

Steps to Christ

Bible Study Series



The Power of Prayer

13 - 16

(1) WHAT IS THE RESULT OF PRIVATE PRAYER?

Matthew 6:6

Related Texts: Psalm 34:15-19; 86:5-7; 50:15; 55:16; Isaiah 65:24; Hebrews 4:16; Romans 8:26, 27; 10:12; James 5:16

We should pray in the family circle, and above all we must not neglect secret prayer, for this is the life of the soul. It is impossible for the soul to flourish while prayer is neglected. Family or public prayer alone is not sufficient. In solitude let the soul be laid open to the inspecting eye of God. Secret prayer is to be heard only by the prayer-hearing God. No curious ear is to receive the burden of such petitions. In secret prayer the soul is free from surrounding influences, free from excitement. Calmly, yet fervently, will it reach out after God. Sweet and abiding will be the influence emanating from Him who seeth in secret, whose ear is open to hear the prayer arising from the heart. By calm, simple faith the soul holds communion with God and gathers to itself rays of divine light to strengthen and sustain it in the conflict with Satan. God is our tower of strength.

Pray in your closet, and as you go about your daily labor let your heart be often uplifted to God. It was thus that Enoch walked with God. These silent prayers rise like precious incense before the throne of grace. Satan cannot overcome him whose heart is thus stayed upon God.

(2) WHAT INSTRUCTION IN THIS VERSE REINFORCES THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER?

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Related Texts: 2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalm 145:18, 19; Jeremiah 29:12, 13

There is no time or place in which it is inappropriate to offer up a petition to God. There is nothing that can prevent us from lifting up our hearts in the spirit of earnest prayer. In the crowds of the street, in the midst of a business engagement, we may send up a petition to God and plead for divine guidance, as did Nehemiah when he made his

request before King Artaxerxes. A closet of communion may be found wherever we are.

We should have the door of the heart open continually and our invitation going up that Jesus may come and abide as a heavenly guest in the soul.

Although there may be a tainted, corrupted atmosphere around us, we need not breathe its miasma, but may live in the pure air of heaven. We may close every door to impure imaginings and unholy thoughts by lifting the soul into the presence of God through sincere prayer. Those whose hearts are open to receive the support and blessing of God will walk in a holier atmosphere than that of earth and will have constant communion with heaven.

(3) WHEN WE ARE IN CONSTANT COMMUNICATION WITH CHRIST, WHAT IS THE RESULT?

Isaiah 26:3

Related Texts: Philippians 4:6, 7; John 14:27; 16:33; Psalm 9:10; 57:1; Jeremiah 17:7, 8

We need to have more distinct views of Jesus and a fuller comprehension of the value of eternal realities. The beauty of holiness is to fill the hearts of God's children; and that this may be accomplished, we should seek for divine disclosures of heavenly things.

Let the soul be drawn out and upward, that God may grant us a breath of the heavenly atmosphere. We may keep so near to God that in every unexpected trial our thoughts will turn to Him as naturally as the flower turns to the sun.

(4) WHAT PROMISE DOES GOD SO GRACIOUSLY EXTEND TO THE BROKEN HEARTED?

Psalms 147:3

Related Texts: Psalm 51:17; 34:18; Isaiah 57:15; 61:1; Hosea 6:1

Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He

who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. “The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” James 5:11. His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watch care, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son.

(5) IN WHOSE NAME SHOULD WE PRAY?

John 15:16

Related Texts: Matthew 28:18, 19; Romans 1:5; Acts 2:38; Malachi 1:11

Jesus said, “Ye shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth you.” John 16:26, 27. But to pray in the name of Jesus is something more than a mere mention of that name at the beginning and the ending of a prayer. It is to pray in the mind and spirit of Jesus, while we believe His promises, rely upon His grace, and work His works.

(6) WHAT ACTS OF PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY SHOULD BE COMBINED WITH OUR PRAYERS AND WORSHIP?

James 1:27

James 2:16

Related Texts: Matthew 25:34-46; 1 John 3:17-19; 1 Timothy 1:5; Job 29:12, 13; Isaiah 1:17; 58:6-11; Galatians 5:6; 6:9, 10

God does not mean that any of us should become hermits or monks and retire from the world in order to devote ourselves to acts of worship. The life must be like Christ's life—between the mountain and the multitude. He who does nothing but pray will soon cease to pray, or his prayers will become a formal routine. When men take themselves out of social life, away from the sphere of Christian duty and cross bearing; when they cease to work earnestly for the Master, who worked earnestly for them, they lose the subject matter of prayer and have no incentive to devotion. Their prayers become personal and selfish. They cannot pray in regard to the wants of humanity or the up building of Christ's kingdom, pleading for strength wherewith to work.

(7) WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP?

