

THE SECRET TO ANSWERED PRAYER

Matthew 7:7-11

Introduction: What kind of God are we praying to? Why doesn't God give us what we ask for? Since God knows everything, why pray anyhow? Everybody has "prayed" at one time or other to some deity of some kind. Every Christian, of course, prays to Almighty God, the Heavenly Father and does so in the Name of Jesus. Yet even Christians don't always seem to have their prayers answered, even though the prayer might be very important. Christians know that God is very able to answer their prayers, so why doesn't He?

I. WHAT IS PERSEVERING PRAYER?

1. Persevering prayer is TRUE prayer, not just playing around with/in prayer.
2. Persevering prayer is frequent, often, not only in times of emergencies or some secret desire.
3. Persevering prayer is made with assurance, knowing that God is interested and does not mock.
4. Persevering prayer is prayer made within God's will, it is not selfish but accepting what God wants.
5. Persevering prayer is relying, depending upon God, acknowledging one's need of God's presence.
6. Persevering prayer is more than just "asking." It is voicing one's wants, needs.
 - It is seeking - making an effort, unable to meet one's needs.
 - It is knocking - more than just once, it is avidly wanting God's help.
7. Persevering prayer is asking someone (God) who is trusted and is able to meet one's need.
 - It is seeking, looking to God for help, when one is unable to meet his/her own needs.
 - It is knocking, going outside one's own self for help, knowing that able help is beyond self.

II. WHY PERSEVERE IN PRAYER?

1. What happens if one doesn't keep on asking?
2. Answered prayer is conditional - upon one's sincerity and respect.
3. God doesn't answer immediately always, why not?
 - It keeps one coming back to Him.
 - It teaches patience and trust in God.
 - It causes one's love and dependence on God to grow.
 - It is a measure of one's trust, love and dependence on God.

III. HOW DOES ONE PERSEVERE IN PRAYER?

1. In persevering prayer, one must look upon God as his/her Father, heavenly Father.
2. In persevering prayer, one asks for that which will glorify God.
3. In persevering prayer, one must be teachable and not quit.

CONCLUSION:

1. Not every Christian is persistent in prayer.
2. Most Christians have "routine" prayers in which basically the same words are said every time the prayer is said, meals, bedtimes, going on a trip, etc.
3. Most Christians are not all that sincere in their prayer life - only in times of emergency do most Christians get serious about what they are praying about.
4. Look at your own prayer life. Are you persistent? Do you have very many answered prayers?