



Obviously, God desires that true believers in Christ have a relationship with Him. How is that relationship defined in the Word of God?

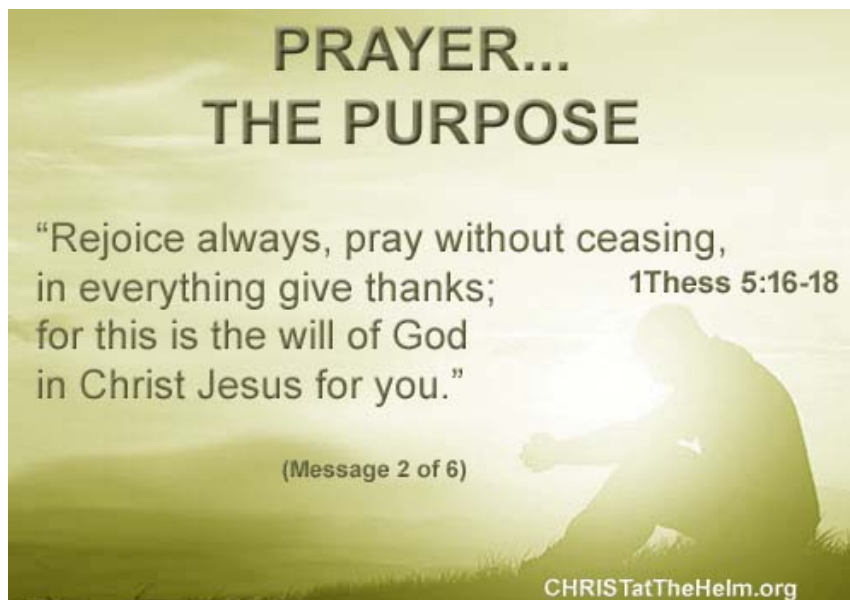
The first biblical element to understand is that no one can come to God but through Christ. That's why Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Paul confirmed in 1 Tim 2:5, "For *there is* one God and one Mediator between God and men, *the* Man Christ Jesus."

Then, Christ described to us how to enter into God's presence in Mat. 6:9-13. It starts with worshipping God and seeking His will, as Jesus taught us: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as *it is* in heaven." (Mat 6:10) We follow with our petitions humbly, seeking guidance and protection from the world's evil, making sure we honor God in the process.

A very important fact is that "The LORD *is* near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth." (Ps 145:18) In other words, if we have sinned, let's first repent as we enter His throne, and then we can fellowship with God. As James 4:8 says, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."

Have we entered His throne to be in His presence so far today?

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Why must we pray? "For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you," as the featured scripture clearly shows. In other words, God desires that we include Him in all aspects of our lives.

Jeremiah. 33:3 says, "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know." In essence God desires to bring revelation of His Word and will to His children, and pour His blessings to those who seek Him with all their heart.

2Chron 7:14 adds, "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." In truth, God desires to heal and forgive His people.

Jesus in Mat 26:41 showed us clearly that we must "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak." In other words, in praying, we find the sure avenue to guard ourselves against the temptations of the world.

Finally, Jesus in Matthew 7:7 said "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."

Can we, just for a moment, realize that the great and unmerited access to God's throne is available to us at anytime, day or night?

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Prayer is not a proud showoff to bring attention to ourselves, but rather, as Jesus clearly said in Mat 6:5, “When you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men.”

On the contrary, prayer requires that we approach God humbly with a pure heart, as well to believe that God does not only hear our prayer, but that as we do pray according to His will, He answers us.

Jesus said in Mark 11:24, “Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.” Then, 1John 5:14 adds, “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.”

Paul in 1Tim 2:8 followed on, “I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” Then in Hebrews 4:16 he enjoined us to have this attitude when we pray: “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Prayer requires we come to God with a humble and pure heart, boldly by faith being confident that he hears us, and realizing we are in God’s holy presence as we do. Let’s believe and trust God!

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PRAYER... CONDITIONS & HINDRANCES

“And whatever we ask we receive from Him,
because we keep His commandments and do
those things that are pleasing in His sight.”

