

Prayer

READING

John 17
Exodus 32
Psalm 51
Ephesians 1
James 5:13-18

Here you are. Sitting talking with the creator of the entire universe. And you're bugging him about parking, and about the weather?

P rayer is simple. It's talking with God.
Not **to** God, **with** God.
When we pray we expect an answer. It's a conversation.

What should we pray for?
Well, anything I guess.

But I would qualify that a fair bit.

It depends on your maturity.
Kids could potentially ask their parents for anything.
They might ask when they're 5 years old if you will fund their college study. Or if you would explain salvation to them. Or why do countries go to war.
But usually 5 year olds just ask for "stuff". Can I have chocolate? Can I have a new bike? Can I leave the Brussel sprouts?

Teenagers start asking deeper things right?
Some of them still just want stuff. But most teenagers are starting to worry about bigger things, like sex, careers, suicide, drugs. Hopefully they'll ask you.

It's kind of the same with Christians praying I think.
A lot of immature Christians still just ask God for stuff. Trivial stuff.
Please get me a parking space.
Please keep me safe as I travel today.
Please don't let it rain for my birthday party.

Often this trivial stuff is self-centered, but some times it's not. Sometimes it's for other people. But really this kind of prayer shows your immaturity. It shows your lack of understanding of the power of the one you're praying with. Actually it shows that you're praying to, not praying with.

If you were given 30 minutes to speak with the monarch of England, or the President of the United States. What would you talk about? Parking? Weather?
I hope not.

But here you are. Sitting talking with the creator of the entire universe. And you're bugging him about parking. And about the weather? Really?

Of course just like a loving father with a toddler, he'll probably answer you.
But I think he'll also be hoping you start to grow up a bit.

Look at the prayers in the Bible. That's heavy stuff. Life and death stuff. Eternal life and death stuff.
Bible prayers don't seem too concerned about "stuff". It's kind of a given that God will make sure you get the stuff you need. Food, shelter, clothes... (Read Matthew 6). But that you will have your heart enlightened to really deeply understand Yeshua and all he has done for you? Not so much a given. That's something to pray for.

Removing demons. That's not an every day prayer.
For those imprisoned for speaking out about their faith. Not even so they will be freed, but more so they will speak boldly.

Can you see the difference here?

So many church prayers seem about our comfort. Our lifestyle.
Please help Mary so she doesn't feel sick. Please help James as he flies interstate today.
Sometimes church prayers feel like they're designed to remind Mary and James that we care about them. That's great. But that's not the purpose of prayer.

Acts 2 tells us the early church was devoted to prayer. Do you think their church prayers were like yours? Or different? Why?
What would it take to get your church to pray like theirs did?

Prayer is to bring glory to the only true god. It is to give him the opportunity to glorify himself by his answer. It declares to all those listening that we **trust** him to look after us with the big stuff.

Read Yeshua's prayer in John 17.
Moshe's prayer in Exodus 32.
David's prayer in Psalm 51.
Paulus' prayer in Ephesians 1.

James 5 reminds us that Eliyah (Elijah) was just like us, and he prayed that it wouldn't rain. And it didn't rain for 3 1/2 years!

Is that your prayer? Is it powerful like that? Is it earnest like that?
Or are you still praying like a little kid.

Pray bigger. Pray deeper.