

## New Year Necessities Back to Basics: Prayer Hebrews 4:14-16

### INTRODUCTION

We return to our series **New Year Necessities - Back to Basics**. Last time we considered the need and the value of God's Word. And in His word, we find an invite to approach God through prayer. In your Bible, please turn to **Hebrews 4:14-16**.

**We forget to our own peril that prayer was a vital part of the early church.** They were devoted to the prayers (**Acts 2:42**). These brothers and sisters prayed corporately. They valued joining their hearts together in prayer - **Acts 4, 12, 14**. Sadly, this has changed in our day. **Prayer is the most-often talked about but least practiced spiritual discipline in the Christian life.** Prayerlessness is a declaration of independence from God. **We forget that what we are on our knees in secret before God Almighty, that we are and no more.** The prayer life of any church is the best barometer of its health...the prayer life of this church is the best barometer of its health.

**Here's the good news:** the God who speaks to us through His word is the God who also is inclined to listen! Not only does He express Himself and bid us hear His voice, but He wants to hear ours. The speaking God not only has spoken, but He also listens; He wants to hear from you. He stands ready to hear your voice. Christian, you have the ear of God. We call it prayer.

**Prayer, simply put, is talking to God. It is relational.** Prayer is simply conversing with God. It is communion with God. We converse with people all the time. Husbands and wives talk together. Close friends get together to visit. Prayer is just doing with God, what you do with people all the time. **We can't have a close relationship with another person without spending time communicating with them.** It's exactly the same with God. We can't have a close relationship with God without spending time talking with Him. **Yet, in this relationship we don't talk as peers.** He is Creator, and we are creatures. He is the great Lord, and we are His grateful

servants. Because of His amazing love and extravagant grace, He invites us to interact. He has opened His mouth and spoken to us. Now He opens His ear to hear us.

It is very easy to make people feel guilty about failure in the prayer and that's not my intent this morning. However, we must come to grips with the fact that to be like Jesus we must pray.

*Please note with me 3 truths about prayer:*

### **I. Prayer is \_\_\_\_\_**

I realize that to say prayer is expected of us may make some of us uncomfortable but it's the truth. Why?

#### **A. Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ His own to pray**

Don't think of prayer as an impersonal requirement. Realize that it is a person, the Lord Jesus Christ, with all authority and with all love, who expects us to pray. These excerpts from His words show that He Himself expects us to **pray**:

- **Matthew 6: 5:** *"And when you pray..."*
- **Matthew 6: 6:** *"But when you pray..."*
- **Matthew 6: 7:** *"And when you pray..."*
- **Matthew 6: 9:** *"Pray then like this: ...."*
- **Luke 11: 9:** *And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you.*
- **Luke 18: 1:** *"And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray."*

#### **B. God's word \_\_\_\_\_ Christians to pray**

In addition to the words of Jesus, the unmistakable expectation of God from the rest of the New Testament is that we pray.

**1. Colossians 4:2:** *"Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving."* People who *"continue steadfastly in prayer"* have devoted themselves to pursuing a Christ-like life where prayer is an ongoing priority. When you make something a priority, when you sacrifice for it, when you give time to it, you know you are devoted to it. God

*Prayer is expected...next, please note...*

**II. Prayer is \_\_\_\_\_**

*But how do I learn how to pray???*

**A. By actually \_\_\_\_\_**

*How do I learn to pray? By praying and...*

**B. By praying with \_\_\_\_\_**

*Prayer is expected, prayer is learned and lastly,*

**III. Prayer is \_\_\_\_\_**

**CONCLUSION**

*Let's wrap up our study with the following questions:*

- Because prayer is expected, will you \_\_\_\_\_?
  
- Since prayer is learned, will you learn to \_\_\_\_\_?
  
- Since prayer is answered, will you persistently \_\_\_\_\_?

**Would you be like Christ? Then do as He did — discipline yourself to be a person of prayer.**