

Prayer

Chapter 9

Now that you are saved, Born Again, and that you are a Christian, lets discuss the next most important thing with God: PRAYER

Do not take God for granted. God wants us to talk with Him and He with us. As we mentioned, He wants to not only be our God, and Father, He wants to be our best friend.

Remember John 15:9

JN 15:9 "As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love. [10] If you obey My commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have obeyed My Father's commands and remain in His love. [11] I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. [12] My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. [13] **Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. [14] You are My friends if you do what I command. [15] I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from My Father I have made known to you. [16] You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in My name. [17] This is my command: Love each other."**

He wants to be our friend, our best friend. So the biggest thing about best friends is that they talk, they talk a lot, and they talk all of the time. They share everything in their life. They help each other all of the time. Not just once in a while but always.

EPH 6:18 "And pray in the Spirit **on all occasions** with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints."

9.1 What is prayer?

In short, it is the way to communicate with the true Creator of this world. Again, it is communication.

How do we communicate? We use our mouth to talk, we use our body language, we use our mind and we use our actions.

Prayer

The world tries to teach us that to communicate to God is such a holy and a pure action (which it is) but it must be done only in a holy and sanctimonious way or location—only in their church: we must always kneel, or prostrate ourselves on the floor, or we must be bowing up and down to show our humbleness and uttermost (make believe) respect. HOG WASH!

Where does it say in the bible that we must put our bodies in a certain position to talk to God. On the contrary He says

MK 7:1 “The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus **and [2] saw some of His disciples eating food with hands that were "unclean," that is, unwashed.** [3] (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a **ceremonial washing**, holding to the tradition of the elders. [4] When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.)”

MK 7:5 “So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, **"Why don't Your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with 'unclean' hands?"**”

MK 7:6 ”He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written:

" `These people honor Me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from Me.

MK 7:7 “They worship Me in vain;
their teachings are but rules taught by men.””

MK 7:8 **“You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.”**

MK 7:9 “And He said to them: **"You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!** [10] For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.' [11] But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: 'Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban' (that is, a gift devoted to God), [12] then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother. [13] **Thus you nullify the Word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.**””

MK 7:14 “Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen to Me, everyone, and understand this. [15] **Nothing outside a man can**

make him 'unclean' by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him 'unclean.' “

MK 7:17 “After Me had left the crowd and entered the house, His disciples asked Him about this parable. [18] "Are you so dull?" He asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean'? [19] **For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body.**" (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean.")”

MK 7:20 “He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes Him 'unclean.' [21] For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, [22] greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. [23] **All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.'** ”

It is not what we do on the outside that God cares about but what is on the inside. It is not the humble looking body that God sees, but the humble spirit inside that He sees. When you talk to your humanly father to ask a question or favor, to you bow before him and beg him, or do you walk up to him as his son/daughter and plainly make your request.

Do you repeat over and over and over again the same request or do you say it one time and then wait for an answer? Do you chant to your humanly father over and over again out side his room or at his feet, as if to please him with all of your noise?

No. So why do you think that your Heavenly Father wants it? When they asked Jesus this question here is what he says:

MT 6:5 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. [6] But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. [7] **And when you pray, do not keep on babbling (chanting) like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. [8] Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.**”

MT 6:9 "This, then, is how you should pray (it is an example as not the technique as to how to pray not a prayer itself):

" `Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be Your name,

MT 6:10 “Your kingdom come,

Prayer

Your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

MT 6:11 “Give us today our daily bread.

MT 6:12 “Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

MT 6:13 And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.”

So He is saying that we need to acknowledge who we are talking to, that we put our faith in Him to do on earth as He does in Heaven, then to acknowledge that He provides for us like in Matthew 6:30, then to help us fight the evil one, as in James and Ephesians.

9.1 But again, what is prayer?

Simply put it is talking to God our Father just like we would a good or best friend; just like we would our own human father. You show respect to your friend, you are humble, you are not arrogant to your friend, you ask their advice and council, you share all your troubles and all of your happiness with your best friend, you share your depression and all of your joy with your best friend.

As He said, God considers us His best friend.

