

Prayer: The Relationship God always wanted and did everything to get

When Richard emailed me about today, as I read “please could you talk about prayer”, the phrase that Jesus prayed came into my mind, **“Father I thank you, that you have heard me. I know you hear me always.....”** and I thought, “Lovely I’d love to share about prayer.”

Prayer is Conversation - its about talking and listening –

It’s a relationship,

And its thus something precious and valuable – something you really want.

And how do relationships happen.?

To KNOW that our Father and Lord ALWAYS hears us is a beginning

How many relationships start when you find someone wants to talk with you?

The thing is so often when we talk about prayer, certain reactions flood in, guilt, doubt, fear and duty:

- Oh dear, I don’t pray like you are supposed to – like important/ professional Christians do
- Well, **I don’t do it right** at all – how to form it, say the words
- **I don’t know** certainly that **I am heard**
- Guilty - **No certainty that I should be heard** (BTW – general guilt feeling, rather than specific does not usually come from God)
- I don’t really think **God answers or acts** on what I pray
- Its hard work, and I **don’t feel He is near** – probably my fault
- Feels like a **brick wall**, not sure **God even wants me** to talk to Him
- **I Ought** to pray more

So I wanted to start from the other way round – **not about US, but about God**, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

A - The Father’s Heart - The Father always hears – always seeking for us.

How much this is about love and relationship, and how God loves talking with us, hearing our voice, passionately – so much so, that not only does **He want to be with us, but does nearly all the work for it**, and makes it all possible.

Lets go back to the beginning – Adam in the garden. God came down and talked to Him.

But when Adam sinned, **Adam hid**, then talking, praying and knowing God collapsed.

The door was SHUT

Rules and regulations came, man couldn’t come freely. A veil separated men from the Holiest Place where God’s presence was. And only one man – the High Priest - could go in only once a year for a moment.

God heartbroken by this separation, He so wanted to have us talking and ONE with Him, that the Father and Jesus were prepared to make the **ultimate sacrifice** – in order to remove sin and end separation. This solution wasn't just to get back to the conversations in Eden, but it was even more wonderful:
 Jesus prayed just before **He died that we should all be as much ONE with the Father as He was. (John 17)** He died and made Himself ONE with our SIN, so that we could live and be ONE with His LIFE

GOD WANTS IT THAT MUCH – **John 3:16**

Even before Jesus died, when the Israelites were disobedient, wicked, ungrateful, unbelieving, God said to them,
“All day long have I stretched out my hands to an obstinate and disobedient people” Romans 10:21
 So if anyone turned to Him, the Lord listened and forgave with glorious GRACE and forgiveness

Lets look at some of God's listening & answering – **QUALITY Listening**

1. Ps 116:1,2 **He heard my voice, recognized it – give eg – pleasure of recognition**
He turned His ear – inclined His ear
Therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live
That's why we want to pray – its relationship
2. Malachi 3: He listened and he heard – **eg “You're not listening to me”**
3. 2 Sam 22 – Entered His ears

The Father			
John 11:41,42	I thank you Father that you hear Me. I know you always hear me	He always hears	
John 17:22,23	I pray... that they may be One , just as we are ONE: I in them, and You in me, that they may be made perfect in one; so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them even as you have loved me.	He wants us	
John 3:16	God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son	He wants us	
Rom 10:21 Isa 65:2	“All day long I have stretched out my hands to an obstinate and disobedient people”	He wants us	
Ps 116:1,2	I love the Lord because He heard my voice and my pleadings. Because He has turned His ear to me, therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live	He always hears He knows me	
2 Sam 22:7	In my distress, I called upon the Lord, Yes I cried to my God. And from His temple He heard my voice, and my cry entered His ears	He always hears	

<p>Wow – what happened</p> <p>Why – because He delights in me GOD is love – His love is full, complete, total to each one Eg – 1st time I had cancer – couldn't pray cos God tolerated rather than loved me – stern displeased love.</p> <p>He pities us, understands us, and knows our weaknesses Ps 103</p> <p>The Father of the Prodigal ran to meet him – Luke 15</p> <p><u>B - The Son's Actions to make us ONE with the Father</u> Lets go back to how Jesus solved it all. Ps 89:19 Our sins separated us, there was a veil in the temple separating us from the Holiest Place where God dwelt, and only one man – the High Priest - could only go in once a year for a moment. When Jesus bore our death and He was separated from His Father, the</p>	2 Sam 22:8-16	Wow – He thundered	He answers He acts, He saves	
	2 Sam 22:17-21	He reached down from on high and took hold of me: He drew me out of deep waters He rescued me from my powerful enemies, from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me They confronted me in the day of my disaster, but the Lord was my support He brought me out into a large place, He rescued me because He delighted in me	He delights in me	
	Ps 103:13,14	As a Father has compassion, pities His children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him. For He Himself knows our frame, how we are formed, He remembers that we are dust.	He knows our weaknesses	
	Luke 15:18-20	I will get up and go to my Father, and will say to him, Father I have sinned against heaven and against you, I am no longer worthy to be called your son..... But when he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and was filled with compassion for him, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him.	He runs to us	
	The Son			
	Ps 89:19	I have laid help on one that is mighty.	He wants us	
	Matt 27:50	At that moment, the Veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom	The door is open	

