

## Why Pray?

Do you pray? Do your prayers “work”? Why should you pray? They are questions that beg answers, yet, often times, they are questions that we can’t seem to answer. If there were ever a “time” for us to pray...it is *now*. We need to fully grasp our “*privilege of prayer*.”

“*There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven;*” (Ecclesiastes 3:1) clearly, it is “*a time to pray*.” We’re finding ourselves overspent and overdrawn in more ways than one; we continue to “consume,” but we’re completely empty. We cry out in desperation, and wonder, “*Where is God?*” And yet, He is right where we left Him—we’ve left Him out of nearly every area of our lives. We have decided to shut God out, until tragedy strikes and then we swell up with pride, call out in prayer, and expect that God should show up...when we ask Him to. *The problem of prayer is not with God, but with us*. Instead of asking God to answer the prayers that are devastating our hearts, *we should start praying about all the things that are breaking His*.

It’s quite disturbing that not much has changed in over two thousand years. Isaiah looked out upon people who longed for happiness and security—an “abundant life.” But they were looking in all the wrong places—so do we. Then, just as now, people were running to the marketplaces and to places of amusement...spending their money frivolously for things which brought them no permanent satisfaction. And yet, Isaiah did not condemn them, but looked past their gluttony and immorality and embraced them with a word from God:

*“Wait and listen, everyone who is thirsty! Come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Yes, come, buy [priceless, spiritual] wine and milk without money and without price [simply for the self-surrender that accepts the blessing]. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your earnings for what does not satisfy? Harken diligently to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness [the profuseness of spiritual joy].”* Isaiah 55:1-2 (NLT)

God offers what cannot be found in this world—*true* fulfillment. It is our deepest need not just to know *about* God, but to have an intimate relationship with Him; knowing Him as Creator, Redeemer, Judge, and closest Friend. Prayer is a human act, given to us by God’s grace, which reflects our dependence upon Him. Prayer is the heart of man connecting with the heart of God. We need to clearly understand that it is not God that has let us down or forsaken us...it is that *we* have forgotten and forsaken Him—we fail to understand our *privilege of prayer*.

The Word that God gave to people over two thousand years ago through Isaiah is just as relevant today as it was back then. He is calling us to understand our true condition and turn to Him.

*“Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. ‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,’ declares the Lord.”* Isaiah 55: 6-8 (NIV)

C.S. Lewis said, "*If God had granted all the silly prayers I've made in my life, where would I be now?*" Our problem with prayer is that we have forgotten that God's ways are not only higher, *but better*. Our current condition is not evidence of God's unfaithfulness, but of ours. We have failed to pray as we've been instructed, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done." Our greatest Christian privilege has become our biggest failure. People all over the world recite the Lord's Prayer daily, and yet, have no intention of anyone's will being done, but their own; we're praying not that "God's will be done," but that He approve ours.

As we pray, we must turn away from "self-centeredness" and pray with whole hearts that cry out, "*God's will be done.*" We must trust that His ways are higher *and better*. We must be *committed* to constant prayer while rejoicing in hope by trusting in His Promises. (Romans 12:12) It is through prayer that we invite God into our world, so that He might lead, guide, and direct us each and every moment of our lives. Our privilege in prayer is not that He will hear us, *but that we will hear Him*.