

church of Christ at Greenwood

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A Christian Prays! Do You?

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A Christian prays — and prays — and prays. But many church members scarcely know the meaning of the word once they leave the church building and the stilted “audience conscious” phrases that pass for prayer there. “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thes. 5:17) makes no apparent impression.

It is a tragedy that God is considered so inaccessible. To many He is far away, locked in an inner office; with an alert guard of clergymen, forms and format to protect Him from the “ordinary” caller. The idea is wholly foreign to the truth.

“Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.” (Matt. 6:6) Thus Jesus describes the close intimate relation that exists between the petitioner and his Creator. This does not negate public prayer (the contrast is with hypocritical show-offs); in fact this touches the vitals of all acceptable prayer. When intimate communion with God is missing, public prayer becomes a farce.

Prayer is a Christian’s privilege; made real and earnest — meaningful — because a Christian (and only a Christian) truly appreciates such characteristics of God as the following.

GOD IS NEAR! He is “not far from every one of us; for in Him we live, and move, and have our being.” (Acts 17:27-28) A Christian lives close to God. His Maker is ever-present, all-about; ready to be contacted upon a moment’s notice. This nearness comforts the Christian —

“in the valley of the shadow...thou art with me.”

GOD CARES! The Christian casts all his cares upon God, “for He careth for you.” (1 Pet. 5:7) Our Father is concerned — His interest is genuine. He who takes note of the sparrow’s fall, watched over all His children.

GOD HEARS! His eyes “are over the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers.” (1 Pet. 3:12) “All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” (Heb. 4:13b) And hearing, He understands our frailties — “the feeling of our infirmities” (Heb. 4:15-16) — so we may come boldly to the throne of grace for mercy.

AND GOD GIVES! “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” (Matt. 7:7-8) **ASK! SEEK! KNOCK!** These are imperatives, in the Greek present tense. They say, “Ask” and keep on asking; “seek” and continue to seek; “knock” again and again. The thought is akin to Matt. 6:33 — “seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

A Christian believes that God is near, that God cares, that God hears, and that God gives. He is conscious of his dependence upon God, and leans upon Him without hesitation. So he prays; when he awakes — as he goes to work — when he partakes of God’s rich blessings — when he feels the weight of sorrow and cares — as he lays him down to sleep. A Christian prays; and what about you?