

May 2024

Dear Friend in Christ.

Prayer for us is an essential part of our Christian life and it's an amazing privilege, but for many, it's challenging. Some of us may be blessed with a regular prayer life with regular times of prayer, while others may be struggling to find time to pray and have only a sporadic, irregular type of prayer life who may even strain and strive to manage five minutes of prayer a day.

But deep down each of us really want to pray more and want to grow in our prayer lives and to see that our prayers are effective and our prayers are making a difference in some way.



However, some of us may have the misconception that our prayer to be effective it must be long. Actually it doesn't. There is no correlation between how long a person prays and whether God answers. What matters is the way we pray the way He is teaching us to pray and that our prayers are Spirit-led, heartfelt, and accompanied by true faith. And actually some of the most powerful, effective prayers we could pray are things like *"Thank you, Lord," "Oh, God, I need your wisdom," "Give me strength to keep going, Lord"*. Just a few words will connect us with heaven as we call upon the Lord to act on our behalf. Jesus did say *"Do not heap up phrases i.e. repeating the same ones over and over"* (Mt 6:7).

Another misconception about our prayer especially in asking is that we must use the right words and speak eloquently. No need! God wants us to be comfortable with Him, so talk to Him plainly and simply. What is important is that our prayer needs to come from the heart.

Actually, to pray powerful prayers, we need only to pray boldly, meaning confidently and without fear or reservation. This because of what Jesus has done for us, knowing that He loves us, hears us, and will answer our prayers in the ways that are best for us.

Here is one good model of praying and asking for something from God which we could learn. It is the prayer of a leper seeking out Jesus in Mk 1:40-45.

The leper came to Jesus begging Him, and kneeling he said to Him "If you choose, you can make me clean." And Jesus moved with pity, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I do choose. Be made clean!"

S42-May 2024 SSVP Reflection



Notice how and what the leper spoke to Jesus. What we saw was that the leper came in humility, begging from a kneeling position. We noticed also the leper knew what he wanted and believed that Jesus had the power to grant it. He said *"If you choose, you can"*

We also noted that later he became a disciple- he spreads the word. He witnesses to a Jesus' goodness.

Having read the powerful account, take a moment to think about our own prayer whether we have the pattern in our own prayers of petition with the same attitude, not hiding our neediness, not hesitant about bringing it before Jesus, listening for Jesus' encouraging response.

Just one last reminder that our prayers should not be mere mouth material but of the inner being in communion with God.

End the reflection with the *Glory Be*. Amen.