

## Articles and Sermons :: PRAYER AND PRACTICE - J.A James

**PRAYER AND PRACTICE - J.A James - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2007/7/25 16:39**

The following is an excerpt from this sermon

([http://www.gracegems.org/25/prayer\\_and\\_practice.htm](http://www.gracegems.org/25/prayer_and_practice.htm)) Prayer and Practice

Prayer is adoration; and what is so adapted to produce profound and habitual veneration for God, as the contemplation and praise of his infinitely glorious perfections? Prayer is confession of sin; and when is sin more apt to melt the heart in to the soft relentings of godly contrition, than when carefully recounted to Him against whom it has been all committed, with a spirit awed into reverence and submission by the pure majesty of the Divine presence? Prayer is supplication for blessings needed; and what a sense of dependence, what a feeling of want, what a confidence in God for supplies, is this exercise likely to produce? Prayer is intercession for others; and how does it nourish all the feelings of kindness, pity, benevolence, and universal charity! Prayer is usually attended with thanksgiving for mercies received, and its breath fans the spark of gratitude, until it is kindled into a flame of pure and ardent love. Prayer resists the influence of the world, raises the soul out of the region of temporal things, and places it within sight and attraction of unseen and eternal things. Prayer gives efficiency to all the other means of grace; and thus is continually, by its own tendency and power, producing a favorable influence upon our character and conduct. Let us, then, beware of insincerity in our prayers and in all other matters; for it is very obvious that there is among professors of religion, who are not really hypocrites in gross, too much of petty hypocrisy in the details of their profession.

**Re: PRAYER AND PRACTICE - J.A James - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/7/29 8:06**

I need not prove to you that prayer, as a *duty*, is essential to Christian conduct; and, as a *privilege*, is equally indispensable to Christian enjoyment. All consistent professors of religion give themselves to this devout exercise. They pray in the closet, at the family altar, and in the house of God. Their petitions are copious, comprehensive, and seemingly earnest. What solemn professions they make to God! What ardent desires they express! What numerous blessings they seek! What strong resolutions they form! Judging of ourselves by the prayers we pour forth in secret, or of each other by the utterances we hear when we meet with one accord to make our common supplication known, we may very properly say, "What manner of people ought we to be?" If we so pray—how ought we to live? What kind of people must we be—to be up to the standard of our prayers? And ought we not, in some measure at least, to reach this standard? Should there not be a harmony, a consistency, a proportion—between our practice and our prayers?

There are many rules and standards of our conduct, or rather the one rule and standard is presented in various aspects in the Scriptures. The moral law, demanding perfect love to God and man; the moral character of God as revealed in his word; the example of our Lord Jesus Christ; the principles drawn from the Bible, and implied in our profession of religion, are all so many declarations of what we ought to be, and to do. Looking at these, how we are struck with our shortcomings, and with what deep humiliation ought we to confess and mourn them! But I now direct you to another rule and standard, and that is—your *own prayers*. Do you indeed ACT as you pray? Do you understand the import, and feel the obligation of your own petitions? Do you rise from your knees where you have asked and knocked, to seek? Do you really want, wish for, and endeavor to obtain an answer to your prayers? Does God see, and do men see, that you are really intent upon doing, and being—what you ask for in prayer?

I need scarcely inform you, that the designs and uses of prayer are many, besides being a means of obtaining necessary blessings. It is intended to do homage to God as the Fountain of being and bliss; to express our dependence upon him; to be a solace to our own minds, and also to be a means of personal improvement. Our prayers are to act upon ourselves; they have, or ought to have, great power in the formation of character and the regulation of conduct. This is too much forgotten. The moral influence and pious obligation of prayer are too much left out of sight. It is plain, therefore, that much of prayer is mere words—we either do not understand, or do not consider, or do not mean, what we say. This is a solemn consideration; for if it is true, we play the hypocrite before God, and insult him by the offerings of feigned lips. Can we endure the thought? It is time to consider such a subject—I mean the moral obligation of our own prayers—and to institute a comparison between them and our practice.

