

If This is Prayer, I Will Pray

God has given an invitation. Call to Me. This calling is prayer. It is an invitation. God is saying, welcome to have a friendship with Me.

It is by talking that friendship grows and lovers get to know each other. The Bible says, God so loved the world through His Son Jesus. So you are His loved one. Isn't there romance in love? How do you express it? With cards, flowers, gifts, sms and so on. But is that enough? Don't you have anything to talk about? With God? When you talk with God, it is prayer.

Prayer is joy. You cannot be in God's presence and come out with sadness. Of course, there are times of pain, grief, loss; when you cannot feel the joy. That is fine. For Jesus Himself wept at times. But the promise of God is joy in prayer. If you are not sensing the joy in prayer, then it could be sin or disobedience that is keeping your joy away.

But then prayer is dependence. Dependence on God. For there are times when life becomes so heavy. You need to rest your burden on someone's shoulder. It is especially at these times that the Holy Spirit comes to your help in prayer. He helps you shoulder your burden.

Prayer brings victory too. The world understands nothing of the power of prayer. It is asking God to bring to action His armies in the heavens. It is unseen by the world but real and full of power. They wage the war against darkness and evil forces all the time. But it is prayer that sets them into action. It is thus prayer that brings God's almighty power to your situation.

Again, prayer is partnership. There is a bonding between believers that happens through prayer. Prayer is the active involvement in the life of other believers and also of the advancement of the gospel. You can do the best work for God and for others through prayer. Though hidden from the eyes of others, God sees and rewards you for your tears in secret. And somewhere along the way, those for whom you prayed for will strengthen you in prayer too.

But then you cannot forget that prayer has praise in it. You cannot think of God and not praise Him. He is the great God. His holiness, love, mercy, compassion and judgment are all worthy of praise. Praise is the language of worship in prayer. Celebrate the greatness of God in praise in prayer.

Again, prayer is a learning experience. It changes you before it changes your difficulties or brings answers to your needs. Sometimes, prayer can be a struggle because of the changes it causes in you. At other times, the forces of evil can resist your prayer. But Jesus has encouraged you and me to continue to pray without giving up.

One final thought. People stop praying because of delays in getting answers to prayer. Without doubt, delays can bring frustration, doubt and disappointment. But know that God delays an-

swers for your good. He, the heavenly Father, knows what you need even before you ask. But when you ask, He delays to make sure that your motives in asking is right. Learn to trust His wisdom which cannot go wrong. At the right time and moment, His answer will come.

Today, God is inviting you to have a romance with Him in prayer. Even if you find your life in total mess; pray and invite God to participate in redeeming (save from evil) your life. He will gladly do so. For every prayer is heard by God. He listens to you all the time.

So, call to God. Anywhere, anytime. Whatever be the matter, silly or important, He loves to hear from you.

And some days will come when you will hear Him talk to you even though He talks to you most of the time through His Word-The Bible. The more you read it, the more you will learn to listen to and recognize His voice. And obey. Like you tune to a radio station, you learn to tune out other voices and tune in to God's voice. It is when you listen to God that prayer vibrates with joy. It is then that you are blessed with His presence.

So pray. It is so natural to talk to someone you love; isn't it? And what a joy to hear your loved one share thoughts with you. This is exactly what God did in the past. He shared His intimate thoughts with His friends. And Jesus has called you His friend. He loves to share His thoughts with you. When He does so, you have the calm assurance that God has heard and answered your prayer!

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