

“EFFECTIVE PRAYER”

By William Sutton

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Some say, “It’s easy. Prayer is just talking to God.” Or some might say, “You don’t learn to pray, you just pray. No one can teach another person to pray.”

(Luke 11:1-4) *“One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” He said to them, “When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven,*

Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us day by day our daily bread,

And forgive us our sins;

For we also forgive everyone

Who is indebted to us.

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.” (Mathew 6:9-13)

The disciples had been praying before, but now they wanted to understand effective prayer.

Prayer is something we learn to do. We are not born knowing how to pray. We, like the disciples, must learn to pray. The first lesson we must learn about prayer is to pray according to God’s Will. (1 John 5:14-15) says: *“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us, and if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we ask of him.”* In this passage, God makes three promises: 1) He promises to listen if we pray according to His will. 2) He promises that we already possess what we have asked for. 3) He promises that we know that we have what we asked for. God’s promises are conditional – that we ask according to His will.

How can I know that my prayer request is in keeping with the will of God?

- 1) Ask God what His will is rather than start with a long list of requests.

(James 1:5) – *“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”*

- 2) If we are still not sure after asking, we can ask the Holy Spirit to make intercession for us as we pray.

(Romans 8:26-27) – *“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts, knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.”*

As we begin praying, we must be willing for God to bring us into completely yielding to His will.

Prayer is something you learn to do. It takes practice. The more you pray, the easier it will become to hear the voice of God; the easier it will be to know His will.

“Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” (Mathew.6:10)

AMEN

Comments

Comment 1

I used to pray by just saying the words, thinking that God hears and answers all prayers. As I traveled along my faith journey I realized that I must pray according to God's will. That when I prayed from my heart I felt the presence of God listening to me. Now when I pray it comforts me and gives me peace.