

Prayer is a Relationship, Part 2

Our contention in the last segment was that prayer is a continuation of our life. “Pray without ceasing,”¹ should be considered here. Pragmatically, we don’t do this but it’s the right goal – to have prayer as a normal and regular segment of our life, not only a special experience but a normal one.

Listening is important to any relationship, but is much neglected when it comes to prayer. We too often think of prayer as what we do (that’s usually the case in the rest of life, too). Certainly that’s part of it, if understood properly. Our need is usually what brings us to God on our knees. We can grow, however, to come to Him for relationship more often and this is where listening comes to bear. To hear His voice, as the voice of a loved one, changes everything, especially who we are. “He spoke, and it was done,”² – this is how He created the physical universe. It is how He formed us in Christ, secure for eternity –by “the hearing of faith,” (Gal 3:2, lit.). It is now how we are changed, again and again, to be like Him, “by it (“word”) you may grow in respect to salvation.”³

“Listen that you may live,”⁴ Isaiah says. Prayer is when this usually happens. It is said of Moses that, “when Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat . . . so He spoke to him.”⁵ It is probably when our hearts are most ready to listen, ready to receive from Him, ready to believe and obey – when we are bowed in prayer and need. This time, when relationship is most in view and mechanical observance is most unlikely, is when the Sovereign Lord draws near in love to whisper the truth and the knowledge of Himself.

“Guard your steps as you go to the house of God and draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools . . .” Eccl 5:1-2 NASB

¹ 1 Thess 5

² Psa 33

³ 1 Pet 2:2

⁴ Isa 55

⁵ Num 7:89