

1.

What Is Real Prayer?

BIBLE GEM

“And it came to pass, that, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” Luke 11:1.

QUESTION

What is real prayer? Would it not be well to define what effective prayer really is before beginning this spiritual adventure?

ANSWER

Speaking to God as to a friend: “Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does, not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him.”—*Steps to Christ*, page 93.

Conversation with God: “If we keep the Lord ever before us, allowing our hearts to go out in thanksgiving and praise to Him, we shall have a continual freshness in our religious life. Our prayers will take the form of a conversation with God as we would talk with a friend. He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Often there will come to us a sweet joyful sense of the presence of Jesus. Often our hearts will bum within us as He draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch. When this is in truth the experience of the Christian, there is seen in his life a simplicity, a humility, meekness, and lowliness of heart, that shows to all with whom he associates that he has been with Jesus and learned of Him.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pages 129, 130.

The key in the hand of faith: “The darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray. The whispered temptations of the enemy entice them to sin; and it is all because they do not make use of the privileges that God has given them in the divine appointment of prayer. Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven’s storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence? Without unceasing prayer and diligent watching we are in danger of growing careless and of deviating from the right path.”—*Steps to Christ*, pages 94, 95.

It is the soul of religion: “Do not neglect secret prayer, for it is the soul of religion. With earnest, fervent prayer, plead for purity of soul. Plead as earnestly, as eagerly, as you would for your mortal life, were it at stake. Remain before God until unutterable longings are begotten within you for salvation, and the sweet evidence is obtained of pardoned sin.” —*Testimonies*, vol. 1, page 163.

The breath of the soul: “Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted, and the health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Wellspring of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience. Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God.” —*Gospel Workers*, pages 254, 255.

PRAYER THOUGHT

Heavenly Father, may prayer become more real to me, and may I think of Thee as my best Friend.

2.

Prayer in the Morning

BIBLE GEM

“Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation. Harken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto Thee will I pray. My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up.” Psalm 5:1–3.

QUESTION

What is the first work of the day? For what should one pray in the morning?

ANSWER

The first words in the morning: “The very first out-breathing of the soul in the morning should be for the presence of Jesus. ‘Without Me,’ He says, ‘ye can do nothing.’ It is Jesus that we need; His light, His life, His Spirit, must be ours continually. We need Him every hour. And we should pray in the morning that as the sun illuminates the landscape, and fills the world with light, so the Sun of Righteousness may shine into the chambers of mind and heart, and make us all light in the Lord. We cannot do without His presence one moment. The enemy knows when we undertake to do without our Lord, and he is there, ready to fill our minds with his evil suggestions that we may fall from our steadfastness; but it is the desire of the Lord that from moment to moment we should abide in Him, and thus be complete in Him.”—*My Life Today*, page 15.

Your first work: “Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.’ This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ. A life in Christ is a life of restfulness. There may be no ecstasy of feeling, but there should be an abiding, peaceful trust.”—*Steps to Christ*, page 70.

Lord, help me to do my best: “In the future life the mysteries that here have annoyed and disappointed us will be made plain. We shall see that our seemingly unanswered prayers and disappointed hopes have been among our greatest blessings. We are to look upon every duty, however humble, as sacred because it is a part of God’s service. Our daily prayer should be, ‘Lord, help me to do my best. Teach me how to do better work. Give me energy and cheerfulness. Help me to bring into my service the loving ministry of the Saviour.’ ”—*The Ministry of Healing*, page 474.

Daily prayer as essential as temporal food: “If we would develop a character which God can accept, we must form correct habits in our religious life. Daily prayer is as essential to growth in grace, and even to spiritual life itself, as is temporal food to physical well-being. We should accustom ourselves to often lift the thoughts to God in prayer.” —*Messages to Young People*, pages 114, 115.

PRAYER THOUGHT

Our Father, help me to make first things first. May the presence of Jesus be very real and assist me in always doing my best.