

Your Father Expects You to Talk to Him

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently, I have been talking to my friends about our Heavenly Father's expectations for us—because He is a God of mercy.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread (Thursday, April 9) I gave a Bible study titled "What Are the Father's Expectations?" The purpose of the presentation was twofold.

- I wanted to remind friends that a God of grace has expectations for His children.
- I wanted to remind friends that the Bible contains many, many examples of the Father's expectations.

On the seventh day of Unleavened Bread (Wednesday, April 15) I gave a Bible study titled "The God of Grace Wants You to Talk to Him." The purpose of the presentation was twofold.

- The God of grace wants us to talk to Him about our needs.
- The God of grace wants us to talk to Him about the needs of other people.

Christ taught about prayer

Have you ever focused upon how the Son of God taught His disciples how to pray? Let's look at two parables in the book of Luke and notice how the instructions match my two points listed above.

- The parable in Luke 18:1-8 shows that we should be persistent in talking to God about our needs.
- The parable in Luke 11:5-8 shows that we should be persistent in talking to God about the needs of other people.

Our needs

It is my perspective that the best example about a person praying for his needs is the example of the Gethesame prayer by the Son of God.

Notice the description of tremendous stress and the openness in His words.

Matthew 26:37-39, 42—“And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, ‘My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.’ He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, ‘O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will’ . . . Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, ‘O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.’ ”

Needs of others

There are many good examples about people praying for the needs of other people. Notice a few.

- Genesis 18:23-33—Abraham negotiated with God.
- Exodus 32:10-14—Moses pleaded with God to reconsider God’s words. (Some people believe that this example shows that Moses had more self-discipline than God. I believe that God was angry but said words to Moses to see if Moses would react with pride or with love.)
- Luke 15:11-32—Although the example of the father in the prodigal son does not mention the father praying, I believe that the actions of the father reveal a heart that included prayer for both of his sons.

Notice the father’s reaction before his son spoke words to him.

Luke 15:20—“And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.”

It is true that the father brought out the best robe, the ring for the hand and the fatted calf for the son after the father heard the son’s apology and remorse (verses 21-24). But the loving father in the parable showed compassion before he saw the son’s remorse.

It is my perspective that this man prayed earnestly for his family. He probably prayed for his friends, coworkers and neighbors. I suspect that this man even prayed for his enemies.