

Prayer By Craig Simpson

Paul says in his first letter to the Thessalonians, chapter 5, verse 17, "Pray without ceasing." We always find time in our busy lives to talk to our close friends, family, relatives or even total strangers. Few of us however have the opportunity to talk to someone considered world famous; but if we did, we would be very careful what we said.

When we consider how great our Creator is, the very fact that He hears our prayers becomes difficult to comprehend and yet, we are assured in 1st Peter 3:12 that "the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers."

When we pray to God, we are talking to Him. As we would be very careful of what we said when talking to a world famous celebrity, how much more careful should we be when we are talking to the Creator of heaven and earth? Solomon tells us in Ecclesiastes 5:2 "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."

Although God is in heaven and we upon earth, He wants us to talk to him: "Then ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:12, 13).

Through prayer, we can talk to God at any time of the day or night and be certain that He hears us. We need to make prayer a part of our everyday life. Jesus often spent the night praying. If the Son of God needed the strength that communion with his Father gave him, how much more do we need the help and strength that comes from prayer alone?

We must seek a time of quiet to draw near to God in prayer. We need to physically withdraw from the hustle and bustle of the world and quietly contemplate the goodness and mercy of God. David said: "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Psalms 119:165). We must love God's law and fill our minds with His thoughts. This can only come through constant reading of His book and praying. It is then that God takes over and keeps us in perfect peace. Isaiah says: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever" (Isaiah 26:3, 4).

We must express our gratitude towards the Lord in prayer for He has provided us with all we have; and yet, how many people eat their food without ever giving a thought to the fact that all we have has come from God? How many crawl into their warm beds and never acknowledge that God provides sleep to refresh the soul? Day and night, warm and cold, the rain and the sunshine are all provided by the loving Father who knows that we have need of these things.

Thanksgiving is something that we should celebrate everyday of our lives, for we have so much to be thankful for. Let us thank our loving heavenly Father for all the blessings He has bestowed upon us. Let us not take for granted the smallest of His gifts. We know that he cares for us; Jesus tells us: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Luke 12:5, 6).

Knowing this let us take courage and be thankful that "the angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" (Psalms 34:7).

Every one of us has twenty-four hours each day. God has given us this time, but how do we spend it? The difference between those who will be saved, and those rejected by Christ will be in the way they spent their time. When we stand before the judgement seat of Christ we will realise that so many things that took up our time were just not worth it. Paul told the Corinthians in his second letter, chapter 6, verse 2: "Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation." The time for us to serve the Lord is right now; so let us commence our worship by uttering several prayers each day. A prayer does not take long to say, but it helps us to feel better about the time we have spent before the Lord.