

What Prayer Does For The Pray-er

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It seems to me significant that our English word "prayer" indicates, by its very nature, someone who does it. A prayer is something prayed by a pray-er. Have you ever stopped to think about what prayer does for us? It's interesting. Prayer makes us like Him whom we adore. People who associate closely begin to adopt one another's characteristics, personality, demeanor. When you keep in touch with God, you will become more and more like Him. Peter says, "Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet. 1:4). How exciting to think it possible to take part in the divine nature—to be holy, to be full of love, to be considerate of others—and the multitude of other characteristics inherent in the Divine One. If you want to be like God, meditate on His promises and pray for His goodness and it will come to pass—you will be more like Him. Prayer exercises our spiritual senses. A lack of exercise results in flaccid muscles. A lack of spiritual exercise produces the same flaccidity—only it's much more serious. You become disinterested, irregular in attendance, unconcerned about spiritual matters. Regular prayer keeps us in good shape, makes us stronger, more able to function in difficult situations, more able to perform in hard places. "Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5:17-18).

Prayer humbles our elevated spirits. We live in a world so comfortable that it's easy to forget from whence our blessings come. We get so caught up in our multitude of blessings that we forget their source. You can't have a spirit of pride and thank God for His blessings at the same time. You have to humble yourself somewhat to give thanks; it places you in a proper position when you pray. The condemnation given the Gentile nations by Paul in Romans 1 says, "Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were they thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Rom. 1:21-22). Prayer and humility are connected. No humility, no prayer. Prayer elevates our broken spirits. Life is filled with unexpected down times. We must face difficult situations at times. No matter how unfaithful people are, when death comes, or a serious operation is in the offing, they pray. How sad that it is reserved only for such a time. Prayer, for the faithful, enhances his ability to endure by connecting him to the immutable Father, by giving him assurance that Jesus has been there, "For," we are told, "we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:15-16). And finally, prayer is our lifeline to spiritual energy. To be constantly in touch with God is to be connected to His strength, to share His power, to imbibe of His energy. "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," He said, so that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:6-7). How encouraging is that! How absolutely consoling! How totally comforting. "Ere you left your room this morning, did you think to pray?" —via Southside Sunday, Volume 9