JN 15: 14 “You are My friends if you do what I command. [15] I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know His master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from My Father I have made known to you. [16] You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. [17] This is My command: Love each other.”

He says that He calls us His friends, if we obey His commands, but what are they: they are to love one another and to love God and be His best friend.

So how much to you share with your best friend? Does God want us to bother Him with all of our smallest problems or pleasures? After all He is God and He must be very busy, to busy for us.

MT 6:25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? [26] Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. **Are you not much more**

Prayer

valuable than they? [27] Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

MT 6:28 "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. [29] Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. [30] **If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?** [31] So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' [32] For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. [33] **But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.** [34] Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

He cares and already knows all of this so how can we be bothering Him to tell Him **our point of view.**

MT 10:26 "So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. [27] What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. [28] Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. [29] Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. [30] **And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.** [31] **So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.**"

MT 10:32 "Whoever acknowledges Me before men, I will also acknowledge him before My Father in heaven. [33] But whoever disowns Me before men, I will disown him before My Father in heaven."

Once again, if He is already going through the trouble to know this much about us, then how can He be too busy to hear what we have to say?

JAS 4:1 "What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? [2] You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. **You do not have, because you do not ask God.** [3] When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."

God even complains that we do not pray or talk to Him enough and that is why we do not have the wonderful things He wants us to have, because we do not ask enough.

Prayer

JAS 4:4 “You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. [5] Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the **spirit He caused to live in** us envies intensely? [6] But He gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

"God opposes the proud (haughty—to cut others down; to criticize others) but gives grace to the humble."

JAS 4:7 “**Submit yourselves, then, to God.** Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. [8] Come near to God and He will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. [9] Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. [10] Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up.”

He is complaining to us that we do not seek Him enough, and we do not submit ourselves enough to Him.

9.2 How often should we pray?

So do we think that He wants us to pray often? Well lets look at a couple scriptures on that.

EPH 6:10 “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. [11] Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. [12] For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. [13] Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. [14] Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, [15] and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. [16] In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. [17] Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. [18] **And pray in the Spirit on all occasions** with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert **and always keep on praying** for all the saints.”

COL 1:9 “For this reason, since the day we heard about you, **we have not stopped praying for you and asking** God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. [10] **And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way:** bearing fruit in

every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, [11] being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully [12] giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of Light. [13] For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, [14] in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

AC 1:12 “Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. [13] When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. [14] **They all joined together constantly in prayer**, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.”

RO 1:8 “First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. [9] God, whom I serve with my whole heart in preaching the gospel of his Son, **is my witness how constantly I remember you [10] in my prayers at all times**; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you.”

2TH 1:11 “**With this in mind, we constantly pray for you**, that our God may count you worthy of His calling, and that by His power He may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith. [12] We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

2TI 1:3 “I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, **as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers**. [4] Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. [5] I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. [6] For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. [7] **For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.**”

MT 18:18 "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

MT 18:19 "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. [20] **For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.**"

MT 18:21 "Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?"

MT 18:22 "Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times."

So how often does He say we should pray? Constantly, is how often and long. Constantly!!!!

9.3 The next question is how do we pray Constantly?

I mean we cannot be on our knees 24 hours a day for 7 days a week. We have to work (and so did Paul), we have a family to care for (like Paul—his has the church), we have... we have... and we have lots of things to do. But so did Paul, and the others who say to constantly pray, he could have found away to not pray. But he constantly prayed. How? Well I believe that Paul knew that God was with him all the time. God was in his heart and so being with him, he could always be with God. He constantly talked to God about everything and everyone.

So if you can be with God always, then your best friend is by you side always.

DT 31:1 "Then Moses went out and spoke these words to all Israel: [2] "I am now a hundred and twenty years old and I am no longer able to lead you. The LORD has said to me, 'You shall not cross the Jordan.' [3] The LORD your God Himself will cross over ahead of you. He will destroy these nations before you, and you will take possession of their land. Joshua also will cross over ahead of you, as the LORD said. [4] And the LORD will do to them what He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, whom He destroyed along with their land. [5] The LORD will deliver them to you, and you must do to them all that I have commanded you. [6] Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; **He will never leave you nor forsake you.**"

REV 3:19 "Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. [20] Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. **If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with Me.**"

Prayer

When we become saved, He lives in us and will never leave or forsake us.

