

Praying In Faith

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You begin to suspect that to pray is to live. (Henry Nouwen)

I got saved when I was 13, and the first gift God gave me was the ability to pray. My 13-year old prayers were rambling, emotional, often ranting or pouty, but they were honest cries and questions from my heart to a God I had just met. I didn't know the Bible, so He often answered me through a quiet voice, or through a hymn at church.

45 years later, I still pray constantly, from my heart—rambling, ranting, crying and praising, laughing, singing—sitting or walking with my Savior, the God who loves me and delights to hear my voice. I have the privilege of knowing that God answers my prayers. I would love to share this intimate gift with you.

In the movie *The Shack*, Mac shares how his family is doing with Papa, Jesus and the Spirit, then stops and says, "but you already know all that. Why am I talking?" Their answer is "Yes, but we love to see them through your eyes." Through Prayer, you share your world with your Father God—He cares about your hurts and your dreams, He is always near you to offer ideas, help and comfort. He is interested in you! A good father loves on his child, and is patiently involved in their world. Talk to Him the same way you talk to a best friend! You don't have to worry about using the right words or having a totally clean heart before you "approach God."

God persists in working through surprises...and if we would participate in them and see them as they happen, it will be through His chosen way of working through prayer. (from *Living By God's Surprises*, Harold L. Myra)

Dark times of doubt can interfere with your practice of prayer. We feel like our prayers bounce off the ceiling, or die at our feet. Just know that this is not true—God *always* listens and *always* hears. Darkness can deepen our trust, because we can't see anything—so we have to operate on what we *believe*.

I came to a conclusion that deep, deep down, I really didn't believe in the power of prayer. If I really believed that prayer was the essential gate through which God acts in my life—that I could see marvelous answers, remarkable works and extravagant love—then I would obviously pray more...and expect more from the Hearer. (from *Living By God's Surprises*, Harold L. Myra)

Pray about everything. (Phil. 4: 6)

To do list—every day, all day. No formulas—just talk. Sit next to Him and share your heart. Keep track of God's surprising answers in a prayer journal. (It builds your faith.) Pick a Psalm and pray it "back to God"—even better put your name in place of "I", "we", "me". When you mess up in life ("sin"), say you're sorry, call it what God calls it (Gal. 5:19 is one list) and ask for His help to change. Pray for what you need and what you really want. Then accept that God doesn't give you things that are bad for you. (You will be glad later!) Be willing to give up your wants for God's greater blessings. Pray for other people and *their* hurts and needs every day. Tell God what a great job He is doing (called Praise or Worship)

RESOURCES

Jill Briscoe, *Our Father talk* at Passionate Pursuit Conference, Tampa, FL., *The Battle Plan for Prayer* (basics from the *War Room* movie), *Intercessory Prayer* by Dutch Sheets (with a charismatic flavor), The Bible (especially Psalms) and a prayer journal

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