



August 2018 Week 1

To write about such an all-encompassing subject such as prayer, where do I start? With prayer, of course! Scripture says to *“pray without ceasing”* (1 Thess. 5:17 NKJV). To me that means to go about your day talking to God whenever the urge arises, to ask for help (Ps.46:1 NLT) *“God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble”* is a very handy prayer), to intercede, to give thanks, to listen for His voice. This would be in addition to having a set daily quiet time with Him.

I have spent years trying to get it right—reading books, listening to messages, talking to people and praying with them, to hear their prayers. I have found that it comes down to talking to God as I would naturally speak to another person. And the more I spend time and talk to Him the more I develop a relationship with Him, and thus draw closer.

God must desire our prayers too. There are over 600 references to prayer throughout the Bible. Jesus models prayer for us as he slips away into the wilderness to spend time talking with His Father, listening for instructions before He acts. He teaches His disciples how to pray (The Disciple’s Prayer) and how not to pray, (Matt. 6:5-13). We need to come to God in sincerity and intimacy, and be willing to forgive others. After these instructions Jesus ends with your Father already knows exactly what you need anyway even before you ask!

Doesn’t that sound like a parent, anxious to hear from the kids, ready to answer? How we would welcome our children to come to us, ask for our guidance or for something they need. Of course, like a good parent, God doesn’t give us everything we ask for, or give it to us immediately. Jesus tells us to *“Keep on Asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on Seeking, and you will find. Keep on Knocking, and the door will be opened to you”* (Matt. 7:7 NLT). Be persistent, don’t give up, but make sure to ASK. Besides, if we who are sinful, know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more will our Father give us good gifts *to those who ask Him!* (Matt. 7:11 NLT, my emphasis)

Above, I mentioned a daily time spent with God. These early morning moments of peace set a solid tone and direction to my day. Reading and meditating on Scripture, worshipping, praying for loved ones and for the needs of the day constitute a fulfilling time of communication with God. What began as insecurity has become an essential part of my life that I can’t do without.

God desires to hear from us, but we need to hear from Him, and as we draw closer to Him in fellowship, that becomes easier. So why not take our Father up on His invitation to talk with Him—it’s not hard to do and it is effective. *“The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results”* (Jas. 5:16 NLT).