If He is always in and with us, and He is our best friend, then do you not share everything with your best friend, do you not ask for favors? But do you have to beg for anything from your best friend?

No. See appendix A below to see how He showed me He wanted to be my best friend.

This means that as you walk down the street, you can talk to God. I find it good to pray and talk to God while I am in my car, especially during the traffic jams. I share my dreams, ideals, my disappointments and successes with Him. We have developed a great relationship this way.

How do you do things? If you are like me, you tend to do things by yourself. When you do, do you look at the problem and then ask, "I wonder how I am going to do this?" Or do you say, "I wonder how to fix this?" Or do you even ask, "I wonder how to I get to my friend's house, or how to I get to the store?" Ahhh, who are you talking to? Yourself? Well who else is inside of you to talk to? Usually most people do. They do not realize it, but they are talking to themselves. I hope you do not think that I am crazy, but I found that I could work better if I did talk to myself and then I would reply to myself with the right answer. I found that once I asked myself the right question, I could come up with the right answer. Often that took some time but it worked.

Well one day as I was doing that with a problem I was having at work, God said, "What are you doing?"

I answered that I was trying to fix this thing. He asked if I knew how, and I said that I did not, that I had never seen that problem before, and I was trying to figure it out. He went on to say that He was wondering why I was asking myself, since I did not know the answer, instead of Him, who did know the answer.

Well I said that I had not gotten to the point of praying yet, and He said, then why are you praying to yourself instead of Him. Well I said that I was not praying to myself, I was talking to myself, and He said, right, praying.

It then dawned on me that He was saying my thinking to myself was praying and so that I should be praying or thinking to Him instead. So I started to place my thoughts to Him, instead of myself, and He then started to give me the answers to the things that I did not know. I found that this was the secret to praying constantly. For we are always thinking and wondering and searching for answers, so why not think to God for all of this.

To praying unceasingly is to always place your thoughts to Him for everything and so you are always praying.

So what is prayer? It is constantly talking to God, your best friend, about everything in your life **constantly**: talk to God in the car, in the mall while shopping, while working (you might be surprised what secrets He might tell you), while in the shower (hard to kneel here), any and all other times you would talk to your best friend if he/she was there.

9.4 How to Pray

Now that you know what prayer is, it is important to know how to pray. We know that we do not pray by chanting but do you know that your attitude and motive is most important to God to hear and answer your prayers.

JAS 4:1 “What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? [2] You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. [3] **When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.**”

JAS 4:4 “You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. [5] Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely? [6] But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

“God opposes the proud (haughty—to cut others down; criticizing others) but gives grace to the humble.””

JAS 4:7 “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. [8] **Come near to God and He will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.** [9] Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. [10] Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up.”

He is holy and pure. So to come before God we must have a holy and pure attitude, which is why in the Lord's pray in the Gospels, He says that we need to first ask for forgiveness for our trespasses and sins. So that way you are holy and pure when you talk to Him. But if we are constantly praying then that means that we have to be constantly holy and pure.

When you are humble in pray, then this is true. A pure and holy person is humble; for he has a humble spirit of God in him.

Prayer

Now that we know how and why we pray, next we need to know how to live as a Christian and stay pure and holy in this humble spirit.

Well there is a few things to understand in order to pray and it is similar to talking to your best friend, kind of like common sense.

Are you rude when you talk to your best friend or your human father?

Do you yell at them?

Do you take them for granted?

Do you really expect them to give you things that they know will hurt you?

Do you really think that they would help you to bad things, or evil things?

Do you think that they would allow you to be spoiled?

Do you think that they would allow you to make them dirty when you go to talk to them?

Most people would say NO to all of this; so why do you expect God to allow it?

When we pray, we do need to be respectful to God our Father, we do not need to be on our knees or prostrated on the floor to talk to Him, but we do in our hearts. That is being humble.

