

General Topics :: I have a question about prayer

I have a question about prayer - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/1 18:05

I am determined, with every fiber of my being, to walk with God as deeply as is possible for a human being to walk with Him.

One of the struggles I have is that I'm "a thinker." I can analyze and over-think things to death if I'm not careful. I also have perfectionistic tendencies, which comes from having to prove myself my entire life. I'm a hard worker in progress for sure!

So, when a question comes to my mind, and I research and study and seek and still can't find the answer, I become stubborn and don't relent until I have the answer I'm after. This question has plagued me for quite some time and I can't think of a better place to ask it.

When I hear men of God talk about "waiting on the Lord" in prayer, and sitting in silence, waiting for the presence of God to come or to hear from God. Unfortunately, I've never met any of these men in person to be able to ask them my burning question: What is happening in your mind as sit and wait in silence? What's going through your mind? This is a troublesome question for a "thinker."

As I'm personally waiting silently on the Lord, I can't turn my brain "off." Should I be meditating on a scripture? Silently speaking to God? Worshiping in song or praises? Thinking nothing at all? This must be an awfully dumb question since I've never heard anyone else ask it and it's never been addressed in a sermon on prayer that I've heard. Fine. I'm dumb. But I would love to get over this mental hurdle of having a fidgety brain during these times.

For example, Gerhard Du Toit has spoken of how a group of Africans came to collect him one night to go to the mountain to talk to God. Often times they would go for 7, 14, 21 or even 40 days with nothing more than a blanket, water and a Bible. When Gerhard asked them how they do that, he said they told him, "You have a problem, brother. Your problem is that you are in a hurry, and God is not."

But that doesn't offer any practical application. How DO we prepare our mind? What do we do with our thoughts, during those quiet times of waiting upon Him?

Re: I have a question about prayer, on: 2016/5/1 18:13

Keith are you married?

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/1 18:18

Nope. When I became a Christian at 17, I was called to be single. It's been proven to be true in my life.

Re: - posted by dohzman (), on: 2016/5/1 18:59

The art of waiting can be cultivated and is often found in a multitude of ways, just like in a restaurant no two servers wait at a table the exact same way so also it is with people and the Lord God. I know that you may not be expecting an answer like the one I would give you but here goes. You were specially crafted by The Lord and are who you are by His love and mercy, you are an individual uniquely designed to fill a part of God's own heart in fellowship and communion, it would only stand that the Maker of all that is Himself would teach you how you were designed to wait on Him. Some sit in silence and sing praises to Him some think on His glories or His works of Old, things He has done down through history, to be sure His written Word is of utmost importance in all things and that is always a great place to start, but for some they need to reach out in Jesus name and offer help to others or even witness...it can be vastly different and come in an infinite degree of shapes and sizes when it comes to His children. I have often thought of Adam and God walking in the cool of the evening together before the fall, can you imagine, the creator of the universe whose very Words are very life and very death speaking face to face talking to one another, what a thought, this is beyond my ability to even approach in thought, but I somehow believe that it is exactly what He desires from us all. Then of course in our hearing, Jesus often asked "How do you hear" or "be careful how you hear", Do we cultivate our listening skills? My dear brother there may never be any clear cut 1-2-3 answer for you BUT I can assure you that The Lord God Almighty yearns for fellowship with you and will teach you His ways and at all times confirming His voice out of His Word helping you to walk according to His testimony.

onies. Waiting, be still, resting in, serving, following, communing in your Heart with the Lord, joining Heaven in praising Him, however in a multitude of ways He teaches you the "hows", when it comes from God our Maker, you will know. God Bless

Re: , on: 2016/5/1 18:59

Do you have a close friend? Someone you like to spend time with?

Re: Trust - posted by Fatherschild (), on: 2016/5/2 0:52

Brother, I find that when God draws me, as he is faithful to do, it's when I'm still that I hear his voice. Sometimes during prayer, or praise, meditating upon him and his word, or just doing the dishes, often I will sing or pray in tongues when I feel I'm reaching for words or my mind begins to stray. Mostly I just talk to him like the Father he is.

Last night, as often happens, I was awakened and knew the Lord would have me pray for someone, the body, or some situation. Often it will be clear who, and/or what he's laid on my heart and mind, other times it's just kind of a blank, and that's when I pray in tongues until I have a release from that prayer time and back to sleep. I don't know if that helps answer any part of your question, nonetheless trust him to lead you, ask and expect to receive. Be patient while waiting for Him to do that work in you. He will. I don't believe there's a one size fits all to your question either.

