

ENCOUNTERING GOD THROUGH PRAYER

John 10:2-4

Introduction: God has always been interested in people from the very beginning and has spoken to them through the ages in various manners, such as through angels, a burning bush, clouds, preachers and then in person, Jesus and then through His written Word, the Bible. There is one other way God has spoken to people and still does so today and that is through **prayer**.

I. GOD CREATED MANKIND TO HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM

1. God put within everyone a desire to **know** Him and today reveals Himself through the Bible.
 - Once one responds in belief in Jesus indwelling by the Holy Spirit then takes place and He begins to reveal God through the written Word.
 - How one responds to what the Holy Spirit reveals is either obedience or disobedience.
2. Prayer is not a religious exercise but is an active relationship with God.
 - Prayer is not a "one way" conversation, although sometimes it seems such, but God does hear and God does speak during one's prayer time.
 - Why pray, doesn't God already know what is best? Why does God need one's prayers?
3. Prayer is God's way of adjusting the one praying to Him. God doesn't need one's prayers, but God wants His children to pray because of what He wants to do through their lives.
 - **It is through prayer that God's children adjust their minds and lives to His will.**
4. Prayer is meeting God. (How it happens:)
 - God starts things by causing His child to want to pray about something.
 - The Holy Spirit takes the Word of God and reveals to the one praying God's will.
 - God's praying child then adjusts his/her life to the truth just received.
 - God's child then looks and listens for confirmation or more direction from the Bible or circumstances or from his/her church family.
 - God's child obeys.
 - God works in and through His children to accomplish His purposes.
5. It is the Holy Spirit's job to bring God's child to want to do God's will and the Holy Spirit will never lead contrary to the Word of God.

II. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN GOD'S CHILDREN ENCOUNTER HIM THROUGH PRAYER?

1. Remember the account of the four men letting their friend down through the roof for Jesus to heal? They believed Jesus could heal their friend and He did, but Jesus did something else: Jesus forgave him of his sins as well as healing him. They asked for one thing and Jesus gave them what they asked for plus.
2. Christians often ask God for one thing and get another. Ever happen to you?
 - God wants to give His children more than they ask for.

3. Most Christians have a "list" of what they think is best for them and others and pray expecting God to answer their request as well as bless what they try to do for Him.
 - Christians forget that God already has things worked out for each of His children's lives and they need to decide whether they are going to demand God give them what they think is best and therefore ask for or let God do what He knows is best .
4. Christians often fail to see God working in the area of their prayers because it is not **exactly** as they asked God to do it.
 - Once the "amen" is said to one's prayer, start looking in the general direction of what was prayed for and be ready to make adjustments God may require so that that prayer can be answered the way God wants.
5. Sometimes God is silent.
 - Usually God is silent because there is sin and is waiting for His child to recognize it and come to Him and confess it and get rid of it.
 - However God is silent sometimes because He is getting ready to do something different in His child's life. Something exciting, big.
 - If God is silent for a while, it wouldn't hurt to look around for some unconfessed sin and get rid of it by confessing it to God. Talk to the Holy Spirit and ask for His help.

CONCLUSION:

1. God wants a relationship with everyone of His children.
2. God has already taken the initiative in revealing Himself to people.
3. God has given the Bible and then the Holy Spirit to help people understand the Word of God.
4. God and His children can talk back and forth through prayer, thus communicate with each other.
5. The Bible is God's primary means of speaking to His children, therefore every child of God should know God's will for his/her life by reading God's Word and listening to the Holy Spirit explain or show what God wants.
6. Once a child of God knows what God expects, then adjustments are to be made so that God can work His will through him/her.