

*Godly Reflections by Kim*

## ***You Should Pray***

We should never become so complacent or too caught up in your own stuff that we neglect to sit down and have a talk with God...a real talk. Getting real with God should be a precious time that we set aside in our prayer life. It's a time to come clean about things in our lives that we would prefer to keep hidden from others—things that we think no one would understand. Every time we enter into prayer we should do so with the intent to expose our little secrets to the light of His love so that they no longer have any power over us. We come to God as we are...often weary, wounded, and sad...just as the song says, but the goal of a special prayer life is to leave the throne stronger, wiser, and better off than we were before we came.

Hebrews 4:12 (MSG) says *"God means what he says. What he says goes."* The Father doesn't pull any punches with us in His Word. He says what He means and means what He says. He's very clear about what we should do, when we should do it, and how we should do it. He expects that we will come to Him with this same open and honest attitude and intention.

I heard a young man say *"I don't think I can go to God so directly. I just can't see how He will forgive me for all the things I do. People do wrong sometimes just for the sake of doing wrong; and they'll do those wrong things over and over again. I can't believe that all they have to do is ask God for His forgiveness and He'll grant it. They don't deserve it, and I don't think I deserve it either!"* Because people's hearts can be so hard and full of malice, they can't imagine that forgiveness comes so easy and free of entanglements, but *"easy and free"* is the very nature of it. Forgiveness is not a difficult thing to do. Actually it's very easy to forgive if your heart is big enough.

This is what God is showing us. His love for us is enormous, and so is His desire and willingness to forgive us for the wrong that we do. When we pray, our first order of business should always be to ask for His forgiveness in earnest. *"In earnest"* means that we have a deep level of sorrow for our bad behavior, poor choices, and wrong actions. Not only does Godly sorrow convey a strong conviction to acknowledge our wrong doing, but it reveals a heart that is truly and deeply thankful for God's forgiveness as well.

Romans 8:1 (NKJV) says *"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit."* Are we guilty of a sinful nature? Yep, but we can go to the Father with the full assurance that if we ask, He'll forgive us. He won't hold our sinful nature against us. God is not a man, as Numbers 23:19 tells us. He doesn't hold grudges the way that we do. We harbor resentment in our hearts for those who wrong us, but God doesn't have resentment. Forgiveness is a very natural part of His love.

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### **Romans 5:18 (NLT)**

*Yes, Adam's one sin brought condemnation upon everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness makes all people right in God's sight and gives them life.*

You see, God wants us to always feel free to come to Him in our nakedness and talk with Him. He wants us to realize the awesomeness of what Jesus Christ accomplished for us, and to acknowledge the fact that it is only through Christ that we have received this tremendous privilege of going before the throne in prayer. Jesus Christ nailed our sin to the cross, because of this sacrificial act we are now clothed in the righteousness that his sacrifice made available. We can stand before God's throne in the name of Jesus Christ, clothed in righteousness, without any sense of sin, guilt or condemnation keeping us from doing so. It is in this spirit that we can do as Hebrews 4:16 (KJV) says, and "*come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*"

1Thessalonians 5:17 tells us to pray without ceasing, so there can be no doubt that you should pray and pray often. And when you pray, focus your thoughts on the Father and allow His love to radiate through you with gratitude and faith. Cast your cares upon Him—really give them over to Him. Take all of your concerns or anything that weighs you down and give them to God, leaving nothing to yourself and leaving everything in His incredibly, capable hands. Don't let concerns of family, work, and relationships take precedence over the fact that you are in His presence. Your prayer time is much too valuable for that.

Philippians 4:6 (NKJV) very clearly bears that out. It says "*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.*" The Father would not tell us to do something just because. He commands us to make our request known to Him because He will transform those requests into reality. Therefore, prayer cannot be effective until you position yourself to receive what it is you are praying for; this is how you demonstrate your faith and trust.

So when approaching the throne of the Most High in prayer, as a matter of precedence your first request should always be an earnest appeal for forgiveness, then lay your desires before Him. No matter what you're going through in life, through prayer you are acknowledging that there's another way better than your own. Trust in that fact always and expect that God hears you. Then, prepare your heart, mind, and soul to receive exactly what you need.

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