<p>Veil in the temple was ripped open – approx. 45’tall – God tore it from top to bottom The Way is open</p> <p>1-<u>Jesus did it - He is the door - doorway cut in His flesh</u> How much do I have to do? – no stairs?, no climbing to wedge the door open? How much do you think you have to do? Passwords, access to electronic stuff, equipment not working And sometimes we allow all sorts of things to make us feel praying is complicated with secret passwords to get to God. Jesus is the door and He is open.</p> <p>Believe that God loves you more than words can say Believe that God is more keen to hear you than ever you are to speak to Him</p>				
<p>2 - <u>He ever lives to make intercession for us - Give 3 versions</u></p> <p>a. Hebrews 7:25 He saves utterly/forever/completely seeing He lives to intercede for us</p>	<p>Heb 7:24, 25</p>	<p>Because Jesus lives forever, He has a permanent priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost / utterly/forever/completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them</p>	<p>He wants us The door is open He helps us</p>	
<p>HE HELPS - HE is the Password</p>	<p>1 John 2:1</p>	<p>If any one sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous</p>	<p>The door is Open He Helps</p>	
<p>b. Hebrews 4:15 High Priest – who is deeply touched with the feelings of our weaknesses – He underwent every temptation you and I ever had and came through it without sin.</p>	<p>Heb4:15</p>	<p>For we do not have a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feelings of our weaknesses , but One who has been tempted in all points as we are – yet was without sin.</p>	<p>He knows our weaknesses He helps The door is open</p>	

<p>c. Hebrews 4:16 Let us come BOLDLY - Like through your own front door. In Africa no knocking</p> <p>To the Throne of Grace – favour, lavishness, gift, joy, liberality, pleasure, acceptance, overflowing, total forgiveness, what you don't need to earn or pay for.</p> <p>That we may receive mercy And find grace to help in time of need – God helps those who cant help themselves – Help and the helper=The one who runs to the sound of the cry – sounds like a mother. Does the baby have to persuade the mother anything.</p> <p>That's God – alert, running – the Father of the prodigal son, running while the prodigal was a great way</p> <p>Isai 49:13-16 You think the Lord doesn't listen?</p> <p>Ps 139:4 He is listening to our hearts before we even find the words</p> <p>Come boldly – Heb 13:5.6 He hath said, I will never leave you or forsake you, so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man will do unto me.</p>	Heb4:16	Let us then come BOLDLY	Come boldly The door is open He wants us He runs to us	
		to the throne of Grace ,		
		so that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need	Come boldly The door is open He wants us He runs to us	
		Isa 49:13-16 For the Lord comforts His people, and will have compassion on His afflicted ones But Zion said: The Lord has forsaken me, my Lord has forgotten me Can a mother forget a baby at her breast? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See I have engraved you on the palms of my hands Your walls are continually before Me	He always hears	
		Ps 139:4 Before a word is on my tongue, you know it altogether	He always hears	
	Heb 13:5.6 Come boldly –He hath said, I will never leave you or forsake you, so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man will do unto me.	Come boldly The door is open He answers		

C - The Aid of the Holy Spirit

The Spirit helps us pray -
 I don't have the words – sometimes my heart is just aching because of someone I love, or my own need, the pain is too big to say
 The Holy Spirit is praying with **groanings which cannot be put into words. Romans 8:26**

US
 God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are giving all their heart and love to draw me to pray, to draw you to pray, to make it possible for us to pray, to pray in us, so that we can be One with our Father – which is what we were born for.

Ps 37:4,5 He delights in us, let us delight in Him. He is committed to us, let us be committed to Him. This isn't a religious duty, exercise, an obstacle race that only the fittest get over and win, it is simply the most wonderful relationship of all, The Father with his child the son with His bride, the Lord with His friends – no shadow between, just love.
 Come boldly

Believe His desire towards you and you will want to talk to Him all day, and hear Him and receive His help and salvation

The Spirit		
Romans 8:26	Likewise the Spirit also helps our weaknesses , for we don't know how to pray as we ought: but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be put into words.	He knows our weaknesses He helps
Us		
Ps 37:4,5	Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him , and He shall bring it to pass	He answers
Ps 37:23,24	The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and HE delights in his way. Though he falls, he will not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholds him with His hand	He delights in us He helps
Song of S 7:10	I am my Beloved's and His Desire is for me.	