

(Matthew 7:7-11, NIV84)

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"

Recently someone was telling me that he didn't think that prayer did any good. He felt that events of this world are predetermined and, whether we pray or not, God will do what He wants anyway.

This fatalistic view of life may square up with our human reasoning, but it does not agree with what Jesus tells us in His Word.

God invites us, yes, even commands us to pray, because prayer changes things.

Due to our innate sinfulness, we wouldn't have a right to ask God for anything. But by the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ we now have every right to assault the throne of God's grace with our prayers in full confidence that our Heavenly Father hears us and happily answers our prayers.

Take Jesus at His word, accept His gracious invitation and pray. It works!

Heard by God with you in Christ,
Pastor Golm

July 22

Afraid To Pray?

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Romans 8:15

Afraid to pray?! Yes, there come moments in the lives of all of us when our guilty conscience is struck with terror at the very thought of stepping into the presence of our just and holy God-"false and full of sin" as we are. But those are the dark moments when Satan has blinded us to the glorious, sin-atonement work of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Through Christ, through his redeeming sacrifice on Calvary's cross for sinners such as we, the mighty God of heaven has become our loving Father. And that makes all the difference in the world when we prepare to step into his presence. That is why the Savior, when his disciples asked him: "Lord, teach us to pray", began his model prayer with the words "Our Father".

Luther, in commenting on this introduction to the Lord's Prayer, says: "God would by these words tenderly invite us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that we may with all boldness and confidence ask Him as dear children ask their dear father."

Afraid to pray? Will a loving child be filled with fear at the thought of sharing his hurts and sorrows, his troubles and heartaches-yes, even his guilt-with him whom he has learned to know as his understanding, sympathetic father?

St. Paul told the Christians in Rome that, having been accepted into the family of God by grace through faith, they could now address God with the intimate, childlike term of affection: "Abba! Father!" And the writer to the Hebrews, reminding them that Christ was now their spokesman in heaven, urged them to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that they might obtain mercy and find grace in time of need". That is why the believing heart can pray:

Just as I am Thou wilt receive, Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

(Devotion from: Daily Walk With God - Meditations for Every Day, by Herman W. Gockel)