

Does God Even Hear Me?

Jennifer Richmond ~ July 2017

Is God even hearing my prayers?



...have you ever wondered that? I have.

For those who follow Christ, the first thing we do to become a Christian is what? Pray.

It's the simplest act.

It's a sort of mystical thing really because we're simply thinking thoughts or maybe speaking them and in the act of doing so, something changes in us and we are in the family of God.

In fact, in that moment of prayer we are made right with God, We are no longer destined for Hell...our eternal address is shifted.

...we have direct access to Him,

...we have our names written in the Book of Life, ...we are redeemed, set free, pardoned, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and set on a path of becoming more and more like Jesus as we walk now faithfully with Him. All of this because of what?

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Prayer. One. Simple Prayer.

Before you knew how to do it...Before you knew the methods...the reasons...

The Bible verses...

The techniques...Before you went to a workshop...read a book about it or heard a sermon on the "10 Ways to Be More Effective as a Woman of Prayer"

...you. just. Prayed.

Then, as we keep walking and growing in our faith we read the Bible, we learn from other believers, we get stronger in our faith through hardship and trusting in God...and that simple first prayer becomes this amazing on-going conversation as we connect with God...or does it?

Do we feel connected still? Do we pray with simple faith still?

Or do we, like David in Psalm 13 wonder if this is working?

David cried out,

"How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?"

And again, in Psalm 88 he cried:

"Why, LORD, do you reject me and hide your face from me?"

Perhaps you're enjoying a great and fruitful prayer life. You are really thrilled with how you're connecting with God. You're so happy and content. You're dialed in, you're connected, you're feeling it. It's vibrant, it's alive. You're communicating, and He's communicating with you.

You don't even know how to explain it if somebody asks. It's like trying to say the Pledge of Allegiance by starting in the middle. You know you know it, but you can't exactly get there or explain it without going through from start to finish. It's that natural to you. You just do it.

And yet, I'm thinking that there are many reading this today **who** would admit, "You know what? I don't know if I know how to pray at all, except for maybe "Our Father" or maybe a prayer that you learned in Sunday school growing up?

In your heart, you know that prayer is part of this life as a Christian. We've read the accounts from the word of God about the power and effectiveness of prayer. We have an understanding that it works, that it's powerful, that it's expected...but, are we really living that? Are we empowered by it? Are we excited? Are we talking to each other about our effective prayer lives? "I prayed this, and look - this is what happened!"

Are we engaging with one another in that way?

I'm going to go on a limb (a pretty thick, strong, stable limb actually) and say,

This isn't "any women's group." This is. Church. This is the body of Christ coming together and it has not only the potential to be so much more - it needs to be more!

"No." No, we are not engaging that way. Do you know how I know? Because we see one another at church or Bible study or other gatherings and rarely do I have women come to me with passion and enthusiasm to share the miraculous results of their prayer life.

I believe that if we were praying like Christ asked us to that we'd be outrageous and bold and unstoppable in how we encounter the world. I know we'd have conversations on that church patio that were electrified by what was being shared. We'd be running up to one another so excited to share how - yet again - God healed, God delivered, God provided, God...

Instead, our patio conversations are about the weather, or the upcoming event, or last week at work, etc.

And while there is a niceness and comfort in these simple and mundane conversations, we could get those in any women's group we joined. But this isn't "any women's group." This is. Church. This is the body of Christ coming together and it has not only the potential to be so much more - it needs to be more!

What if we were praying ridiculously bold prayers filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and infused with confident expectation because we are so aligned with the will of God that we knew beyond any doubts that God was going to literally move heaven and his mighty warriors to accomplish His will because we were bold enough to ask and mature enough to listen to His voice?

Surely our Sunday Patio Conversations would be changed!

My friend, whether you are reading this note as an occasional visitor to La Mirada Christian Church or you are a regular attender, I am praying for you BY NAME. I have read over every name in the church directory and asked the Father to open every heart, to draw every woman to Him, to create within every woman a thirst that can only be satisfied when her life is marked by deep connection to the Father through prayer.

Let's be those women.

Let's be the kind of women who are faithful and faith-filled, energized and energizing to be with, confident and unashamed.

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Prayer will be the way we become like this.

Prayer is how the Father has provided for us to speak to and hear from Him directly.

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus..." (Phil. 4) "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." (Jas 5:16)

How? Well, you can pray. Pray that God would open your heart and help you grow in maturity as a woman of God.

Read the Bible...the actual Bible. Not a book about the Bible. Not a book with a Bible verse on each page and someone else's thoughts and insights about that verse. Read. The. Bible. Not sure how?...Keep reading:

Get better at this whole "being a Christian" thing by connecting with other women like you who want more. Join the Bible study. We meet Mondays at 6:30pm, Tuesdays at 9:30am, and every weekday morning at 7am online through your computer or smartphone.

Yeah, I know, "I don't have time." I totally understand. I don't either.

I work 10-hour days 6 days a week with three different jobs. I have 168 hours in my week, just like you.

What I've realized is that I make time for what I value. I take the time to brush my teeth every day. Why? Because I value them. I take the time to put on clothing

every day. Why? Because...well, that should be obvious.

My point is, we all have the same time in the day. We all make our choices how we use that time. If you're taking time to

fellowship and be in community with other women, guess why? Yep. You value it. If you're taking time to pray and read the Bible, guess why? You value it. If you're not, guess what? Yep. You don't value it.

As your women's pastor, I'm interested in seeing us all become more mature in our faith. Let's do that together. We'll learn from one another, encourage one another, rejoice and weep together...it's what this Christian life was meant to be. I'm excited about what's to come! Please take a moment to reply and let me know that you got this email. Let me know if you'd like to talk to me about anything going on in your life. We can pray together. I'm here for you! To hear an encouraging message about prayer and how to get it going better in your life, go to www.DwellingRichly.podbean.com and listen to "Getting Serious About Prayer."

Blessings,

Jennifer Richmond

Women's Pastor, La Mirada Christian Church
562.755.4964

Helpful Links:

Recorded Bible study lessons:

www.dwellingrichly.podbean.com

Videos of the Bible lessons:

www.YouTube.com/c/jenniferrichmond

Live Bible study 7am weekdays:

www.facebook.com/lmccwomen or

www.zoom.us/j/5627554964

Download the Bible study lesson pages:

www.lamiradachristianchurch.com/ministries/womens-ministry/index.html



12104 LOS COYOTES AVE., LA MIRADA, CA 90638
(562) 943-2213 WWW.LAMIRADACHURCH.COM