1John 3:22

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Ever heard people say that God doesn't answer prayers? As well, ever heard some ask God to fulfill their worldly lusts, clearly showing that their desires do not please God?

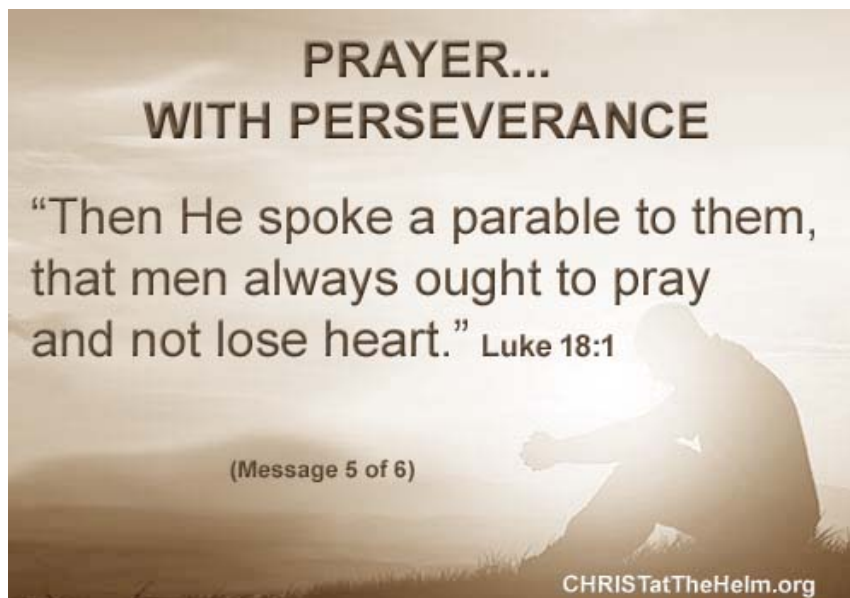
God through the prophet Isaiah said, “But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden *His* face from you, so that He will not hear.” (Isaiah 59:2) James 4:3 adds, “You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.”

Do we realize that the sinful pleasures of the world are serious hindrances to having our prayers answered? In the story of the blind man who was healed by Jesus, and who was challenged by the Pharisees in John 9:31, it says; “Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him.”

Jesus gave us a most direct answer to have our prayers answered this way: “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.” (John 15:7)

The answer obviously has to do with whether we abide in Him and His Word abide in us. How dedicated are we to abide in Christ and seeking His Word to abide in us?

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In the parable of the unjust judge who, in spite of not caring for a poor widow, finally gave her what she wanted after she wore him out, Jesus in Luke 18:7-8 said; “And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.”

Perseverance is defined as a continued effort to do or achieve something, even when it is difficult or takes a long time. That means we must have faith in God, be patient, trust that He knows our needs and what’s best for us, and finally we wait for His time to grant our requests.

That’s why Paul added in Col 4:2, “Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving.” He added in Gal. 6:9, “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”

Why doesn’t God answer our prayers instantly? If asking ourselves such a question, we should first read: “Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.” (Pr 19:21) Then, Hebrews 10:36 add, “For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.”

Will we persevere and trust God, or will we be impatient lose heart and be irresolute?

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Wow! What a powerful promise that Christ gave us, to be able to receive whatever we desire if we abide in Him and His Word abide in us.

In John 14:13-14 Jesus said, “And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.” As well, in Mat 17:20 He said, “I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.”

In clear terms, anything is possible with God if... we ask with a pure heart, humbly, and are dedicated and completely surrendered to Christ’s Lordship to abide in Him and His Word abide in us.

Psalms 107:28-30 tells us, “Then they cry out to the LORD in their trouble, and He brings them out of their distresses. He calms the storm, So that its waves are still. Then they are glad because they are quiet; so He guides them to their desired haven.” In essence, when we cry out to God from a pure heart, God will deliver us.

James 5:16 adds, “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

Do we understand the immense and sovereign power of God, the creator of the universe, that is manifested through fervent prayer from true disciples of Christ?

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