

Lord, hear my prayer Psalm 102:1

Illustrations:

How much do we depend on God?

Do we depend on Him to allow us to come to church and freely worship without persecution? Do we need him to put food on our table? How much do we depend on providing cloth to keep us warm and food to keep us from hungry? As a society, we're so richly blessed that we forget about our need to depend on Him daily!

Personally, How much do we depend on God? We have been conditioned to do things on our own. How much do we depend on Him to provide for the family, maintain proper relationship with our families, friends, coworkers etc.? Our upbringing or training or education make us the way we are – when do we desire for God's word to check our thoughts, attitude, speech, relationship, etc.? Does anyone really think that America today is lacking preachers, books, Bible translations, and neat doctrinal statements? What we really lack is the passion to call upon the Lord until he opens the heavens and shows himself powerful.

Prayer illustration by David Hawkins?

Prayer: just for the sake of illustration, suppose there are two families, husband and wife, son and daughter. Both wives are critically ill and need urgent surgery, or else paralyzed. Neither family has money unless they have good crop, which sells for money to provide. Wheat farmer, having enough rain enough in the past, now fully ripe for harvest, ask for NO rain; potato farmer ask for rain; 'splats, splats', what farmer had too much rain and no crop. Five years later, potato family big house, wife walking around, kids grown up and happy. Dad said did you know five years ago, most critical time – God answered our prayer? We're truly blessed. On other side of the hill, wheat farmer gathered the family, wife in wheel chair, and asked same question – God answered our prayer and we experienced him ways we never before. Prayed.

Civil war, one soldier prayed for victory, the other one, too, came to find out that the Southern soldier prayed too, but skulls covered the whole land

Do doctor get medicine and give to patience? A doctor looks, smells, asks, feels your pulse.

Then gives prescription, Doctors finding out overall health

Message plus divine demonstration. Doctrine plus power. This is the New Testament way.

People must not only hear but also feel, see, and experience the grace of God we speak about. Spontaneity and the leading of the Spirit have been thrown out in the name of keeping things on schedule. Charles Finney, the lawyer turned evangelist, once said that as long as an audience kept looking at him while he preached, he knew he was failing. Only when their heads began to drop in deep conviction of sin did he know that God was working alongside him, producing a heart change inside. The words of sound doctrine alone were not enough. Revival meetings had given to prayer, weeping, and repentance than to sermons. Everyone is free to pray. What USA has made the sermon the centerpiece of the meeting, rather than the throne of grace, where God acts in people's lives. The old saying is true: if you have only the Word, you dry up. If you have only the Spirit, you blow up. But if you have both, you grow up. Jim said, "I must be honest and tell you that I live with an almost constant sense of failure. When I think of what God could do for all the needs of this city and how little we are accomplishing, it makes me passionate to seek God's intervention in even more powerful ways. God will manifest himself in direct proportion to our passion for him.

Ps 102:1 A prayer of an afflicted man. When he is faint and pours out his lament before the LORD. Hear my prayer, O LORD; let my cry for help come to you.

Ps 102:13

Introduction - Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary:

* A sorrowful complaint of great afflictions. (1-11) Encouragement by expecting the performances of God's promises to his church. The Appointed time has come! (12-22) The unchangeableness of God. (23-28)

1-11 Here is a prayer put into the hands of the afflicted; let them present it to God. Even good men may be almost overwhelmed with afflictions. **It is our duty and interest to pray**; and it is comfort to an afflicted spirit to unburden itself, by a humble representation of its griefs. We must say, Blessed be the name of the Lord, who both gives and takes away. The psalmist looked upon himself as a dying man; My days are like a shadow. The outcry of the psalmist is individual in perspective but concerns not a private problem but the destruction of Zion.

Developing Personal Prayer Life

Prayer is a form of ministry Christ desires from every believer. We are saved to pray for others. Prayer is the basis for whatever other ministry one has. Prayer can be the most important ministry in most Christians' lives. One of my greatest responsibilities is to help my people become a praying people, and to help you make your intercession effective for Christ. How much prayer time do we invest in Christ's kingdom per day? This preparation has two phases. I must prepare you to be personally strong in prayer and intercession. I would also guide you develop your personal prayer life. Nothing is more important than a personal prayer life.

Deepening Private Prayer Life

You not only need my repeated clear teaching on prayer, but also need to see in me an example of a life and ministry of prayer. A love for prayer needs to be taught, caught, and practiced. All Christians believe in the duty of some prayer each day. Too often, however, they have never realized the thrill and excitement of communion with Jesus and prevailing in prayer for others.

Magnifying Public Prayer Life

I cannot expect my people to hunger for what they fail to see in me. You must sense my joy in the Lord, my intimacy with God, my love for Jesus and for you. You must sense my vibrant faith as I pray. Then you will begin to hunger to go deeper in prayer yourselves. But remember that my public praying reflects the quality of my personal, private prayer life. God cannot mightily use public prayers and prayers in homes when I am weak, lifeless, and ineffective in my personal prayer life.

The reasons God answers prayers

Nu 14:15 If you put these people to death all at one time, the nations who have heard this report about you will say,

Nu 14:16 'The LORD was not able to bring these people into the land he promised them on oath; so he slaughtered them in the desert.'

UPHOLD GOD'S HONOR

Joh 12:27 "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'?"

No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour.

Joh 12:28 Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."

APPEALS FOR GOD'S GLORY

Nu 14:17 "Now may the Lord's strength be displayed, just as you have declared:

Nu 14:18 'The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.'

Nu 14:19 In accordance with your great love, forgive the sin of these people, just as you have pardoned them from the time they left Egypt until now."

APPEALS TO GOD'S CHARACTER

2Ki 19:15 And Hezekiah prayed to the LORD: "O LORD, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.

2Ki 19:19 Now, O LORD our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all kingdoms on earth may know that you alone, O LORD, are God."

ACKNOWLEDGES GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

Ro 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died-- more than that, who was raised to life-- is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

JESUS PRAYS FOR YOU

Ro 8:26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

Ro 8:27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

HOLY SPIRIT PRAYS FOR AND WITH YOU

Mt 6:9 "This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

FATHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIP RECOGNITION

1Ki 8:59 And may these words of mine, which I have prayed before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God day and night, that he may uphold the cause of his servant and the cause of his people Israel according to each day's need,

1Ki 8:60 so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God and that there is no other.

MASTER-SERVANT

The reasons God does NOT answer prayers

Anger / wrath

1Ti 2:8 I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing.

Broken relationships – with brothers

Mt 5:23 "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, Mt 5:24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

Broken relationships – with spouse

1Pe 3:1 Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives,

Unbelief

Heb 3:12 See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.

Doubt

Heb 3:18 And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? {18 Or <disbelieved>}

Heb 3:19 So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

Hypocrisy

Mt 6:5 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

Idolatry

Eze 14:3 "Son of man, these men have set up idols in their hearts and put wicked stumbling blocks before their faces. Should I let them inquire of me at all?

Indifference to need

Pr 21:13 If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.

Unforgiveness

Mt 6:14 For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

Mt 6:15 But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Disobedience

1Jo 3:21 Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God

1Jo 3:22 and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.

Cherished sin

Ps 66:18 If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened;

Moral crookedness

Isa 59:1 Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear.

Isa 59:2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

Doubleminded

Jas 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

Jas 1:6 But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

Jas 1:7 That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord;

Jas 1:8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

Wrong motives

Jas 4:2 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.

Jas 4:3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.