

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Twenty-One

HOW TO CONTACT THE LORD - BY PRAYER WITH PETITIONS

Burden to Impart:

As God's dear children we have the privilege to pray in fellowship with Him and have our petitions heard and answered. We should practice praying firstly concerning God's interests, then concerning other's spiritual and practical needs, and finally concerning our own needs. God is our faithful and loving Father; He will hear us and we will rejoice as we see Him answer our prayers.

Memory Verse: "And this is the boldness which we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (1 John 5:14).

Facts to Teach:

1. We saw in the previous lesson that through prayer we may fellowship with God and that such fellowship should be from a completely open, unpretending, sincere heart and spirit.
2. Sometimes as we pray we realize that our conscience is bothering us, that we feel bad or wrong in our heart because of some sin we have done or some failure. Before we can continue on in our prayer of fellowship we need to openly and honestly confess our sin or shortcoming to the Lord. As we confess our sin He forgives us and cleanses us with His precious blood. Once is enough. If we confess our sins to Him we can trust His promise that He will cleanse us. We can then continue on peacefully in our prayers.
3. A second great privilege in prayer is to bring our requests and specific petitions to God. That is, we may ask of Him (Matt. 7:8). If we ask anything of Him according to His will, He hears us (1 John 5:15). God is especially pleased when we pray for His interests, name, kingdom, church, people, etc. (Matt. 6:9-10). He also desires us to pray for other's salvation, progress in the Christian life (1 Tim. 2:1-4), and welfare. These are very pure, unselfish prayers, which are God's delight and will.
4. Secondly, the Lord taught us to ask Him concerning our own "daily bread" and material needs (Matt. 6:11; 7:7-11). Since we are His children in life for His kingdom and glory, we have every right to make our needs known to Him, and as a loving Father He delights in taking care of all our needs.
5. Thirdly, we may bring all our anxieties and cares to the Lord, for He cares for us (1 Pet. 5:7; Phil. 4:6-7). He will hear us and take up our burdens. In exchange, He gives us His peace, comfort and reassurance. What a trade! His peace will guard our mind and thoughts from the devil's doubts, fears, anxieties, etc.
6. Lastly, when we pray with petitions we should not ask selfishly, just concerning our own pleasures, profit, etc. (James 4:3). Such prayers do not please God, nor will He answer them.

[See Hymns, #789]