

Sunday August 28th 2022

The Position and Place of Prayer.



I have heard in TV shows when someone has a problem and needs a solution of some sort and don't know where to turn, they approach a friend who's response is: "Don't worry, I know a guy." Usually the "guy" is some sort of fixer and the friend says: "you don't want to know more than that." His friend believes this way is the only way.

I wonder when we pray, if we approach God as "the guy" or even worse "the fixer?"

That is, we have a problem, we are focused on the outcome we want but can't produce our own so we turn to God and tell Him what we want Him to do.

We lose perspective on who we are and who He is – He is God – we are not. Yet sometimes we switch places with Him and expect Him to do whatever we ask.

1. Instead of being **honest** -we tell God our perspective.

When Jesus prayed, He didn't hesitate to tell God His desire, what was in His Heart. Luke 22:42 Jesus prayed: "Take this cup away from me."

We are told in Philippians 4:6 to let our requests be made known to God. We are to be honest with God but also with ourselves and receive whatever answer He provides when we pray.

2. Instead of being **humble** – we insist.

Jesus was humble and willingly submissive to God's will when it came to going to the cross to die. And so was Paul – 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 tells us that Paul prayed 3 times for God to change his situation and God said no 3 times, but gave Paul the grace to live with the situation instead of removing it.,

3. Instead of being **happy** with whatever the outcome, we tie our happiness to getting our way.

Often we approach prayer with the mindset – I can't be happy unless God answers this prayer. Being happy doesn't depend on how God chooses to answer our prayers, it is by knowing we are embracing God's will for our life in every moment.

4. Instead of being **hopeful** that all things will work together for good, we believe our way is the only way.

Psalm 71:5 tells us – our hope is in God not in what we think God should do for us. And this hope is the anchor of our soul. Regardless of how God chooses to answer our prayers, He never changes. Therefore our hope never changes either. We pray honestly, humbly, happily and hopefully – all under the umbrella of His will, not ours, be done.

We don't know "a guy" who can "fix" things. We know our God who does all things after the counsel of His own will – and always for our good.

Here are some types of prayers:

Short term prayers – moment by moment prayers. As I said last week, don't limit your prayer life to once a day – pray constantly. If you develop a habit of talking with God throughout the day, it will bless every area of your life.

Long term prayers – focuses our attention. We are not reminding God of our need but reminding ourselves that God is the source for all our needs.

-clarifies our request as each time we refine our prayers we may identify that part of our prayer has already been answered or that the situation is not longer an issue.

-tests our faith when God delays answering our faith grows and we mature.

-prepares our heart for the answer – sometimes God denies our prayer because our request is too small and He wants to give us something bigger and better.

The Lord's prayer. I have a handout that provides an overview of each phrase in the Lord's prayer which I think you will find useful so feel free to take one as you leave.

I would like to finish with the Lord's prayer and ask each of us to stand to pray.