

UNDERSTANDING EFFECTIVE PRAYER  
MATTHEW 7:7-11

**1. (PRAYER IS ESSENTIAL) IF WE ARE GOING TO LIVE A LIFE THAT ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE KINGDOM OF GOD.**

Now that we know what we have—Jesus, this great High Priest with ready access to God—let's not let it slip through our fingers. We don't have a priest who is out of touch with our reality. He's been through weakness and testing, experienced it all—all but the sin. So let's walk right up to him and get what he is so ready to give. Take the mercy, accept the help. HEBREWS 4:14-16

**2. EFFECTIVE PRAYER IS NOT (PRESUMPTIOUS).**

FIVE WAYS GOD CAN ANSWER YOUR PRAYERS.

1. ("NO, I LOVE YOU TOO MUCH.")

JAMES 4:3, I JOHN 5:14-15, JAMES 1:6, I JOHN 3:21-22

2. ("YES, BUT YOU WILL HAVE TO WAIT.")

ROMANS 8:24-26

3. ("YES, BUT IT IS GOING TO BE DIFFERENT THEN THE WAY YOU THOUGHT THAT I WOULD ANSWER.")

PROVERBS 3:5,6

4. ("YES, AND HERE IS MORE.")

JEREMIAH 29:11

5. ("YES, I THOUGHT YOU WOULD NEVER ASK.")

JAMES 5:16

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOUR PRAYERS ARE UNANSWERED? (GOD SAYS NO)

**3. EFFECTIVE PRAYER IS NOT (PASSIVE) OR WITHOUT (PASSION).**

A woman who had suffered a condition of hemorrhaging for twelve years—a long succession of physicians had treated her, and treated her badly, taking all her money and leaving her worse off than before—had heard about Jesus. She slipped in from behind and touched his robe. She was thinking to herself, "If I can put a finger on his robe, I can get well." The moment she did it, the flow of blood dried up. She could feel the change and knew her plague was over and done with...Jesus said to her, "Daughter, you took a risk of faith, and now you're healed and whole. Live well, live blessed! Be healed of your plague." MARK 5:25-29, 34

"Or imagine a woman who has ten coins and loses one. Won't she light a lamp and scour the house, looking in every nook and cranny until she finds it? And when she finds it you can be sure she'll call her friends and neighbors: 'Celebrate with me! I found my lost coin!' Count on it—that's the kind of party God's angels throw every time one lost soul turns to God." LUKE 15:8-10

#### **4. EFFECTIVE PRAYER IS (PERSISTENT).**

Jesus told them a story showing that it was necessary for them to pray consistently and never quit. He said, "There was once a judge in some city who never gave God a thought and cared nothing for people. A widow in that city kept after him: 'My rights are being violated. Protect me!'

He never gave her the time of day. But after this went on and on he said to himself, 'I care nothing what God thinks, even less what people think. But because this widow won't quit badgering me, I'd better do something and see that she gets justice—otherwise I'm going to end up beaten black-and-blue by her pounding.'"

Then the Master said, "Do you hear what that judge, corrupt as he is, is saying? So what makes you think God won't step in and work justice for his chosen people, who continue to cry out for help? Won't he stick up for them? I assure you, he will. He will not drag his feet. But how much of that kind of persistent faith will the Son of Man find on the earth when he returns?"

LUKE 18:1-8

#### **5. EFFECTIVE PRAYER IS A RESULT OF PURSUING THE (FACE) OF GOD AND NOT JUST THE (HAND) OF GOD.**

"Don't bargain with God. Be direct. Ask for what you need. This is not a cat-and-mouse, hide-and-seek game we're in. If your little boy asks for a serving of fish, do you scare him with a live snake on his plate? If your little girl asks for an egg, do you trick her with a spider? As bad as you are, you wouldn't think of such a thing—you're at least decent to your own children. And don't you think the Father who conceived you in love will give the Holy Spirit when you ask him?" LUKE 11:10-13

#### **DIGGING DEEPER**

MONDAY.....LUKE 11:1-13

TUESDAY.....MARK 11:12-25

WEDNESDAY.....ACTS 4:1-31

THURSDAY.....JAMES 5:7-20

FRIDAY.....LUKE 18:1-14