Re: I have a question about prayer - posted by dbiser, on: 2016/5/2 20:26

Everyone is different and may answer differently for what works best for them. But for the most, those that I asked of this, when I wondered the same thing, they almost all was the same - they 'looked unto Jesus'; 'they adored/praised and worshipped the Lord God' and they rehearsed His wonderful and mighty deeds. Tozer could go for hours just gazing and contemplating His wonders.

If left to stillness, the mind is prone to wander and be distracted. Always have verses, thoughts, visions of the Lord to bring you back before His throne. There to stay, to listen for His voice and leading; and to make thanksgiving with petitions and supplications at appointed times.

Re: Keith., on: 2016/5/3 6:37

Quote:
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The practise of 'waiting silently on the Lord' has come down to us from the early Quakers, whom I have studied intensively due to their Christian witness and holy lives.

First of all, what they did not mean by waiting 'silently' was the eastern religion practise of emptying the mind. We are not meant to empty the mind: It is meant to be active at all times (apart from sleeping).

The early Quakers, along with other believers through church history usually at times of true revival, taught that the baptism of the Spirit is necessary for believers (to Come up through the Flaming Sword - George Fox) and know the cleansing from all sin. The heart is cleansed and as all thoughts come from the heart according to scripture, the thought life will be cleansed too.

If we have intruding thoughts of an ungodly kind then we know that we do not have pure hearts. As Jesus told us; if we have thoughts of harm towards others, then we are murderers; if we lust we are adulterers.

So the Quakers gathered and waited on the Lord with pure hearts and sanctified minds, and any thoughts that came into

their minds did not distract them from God. Their mind was centered on Him anyway and they would wait in prayer until He spoke to them. If there are any areas that we have a dispute with God, or even something that we are even blind to, we are not at peace so cannot wait in silence. There will be noise there constantly.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/5/3 8:46

This insight from Oswald Chambers has always helped me because I too tend to think too much:

"The reason that our prayers are not answered is that we are not stupid enough to believe what Jesus says. It is a child, and only a child who has prayer answered; a wise and prudent adult does not (see Matthew 11:25). We have to be as natural as children in our relationship to Jesus Christ and He does His work all the time. Jesus Christ is our Master and He lays down His orders distinctly, â€œtherefore pray.â€•

Re: I have a question about prayer - posted by Theophila (), on: 2016/5/3 9:24

From my scarce experience in the matter, i offer my 2cents.

First off, most people are used to have their minds constantly on the go. Then when such ones come to the Jesus Christ, they'll need to learn the godly habit of stillness. Now I don't mean, emptying the mind as in eastern religions. I mean, quieting the mind, as in, paying attention to the mad rush of thoughts (think rush hour traffic on a rainy day) hurtling through your mind and sifting through them. Some are to be rejected and cast down, others are to be prioritized etc.

In the beginning, it was work! Just when I sat to either read the Scriptures or pray quietly, thoughts would literally arise like an erupting volcano throwing ideas every which way e.g. chores, errands, emails, that needed attention etc. Not to talk of random anxious thoughts and offenses.

It helped to have a notepad and pen handy. Back then, I simply wrote down such errands etc. The anxious thoughts and offenses were presented to the Lord. It took a li'l while but my mind gradually quieted down.

There's a reason the Scriptures tell us to guard our hearts with all diligence. All sorts of stuff try to slip in unnoticed especially through unresolved offenses and entertainment media. As the Lord has removed much of the desire for entertainment, the cleansing and purging process has gone on with a little less hindrance.

It seems the more gunk a person has in their soul, the more silence/stillness weighs on/bothers them.

Then, I would read Scriptures, mostly aloud. Then, meditate on them. Sometimes, other supporting Scriptures would come to mind and I would write those down too. Other times, the Scripture at hand would be expanded/illuminated to me. Jesus really IS the light!

At this point, worship and communion with Him become easy.

Re: I have a question about prayer - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/5/3 17:44

Thank you everyone for your responses. I have read and considered everything that was said.

What was confirming to me was the Oswald Chamber's quote. It's been something I've been praying for a long time. I want to be like a little child who simply believes and acts on something. It's the perfectionist in me that wants to prove myself that gets in the way. But, since I've been here on SermonIndex, I've seen changes in this area of my life.

I'm going to be spending as much time as I can being intentionally alone with Him. I can't stop thinking about it because I don't have as much time as I used to have in this world. I want to change and that's not going to happen apart from Him. I'm not speaking legalistically or being performance-driven, or anything else like that. I just want to be a tree firmly planted by streams of water. I want to be in love and changed into His likeness.

So, I may not be on here very much in the immediate future because this is my only goal and desire right now. Lord willing, I do intend to return! It's just that my focus needs to be on this right now. I would appreciate it if you would pray for me as the Holy Spirit puts me in your remembrance!

I love you all very much!