

### **We pray to God, vv.1-2**

- I. This is where Christian prayer begins: in an address to God as He's revealed to us in Scripture. We don't pray to a God of our own imagination or an idol of our own making.
- II. We pray to God on several accounts.
  - A. Because prayer is an act of worship and God alone is to be worshipped, Ps 95.3, 6.
  - B. Because God alone knows all our wants and hearts, 1Kgs 8.39.
  - C. Because God alone is all-sufficient and able to answer, Ps 145.19.
  - D. Because God alone is the hearer of prayer, Ps 65.2.
  - E. Because God alone is our Father and Redeemer, Rom 8.15; Acts 17.28.
  - F. Because we believe in God as He's revealed Himself in Scripture and in Jesus Christ, Rom 10.14.

### **We pray with heart, vv.1-3**

- I. We pray heartily, Mk 7.6-7.
  - A. David mentions his groaning and crying. He was calling upon God from a heart in distress. His voice and tears gave vent to his heart.
  - B. Thus the heart has preeminence in prayer. Only hearty prayer can be honest, sincere, and fervent.

### **We pray with regularity, v.3**

- I. We should pray with regularity, Ps 88.1; Ps 92.2.
  - A. Not sporadically by feeling, or periodically by convenience, but regularly and habitually, as part of our daily routine, 1Tim 4.4-5.
  - B. We should have private prayer times, family prayer times, as well as public prayer times in God's house.
- II. In particular, we should seize the morning hours for prayer.
  - A. A battle is fought every morning in every Christian's life regarding how he'll begin his day. We must break our sleep at an hour that will allow us to begin it with God, Mk 1.35.

### **We pray with specificity, v.3**

- I. We pray with specificity, preparing or arranging our motives, our thoughts, and our words in a manner that truly reflects our hearts and needs.
  - A. Too many of our prayers are mere words from which our heart is so distant that we hardly know what we're saying. How can we expect that God should be mindful to grant what we ask when we don't even mind what we're asking? Prayer is to be with purpose and therefore it must be with specificity.

1. Pray for specific things, Mt 6.9-13.
2. Repent of specific sins, 1Jn 1.9.
3. Petition for specific needs, Phil 4.6-7.
4. Give thanks for specific blessings, Ps 103.2.

### **We pray with mediation, v.3**

- I. We must pray with mediation.
  - A. David came to God with a sacrifice because this was the appointed way of approaching God in prayer.
  - B. Just so, we must come by the sacrifice and intercession of Jesus Christ, Heb 4.15-16; 7.25; Rom 5.1-2; Heb 10.19-22.
  - C. Our prayers are heard only for His sake and only through His mediation. Without Christ's mediation, we won't be heard.

### **We pray with expectation, v.3**

- I. We pray with expectation, Heb 11.6, watching for an answer for several reasons.
  - A. Because we pray through and by His Son, Jn 16.23.
  - B. Because we pray His promises, Ezk 36.27.
  - C. Because we pray His precepts, Mt 11.28, cp. Jn 6.37, 44; Phil 2.12-13; 1Thes 23-24; Dt 30.6.
  - D. Because we pray as His children, Lk 12.32; Phil 4.19; Ps 84.11.

### **Application**

- I. Let this urge you to pray to God.
  - A. It's your duty, your privilege, and should be your delight.
  - B. We all struggle with a backwardness to prayer.
    1. Either God hides His face, or Satan clouds our minds with lies, or we're hindered by sin or worldly-mindedness.
  - C. But we must persevere in prayer because to neglect prayer is foolish, sinful, impious, and unbelieving.
- II. Let this encourage you to pray to God.
  - A. Be encouraged that God allows you, a sinner, to call upon His name in prayer, Mt 11.28; Rom 10.13.
  - B. Be encouraged because God commands you to pray, 1Thes 5.17.
  - C. Be encouraged because God delights in your prayer, Prov 15.8.
  - D. Be encouraged that Christ has not only opened a way for you to pray, Heb 10.19, and Himself intercedes for you, Heb 7.25, but has taught you how to pray acceptably, Mt 6.9-13.
- III. Consider what great need you have to pray to God every day.
  - A. Think of all your burdens, Ps 55.22; 1Pet 5.7.
  - B. Think of your need for guidance, Ps 31.3; Prov 3.5-6.
  - C. Think of how many times you sin in a day, Mt 6.12.
  - D. Think of your enemies, Mt 6.13.
  - E. Think of all the duties required of you, 1Cor 10.31.
  - F. Surely you have something to say to God every day. So give yourself to daily prayer.