

**Title: The Value And Importance of Prayer  
Sermon #7 on Prayer  
"Obstacles to Answered Prayer" #5**

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**"O God, who hears prayer." Ps. 65:2**

**"What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to Him?" Deut. 4:7**

**"Go into your closet and close the door and pray to your Father in heaven. And your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you." Matt. 6:6**

**4th Condition for answered prayer (as learned last Sunday)**

**For God to answer prayer, prayer can not and must not regularly be rushed into if it is to be effective. God's people must deliberately set aside time to pray. We must schedule time to pray. We must plan for it and make it a primary priority in our lives. For prayer to be profitable, it cannot be done on the fly. Jesus modeled for us deliberate, scheduled, planned, private, personal times of prayer (Mk. 1:35, 5; Lk. 5:16, 6:12) as part of His devotions. To be a follower of Jesus means that His people pray in this way!**

**The New Testament also emphasizes to us deliberate, scheduled, planned, CORPORATE times of prayer (Acts 2:42, 3:1, 6:4, 16:13).**

**"We need to determine never to get in such a rush that we fail to take time to get spiritual power through prayer. But unless we set a definite time for prayer each day, we will let other things crowd it out.**

**When we begin to pray as God's wants us to, something will happen in our prayer life. Instead of not wanting to take time to pray, we will look forward in anticipation to our quiet time with God. We will get to know Him better, and He will become more real to us than any earthly friend. We will discover the joy and peace of mind that He wants us to have. We will have victory in our Christian life, and the devil's darts won't take effect." Lillian Guild, "How's Your Prayer Life?"**

**"Today most Christians feel their greatest spiritual deficiency is the area of prayer. If you are to be a spiritually healthy Christian, you cannot afford to neglect this aspect of the Christian life. Your spiritual life will never rise above the level of your praying, and your prayer life will never rise to stay above the level of your personal, regular, daily meeting with God. Regular contact with the source of spiritual life, Jesus Christ, is absolutely necessary.**

**However, maintaining a consistent prayer life is hard work. Prayer is difficult because it is one of the activities Satan wants to remove from your daily schedule. Through prayer you receive guidance and provision, but you also become a channel for God's power. God's power is necessary to succeed in the spiritual warfare in which you are engaged. Most Christians fail in their prayer lives because they do not set apart a definite time and place to meet the Lord daily in prayer. You**

will never be successful as a growing Christian apart from a personal, regular, daily meeting with God."

J. Gordon Henry, "Early Will I Seek Thee."

I Peter 4:7, "Be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray."

The 5th condition for answered prayer:

We must be convinced of our need for God and His regular involvement and consistent provision for our lives and ministries.

Independence or perceived independence (self-sufficiency) is an obstacle to praying and therefore to answered prayer. The more that we need God or the more clearly that we understand that we really do need God, the more heartily that we will pray and the more frequently we will find God answering our prayers.

According to the Bible, there is a kind of prayer that draws the attention of God. Its the kind of prayer that comes from desperation because we find ourselves in a real predicament with no where else to turn.

The Scriptures evidence for us that God has a very tender heart and a ready ear to listen to prayers in which His people "cry out" to Him in desperation because they are in a bad predicament or they are being wronged by another person(s). When God's people are hurting and cry out to Him, God is more apt to hear and respond than when things are going so well in our lives that we live as if we don't need God's involvement or provision in our lives.

Clear passages in the OT that bear out this attribute of God-His compassionate, merciful heart and how it relates to the intense prayers of His people.

Ex. 22:22-24

While God watches over the widow and orphan and hears their intense prayers when they cry out to Him, God also wants us to understand that it is not only them who receive a ready hear from God when they cry out, but it is all of His children who cry out to Him in times of desperation.

Exodus 22:25-27.

The NIV footnote says this about these passages in Exodus 22.

"That the poor, the widow, the orphan, the alien-in fact, all defenseless people-are objects of God's special concern and providential care is clear from the writings of Moses (Ex. 23:6-12; Lev. 19:9-10; Deut. 14:29, 16:11, 14; 24:19-21; 26:12-13); the Psalmists (Ps. 10:14, 17-18; 68:5; 82:3; 146:9) and the prophets (see Isa. 1:23; 10:2; Jer. 7:6; 22:3; Zech. 7:10; Mal. 3:5) as well as from the teachings of Jesus (Matt. 24:34-45)."

**Other Bible passages illustrate that God has a soft heart and ready ear for prayers of desperation from His people.**

**Ps. 10:14-18**

**Ps. 68:4-6**

**Ps. 146:1-2, 7-9**

**Lk. 18:1-8**

**Personal Application:**

**1. Trials and difficulties in our lives provide us with opportunities to see God work in special ways in our lives. Through hard and difficult times, we learn to "cry out" to God and we personally discover attributes of God that we would not have learned otherwise.**

**God is going to teach you to pray more intensely now.**

**2. Learn to thank God even when another person(s) terribly wrongs you because (if you will respond righteously through intensely crying out to God and submitting yourself to Him) they just brought God into your corner!**

**3. Don't be too quick to rush to the delivery, the rescue of those who are being wronged or facing difficult times whatever they might be. God uses difficult times and injustice to draw prayers from His people. Most people learn to pray when things are bad, not when things are good. For we parents, the best thing that we can teach our children (so that when we are dead and gone they will know where to turn for help) is to turn to the Lord for help.**