

Assurance of Salvation
 Part 85
 Prayer:
 Having the right spirit of prayer

There comes a time...

When it's too late to start praying.

START NOW!



But do so with the right attitude!

EXAMPLE OF A WRONG ATTITUDE:

When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

James 4:3 (NIV)

[JUST ONE OF MANY EXAMPLES FOUND IN SCRIPTURE.]



And from the heart!

Our Father, who art in heaven...

Even a trained parrot can quote a prayer!

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF A WRONG ATTITUDE:

When you pray, don't ramble like heathens who think they'll be heard if they talk a lot.

Matthew 6:7 (GW)



TODAY... We begin the topic of prayer.

Starting with: **"Prayer as evidence of salvation."**

WHY DIDN'T I LOOK AT THIS TOPIC BEFORE IT WAS TOO LATE?

(It's not too late, if you're not dead yet.)



A very important distinction

PRAYER as evidence of salvation:

- It's NOT the mere "activity of prayer" that proves you are saved.
 - i.e., what happens on the "outside."
- It's the right "spirit of prayer" that matters.
 - i.e., what happens on the "inside."

NO GUARANTEE??
AW-W-W-K!!



Sorry, Mr. Parrot, but quoting a prayer doesn't prove anything!

The FAKES

- They may have the "activity of prayer," but will NOT have the right "spirit of prayer."

These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.
Mark 7:6b (GW)

They ... say long prayers to make themselves look good.
Mark 12:40a (GW)

The GENUINE DISCIPLES

- They will have the "activity of prayer," and will ALSO have the right "spirit of prayer."

EXAMPLE:

Hear, O Lord, my righteous plea; listen to my cry.
Give ear to my prayer— it does not rise from deceitful lips.
Psalm 17:1 (NIV)
A prayer of David. The whole psalm is his prayer.

HE WASN'T BEING ARROGANT, BUT HONEST!

What are the characteristics of a right spirit of prayer?

Three things:

- It is humble.
- It is trusting.
- It is submissive.

These things will affect the whole person, not just one's prayer attitude!

MORE DETAILS:

The RIGHT spirit of prayer...

1) It is HUMBLE

- A person with this spirit is aware of his complete unworthiness to approach God in prayer.
- His attitude is the same as what was expressed by:
 - Ezra (an Old Testament example)
 - The tax collector (a New Testament example)

EXAMPLES



[Ezra] prayed, "O my God, I am utterly ashamed; I blush to lift up my face to you. For our* sins are piled higher than our heads, and our* guilt has reached to the heavens."
Ezra 9:6 (NLT)

But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'
Luke 18:13 (NIV)

* (There is a community aspect to sin that most people today ignore or even deny. We might not commit the sin ourselves, but the consequences of the group's sin effects the whole group.)

ACCEPTANCE IS POSSIBLE!

- Though we are unworthy, Scripture tells us that God will accept us if we have this humble attitude.

PROOF:

A broken and repentant heart, O God, you will not despise.

Psalms 51:17b (NLT)

WHAT MAKES IT POSSIBLE?

We can know that this promise applies to us, because of the second characteristic of a right spirit of prayer.

The RIGHT spirit of prayer...

2) It is TRUSTING - Believing God -

- A person with this spirit is aware of his unworthiness; but he trusts God and believes God's promise that he can obtain mercy through Jesus.

WHAT MAKES IT POSSIBLE?

There is a real foundation on which this trust/belief rests. Without this foundation, any "trust" or "belief" would be imaginary.

MERCY... because of JESUS!

- A **penalty** had to be paid for our sins.
 - **JESUS** offered to pay this penalty with his own blood.
- A **sacrifice** had to be made for the payment.
 - **JESUS** chose to become the ultimate sacrifice for our sin.
- A **high priest** had to offer the sacrifice to God.
 - **JESUS** is our great high priest, who offers this sacrifice to God.

- We who trust God can go boldly to him. Jesus has removed the barrier between us and God!

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin.

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Hebrews 4:14-16 (NIV)

The RIGHT spirit of prayer...

3) It is SUBMISSIVE

- A person with this spirit comes to God with an eagerness for God's will to be done in his life.
- He freely expresses the desires of his heart.
 - But he is ready to accept whatever answer God may give, whether "yes" or "no."

WHY CAN HE ACCEPT A "NO" ANSWER?

- He wants God's will, whatever it may be.
 - Even it means that his request will be rejected.
- He knows that God's wisdom is greater than his own.
 - So he is willing to trust God for the final outcome.

JESUS – Desiring God's will in all things:

"Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will, not mine."

Luke 22:42 (NLT)

PAUL – Recognizing God's wisdom, when God said "no" to his prayer:

[God] said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

2 Cor. 12:9 (NIV)

That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, ... For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Cor. 12:10 (NIV)

In contrast...

Prayer that lacks these characteristics

1. Scripture never requires it.
2. God will not accept it.

RESULTS OF PRAYER "ACTIVITY" WITHOUT THE RIGHT "SPIRIT":

When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, **I will not listen.**

Isaiah 1:15a (NIV)

YOUR MISSION: Evaluate your prayer

Is it humble, trusting and submissive?

If your prayer lacks these characteristics:

- Your "spirit of prayer" comes from a false spirit.
 - Your prayer is fake and provides no evidence of salvation.
- BUT -**
- If you're willing to face reality, there is still time for you to repent and begin to follow Jesus!

YOUR MISSION: Evaluate your prayer

Is it humble, trusting and submissive?

If your prayer has these characteristics:

- It's because God has done a work of grace in your heart, and has put his Spirit within you.
- The Spirit's presence enables you to have the right spirit of prayer!

- AND because of this -



- You will know that God has reconciled you to himself, and has become your "adopted" Father!
- Furthermore, talking to him (prayer) will be a joy!

[God] predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- to the praise of his glorious grace ...

Ephes. 1:5-6a (NIV)

Because you are God's children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into us to call out, "Abba! Father!"

Galatians 4:6 (GW)

**AN
EXPRESSION
OF PRAYER!**

Credits

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