

## Prayer is a Relationship, Part 1

In some circles we pray too much. Our prayer is regarded as a discipline or sacrifice, our duty, if we would be pleasing to God or be a good Christian, one of the elite soldiers. At least, this is too prevalent.

Prayer is the natural outgrowth of a relationship. As we walk or live with the growing presence of God day by day, communication also grows along with our growing knowledge of Him. Prayer is not a separate activity, it is a continuation or extension of our life. “If you abide (continue) in Me, and My words abide in you, *ask . . .*”<sup>1</sup> The context of this phrase, both before and after, is that of fruit bearing relationship, it is that of persevering or abiding in our Lord’s life as a branch in the vine. He longs for this, that we would be *with Him*, that “where I am, there will My servant be also.”<sup>2</sup> Toward the end of His life, He prays, “Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be *with Me* where I am.”<sup>3</sup> As we would “walk by the Spirit,”<sup>4</sup> we must “pray in (by) the Spirit.”<sup>5</sup> The same rules and dynamics apply to prayer that apply to life in general. As we live in relationship with the Father by depending on Him and obeying Him, even so authentic prayer is an extension of this same relationship, following His lead and experiencing His power to pray as we should.

This eliminates so much of the external nature of the *activity* of prayer and makes it a more natural and relaxing part of the normal life we are learning to lead. It eliminates the anxiety about *what* to pray and *how* to pray the what. We are simply in fellowship with our Father, with whom we are living life. We, now, pray as He leads us, the same way we live as He leads us and we do all this in faith, believing in Him and depending on Him. We know the outcome will be good, in the end, even if the path is difficult. Prayer, as life, is not about always getting our way or always praying for and expecting idyllic results. It is about fighting “the good fight of faith,”<sup>6</sup> in prayer as in life.

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<sup>1</sup> Jn 15:7

<sup>2</sup> Jn 12:26

<sup>3</sup> Jn 17:24

<sup>4</sup> Gal 5:16

<sup>5</sup> Eph 6:18

<sup>6</sup> 1 Tim 6:12