He does want us to come to Him in His place, and not to just yell across the world. We need to see ourselves coming before Him at His thrown in our heart and spirits.

If we do not ask Him for what we need or want, then we are taking Him for granted. We cannot expect Him to just give to us without our making our requests; He hates spoiled children who will not be humble. We have to do our part out of respect and love for Him.

When we go before Him, we cannot take our dirt, evil attitudes and sins before His holy thrown. We must be right with Him, we must make ourselves right with Him. We must wash ourselves of our sins before we can expect to stand before Him.

Well if you are praying constantly, then you usually do not have many sins to wash away, but we are human and we fail—sin.

So it is best to wash yourself at times. I find it best, when I am able to get alone at a quiet time and at a moment that is dedicated for sincere prayer, to do this.

Prayer

I first seek God to forgive me of my sins; to wash them away; to show me how to change my **attitude** so that I will not sin like that again—to repent from it.

Then I look for things to praise Him for, to show my appreciation for His help, His kindness, and His mercy for me.

Next, I thank Him for all the things He has done in my life, and I thank Him for specific things that He has done.

Then I seek Him for guidance of who else needs His help. I look for ways to pray for others.

Then I make my needs known to Him. Specific needs. This is important because then when your needs have been fulfilled you know what God has done and now you have specific things to thank Him for. Also it helps to boot your faith when you see that He is alive and has mercy on you, by fulfilling your needs, and you know that His is your God and Father. Then I pray for general needs.

This is how I get right with God, now I am ready to go on constantly praying.

This is also how I get prepared for being with His people in church, or fellowship. Before we get together with others in His name, we always need to become right with Him; for, remember whenever we are gathered with His children, His is with that gathering, and so we need to be pure and holy to be in His presence, or else He will not be there.

He will not gather in the presence of evil.

MT 18:18 "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

MT 18:19 "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. [20] **For where two or three come together in My name, there am I with them."**

So this is very powerful, but we must be respectful and not rude, by expecting Him to gather with His children in a dirty—evil—gathering. We must clean up the place for Him to join.

This is also why He wants us to get together in unity and faith. So that He can be closer to us, so that He can bless us for our obedience. This is why prayer groups are best for many people and churches. This obedience releases Him to bless the church.

Prayer

Individual pray is best for oneself and ones family, but prayer groups are best for churches.

Obviously, there is more to prayer then this, relationships are complicated, but this is a beginning.

The major point is that your attitude to pray, to want to pray, and your willingness to pray and the attitude of your relationship is the key here.

Appendix A

My Watch Story

By Richard

One day while in the Navy, my wife's wristwatch broke. We discussed that when I returned from my cruise we would go buy a new one. The next day on the ship out at sea, I went to the ship's store to get some snacks. I saw that they had received a new batch of watches. When I got closer, they were really nice and at a price I could afford. They had 2 types, they were digital and one had a yellow gold face and the other one had a blue face with a silver edge ring.

I started to look around for my friend, hoping he was still around, so that I could ask his opinion as to which watch to buy. I started to panic because the store would close soon and the line was long. If I got out of the line I would not be able to get back before it closed.

I was starting to fret and worry. Then I heard this sweet loving voice say, "What is wrong?"

I said, "I was looking for my best friend Willy but could not find him."
He said, "Well you cannot find him. What about Me? Aren't I your best friend too?"

I said, "Sure you are. But aren't you too busy to help me pick out a watch? Don't you have the world to keep turning and the sun to keep moving?"

He said, "That is all taken care of and I would love to give My advice on which to find buy. I want to discuss things with you just you do with your best friend."

So finally I said, "Well if you are sure you have time for me, I would love to discuss this with you. Which watch do you think I should get for my wife?"

He said, "Well remember she is Japanese and because of that she hates yellow gold. The other watch has a silver edge and a blue face. I really think that she would like the blue and you know she loves white gold—silver."

I replied, "You are right, she hates yellow gold and loves silver. So I will get the silver and blue one."

I bought it, and when I got home and gave it to her, she loved it. She wore it for the next 5 years until it literally fall apart. I have sought Him for advice for the rest of my life, and I could not have been happier.

Prayer