

## Prayer; Romans 8:26-28

### I. Communication

- A. Prayer is our only communication with the Father
  - 1. He used to talk directly to the head of the family (Patriarchal Age)
  - 2. He used to talk to Israel through the Law (Mosaic Law)
  - 3. He used to talk to nations through the Prophets (also under the Mosaic Law)
  - 4. But now He talks to us through His Son (through the men inspired by the Holy Spirit to pen what we know as the Bible)
- B. Relationships are built on communication
- C. This was the way the early church fought persecution
- D. But we have a hard time with praying

### II. Ask

- A. Matthew 7:7–11 (ESV); <sup>7</sup> “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. <sup>9</sup> Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? <sup>10</sup> Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? <sup>11</sup> If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!
- B. Prayer is how we petition God; how we ask him for the things we want
  - 1. We have a God who wants to give us things
  - 2. Philippians 4:6 (ESV); do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.
- C. But God asks one thing of our requests
  - 1. 1 John 5:14–15 (ESV); <sup>14</sup> And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. <sup>15</sup> And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.
  - 2. Our God wants to give us what we ask for as long as it is “according to His will”
  - 3. Here is the key to our prayers
  - 4. But this means we have to be “in tune” with God’s will for us
    - a) God’s two eternal purposes; that all people be saved and that the saved become more like His Son
    - b) Read some of Paul’s prayers in the New Testament and you will see they are wrapped around these two purposes
    - c) But there is more to prayer than that, “let your requests be made known to God”
    - d) We are supposed to pour our heart out to Him
    - e) David did just that in the Psalms
    - f) Over and over again David reminds God of His promise to keep him safe from his enemies
    - g) David even questions God’s actions
    - h) But he always comes back to the fact that God is the almighty, the Creator, The Promise Keeper
- D. Don’t be afraid to ask God for what you want... However...
  - 1. James 4:1–7 (ESV); <sup>1</sup> What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? <sup>2</sup> You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup> You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. <sup>4</sup> You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the

world makes himself an enemy of God. <sup>5</sup> Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, “He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us”? <sup>6</sup> But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” <sup>7</sup> Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

2. This is where the “in tune” comes into play
3. Under the Patriarchal and Mosaic Law, God gave Israel just about everything they asked for
  - a) Quail (after He gave them mana)
  - b) A king (even though they were rejecting Him)
4. I don’t believe that God continues that anymore
5. When we ask “wrongly” we “do not receive”
6. God has even given us an answer for this

### III. What Do We Ask For?

- A. Romans 8:26–28 (ESV); <sup>26</sup> Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. <sup>27</sup> And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. <sup>28</sup> And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
- B. I find it amazing that my Heavenly Father wants so much to talk to me that He made a way even when I have no idea what to say!
- C. He is so concerned about communicating with us that He asks us to “pray without ceasing” 1 Thessalonians 5:17
  1. In everything we do, pray
  2. In everything we say, pray
  3. In every moment we are, pray
  4. We must be in constant communication with God
- D. Prayer is not a position
  1. We get caught up with the “bow your heads with me”
  2. We tell our kids, close your eyes and fold your hands
  3. And I know that is to keep the distractions at a minimum
  4. But we make that a tradition and don’t think we can pray unless we go into our “prayer closet”
  5. “I’ll pray for you tonight when I say my nightly prayers” versus “I’ll pray for you in a couple seconds since I’ll be talking to God then”
- E. Prayer is an attitude
  1. Of constant communication with God
  2. Of constantly thinking about His will
  3. Of consistently trying to do His will
- F. Prayer is an action
  1. James 2:15–16 (ESV); <sup>15</sup> If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, <sup>16</sup> and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?
  2. “I’ll pray for you” is a powerful statement (just to know that someone would want to petition the Creator of the Universe on my behalf is very humbling)
  3. “Let me help you” is a powerful action

### IV. Prayers of the Righteous

- A. James 5:16 (ESV); Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.
- B. Prayer helps develop our relationship with God
- C. He wants us to talk to him even when we don't know what to say
- D. He wants us to think and act on His will