



thanksgiving, let your **requests** be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6). Yes, our Father wants us to express our heart’s desires to Him. But we must be careful to search our hearts first, and to know that – ultimately – we want **His** will, not **ours**.

✿ Pray with **patience**. Sometimes the unspoken attitude of Christians is, “I want/need this, and I need it NOW.” Re-read Scripture and see again how exactly God times what He does in our lives. Abraham was promised a son. When his and Sarah’s patience was exhausted, the plan was made that resulted in the birth of Ishmael — interference that continues to bring enmity and war among Abraham’s descendants.

According to God’s timing, Isaac was born; according to God’s timing, the Israelites entered the Promised Land when the iniquity of the Amorites was complete. According to God’s timing, Christ was born — when the Greeks had unified the world with one language; when the Romans had brought relative peace to the Empire, connecting it with a well-established road system; when the ten Tribes of Israel had been dispersed throughout the world as the first recipients of the Gospel when persecution scattered the early Christians.

Even today, God answers prayers with precise timing. **Take note**, and your faith will

grow through the waiting and the realization of His total comprehension of your needs and of the exact time to respond.

✿ We are to pray **without anxiety**. As James warned, “...let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord...” (James 1:6,7). Have you ever noticed how often your prayers that are coupled with doubt are not answered? The “No” may come from your own lack of faith, rather than from God.

✿ We are to pray with **thanksgiving**. Surprisingly, this admonition is actually for *our* benefit, not simply a reminder to say “thank you” to God. Looking back at what He has *already done* will strengthen our faith in the good that He will bring to our lives in answer to our prayers.

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## What Does Prayer Accomplish?

**Betty Burton Choate**





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What is the promise? “... *I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it*” (John 14:13,14). What a bold statement! But does that mean that if I ask for a new house and a car, Jesus will just give them to me?

In order to properly understand Scripture, there must be harmony among the passages dealing with a particular subject. Notice this further promise concerning our petitions to God:

*“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him”* (1 John 5:14,15).

These verses promise that if the thing we are asking of God is *according to His will* — something that will be good for all who will be affected by the answering of the petition — then, not only will He do it, but a positive answer is of such certainty that, in effect, we already *have* the thing for which we asked!

James further explained in James 5:16, “... *The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*”

So prayer is probably the most powerful tool available to the faithful Christian, because we can petition God for His help with any need that is beyond our human ability to meet. What security!

But prayer is even more than the act of “asking”. Think about what actually takes place when we pray: I, as a child of God, am turning in love, in need, or in thanksgiving to my Father. But I don’t go alone. God’s Holy Spirit, within me, “*makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*” (Romans 8:26), as God grants us “... *to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man*” (Ephesians 3:16).

And **through Whom** do I pray? Whose name becomes my “open door” to the heart of God? My Brother, Jesus Christ, Who died that I might have my sins washed away, Who died that it might

be possible for me as a human to actually come into the presence of Almighty God — My Brother is my Mediator! So, in the act of prayer, God’s Spirit is helping this needy human in His petition to and through My Brother, Who turns as Mediator to My heavenly Father, so that I may be assured that ... whatever I ask the Father in His name, according to His will, will be done! The Elohim of the universe is listening and is involved when I pray!

It is a faith-building exercise to keep a log of special needs and petitions, not only of the *asking* but of the *answers* — or of the seeming *lack of answers*. In conjunction, an analysis of the effects of the prayer would be educational in growth in understanding *how God answers prayers* and *how providence works*.

Living a life of prayer requires important mind-sets:

- ✿ Pray with an attitude of **submission** of your will to God’s. Far too often, without realizing what we are doing, Christians so fervently desire a thing that our prayers are attempts to convince God that He should do what we want, an attempt to change God’s mind to fit our judgment of what would be best.

We are instructed: “*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with*

