to one's prayer is ready to be found in the Word of God.
 - C. If one does not read the Bible, he cannot hear the answer to his prayers! *{Had Cornelius not listened to Peter, he would not have heard God answer to his prayers.}*
- III. THE RESPONSE OF **OBEDIENCE** (PSALM 51)
 - A. Heartbroken over his sins, David prayed to God for forgiveness and cleansing.
 - B. However, he also understood that his praying to God (and God's answering) demanded a response.
 - C. Thus, David promised to obey God by teaching others and offering true sacrifice.
 - D. Can one expect God to answer his prayers if he refuses to obey God's will?
- IV. THE RESPONSE OF **WORSHIP** (PSALM 86)
 - A. Again, David called upon the Lord in a time of great need (vs. 1-8).
 - B. As before, David understood that a response was required – obedience and worship (vs. 9-13).
 - C. David honored God with his prayer and vowed to glorify God in response.
 - D. Prayer without praise is perhaps the lowest form of ingratitude (Luke 17:12-19).

CONCLUSION:

1. Do I recognize the importance of prayer and pray regularly?
2. Do I also understand that prayer demands a response on my part?
3. How do I respond to the wonderful blessing of prayer?
4. What changes can I make to show God how thankful I am that He hears my prayers?

Practical Prayer

Exercises

Prayer Is Personal

1. Read Matthew 6:5-6. Prayer is not a performance to be seen of men. What is the value of private prayer in secret?
2. Read Matthew 6:7-8. Prayer is not rote memorization or repetition just for increasing one's word count. How can I make my prayers more personal?
3. Read Matthew 6:9-13. Prayer is to be reverential but also humble, even simple. Do I find myself trying to impress God or others with my prayers? How does the "model prayer" help me to remain humble before God?
4. Read Hebrews 4:12-13. How can understanding that God knows everything about me – even my thoughts and motives – affect my prayers?
5. Read Proverbs 28:13. Have you ever tried to hide something from God? Do we sometimes pray when there is sin we refuse to acknowledge? Will God hear such a prayer?
6. Read 1 John 1:7-10. As a Christian, prayer is one's personal access to the Father for the forgiveness of sins. Strive to come before God openly and honestly in every prayer!