

Seeking God Through Prayer

- Ron Stullenbarger -

The fact that God listens to us as His children changes the landscape of prayer from empty phrases to direct communication with the Creator and Sustainer of all. When you pray you are heard by your heavenly Father. It's because He listens to us that prayer is one of the most wonderful and powerful avenues to pursue Him. May we learn to dialogue in greater ways with our heavenly Father as we open our hearts to Him in prayer.

Matthew 6:7-8 says, *"And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him."* Jesus inaugurated an entirely new perspective on prayer. Prior to Jesus, God's people would pray out of obligation or ritual, begging a seemingly distant God to move on their behalf. Jesus taught that God knows our needs before we even ask. He taught that God is a good Father who longs to respond to the needs of His children. In John 15:7 He taught, *"If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."* God's desire is to respond favorably to our prayers. He always has our absolute best in mind and longs to satisfy the desires of our hearts.

The key to effective communication with God is first to trust that He is a good Father who listens and longs to answer the prayers of His children. After gaining proper perspective, we need to spend significant time allowing God to fill us with His desires for us, fashioning our hearts into a reflection of His. God will not give you what He knows is less than His best. Rather, He longs to fill you with a desire for what is best for you, then come along and satisfy that desire in magnificent and miraculous ways as you pray.

Jeremiah 33:3 says, *"Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known."* When you call out to your heavenly Father, trust that He will answer you. He longs to fill you with the knowledge and desire for His will. He longs to speak with you. You can have His heart and know how He feels. The Holy Spirit who dwells within you longs to reveal to you the perfect plans of your heavenly Father.

Spend time in prayer listening for the heartbeat of God and allowing Him to fill you with the knowledge of His will.