

Some Thoughts on Prayer

By Red Miller

Three men were discussing the proper position and attitude for prayer. One said, "You should be on your knees with your head bowed in reverence to the Almighty." The second man spoke up and said "Remember that you were created in God's image. The position in which to pray is to stand up looking into the heavens, into the face of God and talk to Him as a child to his father." The third man spoke up and said, "I know nothing about those positions, but the finest praying I ever did was upside down in a well." On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. (Acts 16:13)

People in the scriptures often had a specific spot where they went to pray as many also do today. Having a specific place to pray helps by blocking out distractions around us and helps us focus on our prayer. The place could be a particular room in our home, a wooded area, a park or anyplace we can be alone and comfortable.

Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. (Romans 12:12)

Prayer does not always come easy so we must continue to be faithful even when prayer seems difficult. Our faithfulness in prayer shapes our lives as no other activity can. Once we have experienced the power of prayer it will be difficult to live without it.

But I keep praying to you, Lord, hoping this time you will show me favor. In your unfailing love, O God, answer my prayer with your sure salvation. (Psalms 69:13)

When we are tempted to turn from God, give up, and quit trusting him. When our situation seems hopeless, we must determine that no matter how bad things become we will continue to pray. God will hear our prayer, and he will rescue us. The greatest motivation for prayer is answered prayer. When others reject us, we need God most.

But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! (Matthew 5:44-45)

Jesus' teaching about praying for our enemies is difficult for us, because we have a problem with what that person may have done to us. However, our understanding of the gospel is directly connected to this teaching. Jesus could have had bad feelings toward those who falsely accused Him, beat him and cruelly crucified him in humiliation. Even our sins were responsible for this terrible act, literally making us His enemies.

But instead of condemning us, Jesus willingly sacrificed His life for our sakes. The very essence of the gospel is, *"For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. (John 3:16-17)*

God loves you and so do I!