



Outer Growth - Pray

**I pray for them: I pray not for the world,
but for them which thou hast given me;
for they are thine.**

John 17:9

Petition - 1 Samuel 1:17

Regularly - Psalms 86:3

Adversary - 1 Peter 5:8

Yeshua - Isaiah 55:6

Why do Christians or believers have to pray? First, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, mentions to pray for the people who use you and persecute you, as in Matthew five, verse forty-four, from the Neighbors and Enemies section. Why would Jesus begin with the saints of God to pray for them? Certainly, many godly people would have family, friends, loved ones, and other associates on top of their list. However, why neighbors and enemies?

The devil can use these groups of people because the enemies are already against you, and they are more dangerous to plan for you to turn you away from God. Neighbors can be a nuisance with their manipulative ways to gain from you and cause you to get mad and sin against God. Relatives and friends are capable of doing the same, but they are not as effective as neighbours and enemies.

In Matthew six, the first fifteen verses contain how to pray for believers. Not to be boastful or self-centered, but to be humble and secretive because God is a Spirit, and the attention should be towards Him and not people. Although they do hear you, only God can

answer and help you. "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him," as in Matthew six, verses seven to eight.

The theme verse from Jesus to the Father, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." This is the special claim on which He commends them to the Father. They were the Father's before they were given to the Son. By that gift, they have become the Father's more fully as in John seventeen, verses six to eight. They are the Father's, for all things which are the Son's are the Father's, and all things which are the Father's are the Son's.

To pray is to request help. God can do the impossible, of what believers can't do for themselves. There is a saying, "Even the weakest saints on their knees, the enemy trembles. The Devil flees when he sees the weakest saint upon their knees!" What is it speaking about? A believer who prays to the Almighty God.

There is something different about a saint who maintains a life of devotion to the Lord. "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking, as in Matthew six, verse seven. Hannah in First Samuel one, was in bitterness and prayed to the Lord, as in verse ten. She prays in the next verse, "O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head." No one has to be a professional to pray to the Lord, especially a believer.

God sees the hearts, if it's towards Him or not. No one can fool Him. Hannah says, "Remember me," "forget not thy handmaid." Hannah, looking at the situation at hand, only God can meet, and no one else. She poured out her soul to the Lord, as in verse fifteen. For believers, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us," as in First John five, verse fourteen. Each time we pray,

we are presented to God in submission and confidence according to His will as revealed in scripture or otherwise by the Holy Spirit. We know God's will in many instances because it is revealed in scripture. At other times, it becomes clear only as we earnestly seek His will. Once we know His will about any given issue, then we can ask Him in confidence and faith. When we do this, we know that He hears us and that His purposes for us will be accomplished.

"And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him," as in First John five, verse sixteen.

To pray is to do it daily. When a person hears from someone every day, it becomes easier to contact with. Imagine if the saints of God continue to reach out to the Lord daily, how much easier it would be to receive an answer. Hannah moved her lips without words coming out in the beginning of First Samuel one, verse thirteen, "Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard." What moves God is love for others because God is love, and that is the most powerful thing: No vain repetitions or asking "I want this or that," but helping someone else with whatever needs to be met is effective and is love.

"Be merciful unto me, O Lord" is a humble approach, especially during trials, which many people are unable to do. Most people cannot maintain humility despite challenges, and it carries over in their approach to God and others. Some will begin when they pray, "Well, God, I do this for you and that for you." He is not a delivery service that will drop everything on a silver platter because a servant of God is experiencing adversity. Jesus faced trials among the people that knew Him, and look what they did, and He did not go to the Father and carry on and say, "Well, I am your Son!" Yet, He prayed to God daily.

The desire to pray will encounter adverse situations. Led by the adversary, the devil and his demons, to disrupt or interrupt believers who pray daily and are close to God in their daily devotion. If a believer fails to pray, it will only hinder their relationship with God and gradually sway them to be influenced by the

world to the point they stray, then really go astray, until they fall away.

The devil will use the flesh against the saints of God to focus on self, to get in the way when saints have the desire to pray. The "too tired" thoughts will heavily come in the way, which the enemy will use feelings to fight our flesh from submitting to pray. The five senses of the eyes, ears, nose, touch, and memory are the few things Satan presents in that moment of a believer trying to connect with God. Also, his dark list of favourites, we like and dislike, to apply against those who attempt to pray. For a believer to live holy before God and stay on the path of the straight and narrow way, they will need to pray daily.

When humanity fell into sin, Satan became the ruler of the world by seizing something. He dominates the world, patrols this earth, and is the commander of a host of evil spirits through whom he enslaves and keeps captive those without Christ. Only believers are delivered from his power. However, as a roaring lion, he remains a threat to believers and seeks to destroy them. especially through experiences of suffering.

However, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world," as in First John four, verse four. Believers are fully equipped to defeat Satan's schemes. To pray is the beginning. Through our faith in the blood of Christ, as in Revelation twelve, verse eleven, spiritual warfare by the Holy Spirit, as in Ephesians six, verses eleven through eighteen, and to resist him and stand firm in the faith, as in First Peter five, verse nine.

To pray is through the Son of God. Jesus Christ is the link to God for people in the world who are not yet saved. As mentioned earlier, when humanity fell into sin, through salvation through God's Son, anyone can come out of it. "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near," as in Isaiah fifty-five, verse six. We must seek God while there is still the promise of His response.

God's time of salvation is limited. A day is looming when He will refuse to be found. Why do Christians or believers have to pray?

The answer is, the direction in this life will depend upon it. To keep the enemy from gaining control of a believer's life. To have the

opportunity to have our needs met by God and be successful in many areas of our lives. This is what is at stake when we do pray or do not pray.