Hebrews 10:25

Related Texts: 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Matthew 18:20; Acts 2:42; 20:7

We sustain a loss when we neglect the privilege of associating together to strengthen and encourage one another in the service of God. The truths of His word lose their vividness and importance in our minds. Our hearts cease to be enlightened and aroused by their sanctifying influence, and we decline in spirituality. In our association as Christians we lose much by lack of sympathy with one another. He who shuts himself up to himself is not filling the position that God designed he should. The proper cultivation of the social elements in our nature brings us into sympathy with others and is a means of development and strength to us in the service of God.

If Christians would associate together, speaking to each other of the love of God and of the precious truths of redemption, their own hearts would be refreshed and they would refresh one another. We may be daily learning more of our heavenly Father, gaining a fresh experience of His grace; then we shall desire to speak of His love; and as we do this, our own hearts will be warmed and encouraged. If we thought and talked more of Jesus, and less of self, we should have far more of His presence.

(8) TO ABIDE IN PEACE, WHERE SHOULD OUR THOUGHTS AND AFFECTIONS CENTER?

Isaiah 26:3, 4

Colossians 3:2

Related Texts: Isaiah 57:19-21; John 14:27; Psalm 91:14; 119:36-40; Proverbs 23:5; Matthew 16:23; Romans 8:4-6; 1 John 2:15

If we would but think of God as often as we have evidence of His care for us we should keep Him ever in our thoughts and should delight to talk of Him and to praise Him. We talk of temporal things because we have an interest in them. We talk of our friends because we love them; our joys and our sorrows are bound up with them. Yet we have infinitely greater reason to love God than to love our earthly friends; it should be the most natural thing in the world to make Him first in all our thoughts, to talk of His goodness and tell of His power. The rich gifts He has bestowed upon us were not intended to absorb our thoughts and love so much that we should have nothing to give to God; they are constantly to remind us of Him and to bind us in bonds of love and gratitude to our heavenly Benefactor. We dwell too near the lowlands of earth. Let us raise our eyes to the open door of the sanctuary above, where the light of the glory of God shines in the face of Christ, who “is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.” Hebrews 7:25.

(9) WHAT IMPORTANT ELEMENT SHOULD OUR PRAYERS INCLUDE?

Colossians 4:2

Related Texts: Colossians 2:7; 3:15, 17; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

We need to praise God more “for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.” Psalm 107:8. Our devotional exercises should not consist wholly in asking and receiving. Let us not be always thinking of our wants and never of the benefits we receive. We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. We

are the constant recipients of God’s mercies, and yet how little gratitude we express, how little we praise Him for what He has done for us.

(10) WHAT WILL FLOW FROM THE HEART OF THOSE WHO JOYFULLY DEDICATE THEIR LIFE AND MEANS TO CHRIST?

Deuteronomy 12:7

Related Texts: Deuteronomy 26:11; Psalm 111:1-5; 9:1; 103:1-5

That which is done for the glory of God should be done with cheerfulness, with songs of praise and thanksgiving, not with sadness and gloom. Our God is a tender, merciful Father. His service should not be looked upon as a heart-saddening, distressing exercise. It should be a pleasure to worship the Lord and to take part in His work. God would not have His children, for whom so great salvation has been provided, act as if He were a hard, exacting taskmaster. He is their best friend; and when they worship Him, He expects to be with them, to bless and comfort them, filling their hearts with joy and love. The Lord desires His children to take comfort in His service and to find more pleasure than hardship in His work. He desires that those who come to worship Him shall carry away with them precious thoughts of His care and love, that they may be cheered in all the employments of daily life, that they may have grace to deal honestly and faithfully in all things.

(11) WHEN OUR THOUGHTS, CONVERSATIONS, AND PRAYERS PRAISE AND GLORIFY GOD, WHAT WILL BE REVEALED?

Psalm 50:23

Related Texts: Psalm 50:14, 15; 85:9; Romans 15:6, 9; 1 Peter 2:9

We must gather about the cross. Christ and Him crucified should be the theme of contemplation, of conversation, and of our most joyful emotion. We should keep in our thoughts every blessing we receive from God, and when we realize His great love we should be willing to trust everything to the hand that was nailed to the cross for us.

(12) BECAUSE OF OUR RECOGNITION OF GOD'S GOODNESS, WHAT SHOULD ALWAYS BE ON OUR LIPS?

Psalm 107:21, 22

Related Texts: Psalm 107:15, 31, 32; 34:3; 92:1, 2; 147:1; Isaiah 63:7

The soul may ascend nearer heaven on the wings of praise. God is worshiped with song and music in the courts above, and as we express our gratitude we are approximating to the worship of the heavenly hosts. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth" God. Psalm 50:23. Let us with reverent joy come before our Creator, with "thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. Isaiah 51:3.

I realize the need of a constant connection with God through both private and public prayer in my day-to-day experience with Him.

Please Circle: Yes Undecided

I understand the importance of including praise and thanksgiving to God for His mercy and goodness in my life as I pray.

Please Circle: Yes Undecided

I am thankful for the privilege to come before God's throne through the blessing of prayer and claim His awesome power in my life and in the lives of those for whom I pray.

Please Circle: Yes Undecided

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