

BIBLICAL PRAYER (37)

The wife, who does not maintain a proper attitude toward her husband, will be unfit to pray and will not see God answer her prayers. On the other hand, a husband, who does not maintain a proper attitude toward his wife, will be unfit to pray and will not see God answer his prayers. In fact, as Dr. Richard Lenski said, when improper attitudes exist there will be “no life of prayer.”

God is obviously interested that when we approach Him as Holy, Sovereign God, with our requests, that we maintain proper God-honoring attitudes in the marital relationship. If we don't, our prayers will be hindered and we will not see many answers to our prayers.

Fact is, those who are single are at a real advantage in prayer. There are certain benefits for being single and one of them is this factor pertaining to one's prayer life.

The assumption here is that a husband and wife will pray together. He also assumes that they will take His Word seriously so that He can move to answer their prayers. The wife and the husband, who do their best to line up their lives with Scripture, will see God do some powerful things in prayer.

Prerequisite #7 - A believer must be willing to examine his faith. **James 1:5-7;**
Mark 11:20-24

There is a very important principle that is extremely critical to the life of a believer and especially critical to a life of prayer. The principle is found in **Hebrews 11:6** - “without faith it is impossible to please” God.

Now when it comes to the subject of prayer we may know that if we do not please God by our faith, then it will be impossible to move God by our prayers.

In all reality, the entire subject of prayer becomes an important Biblical matter of faith. A person must decide if he/she will believe God enough to pray and meet the necessary prerequisites to be powerful in prayer. It all comes down to faith.

Faith is so critical to prayer that it caused Dr. Hallesby to say, “It is blasphemy toward God to turn to Him in prayer and not believe in answer to prayer. When an honest soul examines himself in the light of the Scriptures, he soon finds that faith is just what seems lacking in his prayers. It says that he should ask in faith, not doubting. He does just the opposite. He doubts before he prays, while he prays and after he has prayed” (*Prayer*, p. 28).

There are many passages that connect the subject of faith and prayer:

- 1) **Matthew 17:19-21**
- 2) **Matthew 21:21-22**
- 3) **Mark 11:24**
- 4) **John 11:3, 40**
- 5) **James 1:6**
- 6) **James 5:15**

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In this world, there are two types of faith: 1) Natural faith; 2) Spiritual faith. Under these two categories of faith, we may classify faith as being based on what is real or unreal. **Faith that is real is a faith based on what is true and faith that is unreal is a faith based on what is false .**

Natural faith is the faith that is common to everyone and is the basis of community life in general. For example, all people in our society believe that if they put a stamp on a letter and turn that letter into the post office, that letter will eventually get to its destination. Every time a traffic light turns green and we begin to move forward, we exercise faith that the people who see the red light will stop. Natural faith is common to all people. People place their faith in doctors, merchants, airplane pilots, police officers and practically every business merchant. Faith is exercised when you are working, believing that if you work hard with your skills it will pay off and you will get a paycheck. Faith is exercised when you are exercising, believing that if you will keep at it you will shed the pounds. Faith is exercised when you are cooking, believing that if you take certain ingredients and put them together you will produce a delicious meal. This is what we would call faith that is natural to everyone.

Spiritual faith (faith that is Biblically spiritual) is not a human faith and it is not a natural faith. In fact, this kind of faith is a specific gift of God (**Ephesians 2:8**). The closest we may come to a specific Biblical definition of this kind of faith is found in **Hebrews 11:1** - "...faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." So this kind of faith is a faith that has the assurance of the things you are hoping for and a conviction that even though you cannot see it at the present time, that it will come to pass. This is a factual and Biblical faith and not a fictional faith, because this kind of faith is a "gift of God." One who has this faith has an assurance and a conviction of the truth of God's Word and it is this kind of faith that prays, believing God will answer the prayers in conformity with the Word.

This is the kind of faith - based on God's Word and a gift of God - that is necessary to please God. In fact, without faith it is impossible to please God. If one is coming to God to ask things without this kind of faith, God will not respond. When one prays with a faith that pleases God, one will move God to answer prayer.

Now this kind of faith is not a blind faith or a foolish faith or some leap in the dark faith. As with all types of faith, true faith must be based on sufficient data. God has graciously seen to it that we have the best data possible to establish our faith in God and in the truth of His Word:

- 1) We have creation that testifies of God. **Romans 1:19-20**
- 2) We have Christ who is the fullness of God. **Colossians 1:19**
- 3) We have the Bible which is the inspired truth of God. **II Timothy 3:16-17**
- 4) We have the Spirit who guides faith into all truth. **John 14:16-17**
- 5) We have the examples of transformed lives. **I John 4:12**

God has left us with plenty of data so that our faith may develop.