

How To Draw Near To God In Prayer

(Part I)

Are you hungry for more of God?

Are you frustrated for lack of intimacy with Him?

Is your prayer life unsatisfying?

Do you sometimes feel like a hypocrite when you pray?

Are you a worrier in prayer?

Instead of bringing peace and joy, does prayer bring you anxiety and fear?

Have you almost given up on prayer?

Are you a defeated Christian?

Must you, as the author had to do through thirty years of ministry, say you love the Lord but can't consider yourself a spiritual Christian?

Is there something better for you?

Read on . . .

Yes, my dear friend, God does have something better for you.

And if you want to know my personal experience in learning to draw near to God in prayer, just write me for HOW TO DRAW NEAR TO GOD IN PRAYER – Part II. As God provides I will send it to you.

But right now let me whet your appetite for a dynamic prayer life by telling you first what such a prayer life is, second what it is not, third how to get started, and fourth what benefit you may anticipate from it.

Drawing near to God in prayer is simply *the* natural aspiration of every Christian. As sure as you turn from your sin and receive Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and the Holy Spirit comes to live within, you want to draw near to God in prayer.

Unfortunately, our old self nature reads the Bible with jaundiced eye and sees the promises that "whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," as a great way to get what it wants. And one of two things usually happens: we become disappointed when God doesn't answer such selfish prayers; or He does answer some of them, and we find we're like the Old Testament Israelites who "God give them their request but sent leanness into their soul."

Probably most of us experience something of both of these results of selfish praying. We live in disappointment and frustration, knowing the Bible promises something better but knowing not how to find it.

There is a "a more excellent way."

It is the way of love.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

He gave freely in love.

That is all He asks in return.

When asked, "Which is the greatest commandment in the law," Jesus answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment." (Matthew 22:37, 38)

So when you come to God in prayer, come to Him in love. Worship Him, Praise Him, Honor Him, Adore Him, Thank Him for Himself and His love first, then for His mercies.

No matter that you feel unworthy of loving Him or receiving His love. No matter that you feel incapable of loving Him and receiving His love. Love and worship and praise and delight yourself in Him. Do it. Do it without feelings. Just do it.

Pray if you wish, "God give me a holy hunger for Yourself." Pray it over and over again if you wish. But love and worship and praise Him, and delight yourself in Him.

Now you will immediately hit a snag. Your mind will want to run all over the place. Just set aside every worry, every concern, every need and restfully, quietly love your lovely Lord. Know assuredly you have a right to His peace!

By way of preparation for this loving communion, you may read the worship and praise Psalms; Job 38-42 (especially 42:1-6); Isaiah 6:1-8; 26:1-13; 40:28-31; 45:5-9; 53; 55; Revelation 4:8-11; 5:9-14; 129:1-16; 22:1-5, 12, 13, 17.

By rearranging Colossians 3:1 and 2 slightly, we can make clear this message: *Seek those things which are above, set your affections there where Christ is seated on the right hand of God.*

And what is the result?

Again let us bring together some expressions, this time from II Corinthians 3:18, 4:6, *Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord in the face of Jesus Christ, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord.*

Our glory is His glory in which we come to delight. Beholding Him there we're changed gloriously, little by little into His own lovely image as we look un to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. (Hebrews 12:2)

There He becomes to us Precious (2 Peter 2:4, 6, 7), and who would do ought to hurt or grieve the One Who to him or her has become so Precious? And so we are changed by love.

The danger is that instead of continuing to wait on Him alone in the quiet of His loving presence we become impatient and return to selfish begging or abandon altogether the pursuit of God in the quiet.

For it will take many hours of pursuit of Him alone in the quiet before the transforming difference is seen. The evil one will certainly seek to discourage. And the mind will suffer every kind of distraction.

But for those who persist in setting their affection on Christ above not on things on the earth, looking not on things seen but on things unseen, they will see the eternal God in the face of Christ and be transformed into His image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord. (Ref. Colossians 3:1, 2; II Corinthians 3:18; 4:6, 18)

Now, my friend, be sure to get Part II and subsequent parts of HOW TO DRAW NEAR TO GOD IN PRAYER and make this your life-long pursuit.

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