

How I Neglected God!

After entering the ministry I tried for years to spend some time most days in prayer or Bible reading. Occasionally these times were protracted, often brief, sometimes not at all.

A HISTORY OF FRUSTRATION

I knew prayer, as I had been taught as a child, as simply asking God for what I wanted.

As I began to face tougher and tougher circumstances, prayer time became worry time.

And when I read a book by a widely known Christian author in which she reported that she hadn't time to be alone with God, so she simply prayed as she went about her daily household chores, I decided *that* was for me. My excuse was that praying on my knees was too much a routine at which I even sometimes went to sleep!

I had tried "moving mountains" through prayer. But they most often stayed right where they were. So my "service" became more important to me than my prayers. Because from this I could see at least some results.

This didn't mean I didn't love God and want to please Him. I did. But I was spiritually frustrated.

A PERIOD OF NEGLECT

My prayer life was of limited value; and for years, as a time apart, I neglected it, praying largely only as I went about my daily work.

Then I saw this to be wrong. And I started taking at least two and a half hours a week – a half hour Monday to Friday with weekends usually off. I would often walk and pray, sometimes in the open air.

And I did watch God answer some of my specific prayers. And I did begin *sometimes* just to worship and praise and adore Him as I really knew I should.

FAILURE IN DEEPER LIFE

You see, you need to be aware that I had an excellent background in training and literature in regard to what was called the *deeper life*. And for one brief period I had especially pursued trying to find this intimate walk with God that I was told was my right – only to become discouraged and give it up.

That was many years earlier. Then there came the time after all of this that I was facing financial catastrophe, not for the first time. But this time I doubled my half hour to an hour and expected God to meet the financial needs I begged of Him.

"WAIT!"

Instead He told me to stop begging, leave all my temporal needs with Him, and just wait on Him in rest and peace, love and worship and expectation. I anticipated, as I sought to obey, that He would supply the financial need as I saw it to be. Instead the financial situation continued to deteriorate.

Then He convinced me that I must want Him for Himself alone. I doubled my time alone with Him again. And He brought the ministries I had conducted for fifteen years to an end.

NOW IT'S HIM AND HIS

And I praise Him that He alone is all I need. And I seek Him morning by morning for Himself alone, not His gifts. And now I watch Him work on my behalf as it pleases Him. Not when or the way I want.

And if what I need today is temporal deprivation and suffering so that I may reap eternal and spiritual benefit, I want to hug that to my breast as His good gift to me today.

And I want never to neglect Him again, but to have my greatest joy in loving and worshiping Him who loved me and gave Himself for me.

How about you?

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