

Prayer

If we would learn to pray, it us read and study the great prayers recorded in God's Word - prayers that God not only heard and answered: but preserved for examples of genuine prayer: Moses (Exodus 32:11-13); David (II Samuel 7:18-27); Solomon 9I Kings 8:23-53); Elijah (I Kings 18:36-38); our Lord, teaching the disciples to pray (Matthew 6:9-13). These prayers are filled with the celebration of our Lord's attributes, an acknowledgment of our unworthiness, much praise and thanksgiving, petitions for spiritual blessings, and ascribing all the glory to God. I fear that most prayer today has degenerated into repetitious phrases, religious form, and requests for material and physical blessings that we not only don't need but often serve as idols which turn our minds away from God. I would like to hear us pray as follows:

1. Less about the needs of our bodies and more about the needs of our souls.
2. Less about the condition of our homes and more about the condition of our hearts.
3. Less about our growth numbers and more about our growth in grace.
4. Less about what we need and more thanksgiving for what we have.
5. Less vindication of our faith and sincerity and more frank, honest confession of total dependence on His sovereign mercy.
6. Less words from the head and more groanings from the heart.
7. Less concern for ourselves and more concern for others.

Our public prayers are needful and necessary to worship and proper church fellowship, but to neglect private prayer is to make our public praying a farce. What would God be pleased to do for a congregation of people who spent much time in praise and prayer before His throne, seeking His glory, His will, His presence and His message?

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