

The Perplexity of Prayer

Luke 22:39-46

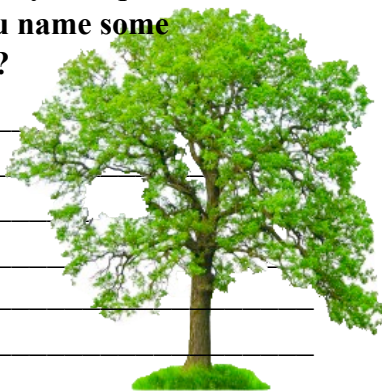
Probably the most frustrating aspect of prayer is dealing with unanswered prayer. We looked into the text of Luke 22:39-46 where Jesus prayed with His disciple just prior to His arrest and crucifixion. He asked the Father that if it were possible to let the cup of suffering pass from Him nevertheless He was in perfect subjection to the will of His Father.

Jesus struggled in emotion and will in what He already had known in theory. We are commanded to pray passionately about our life and ministry as well as for others. We are not coming to an ATM machine, just to withdraw some quick answers and go our way, but are interacting with a holy Person who answers before we call and who has a Personal will regarding our future as well as others and is guided by His holy character.

Since we "walk by faith, not by sight,"^{2 Cor 5:7} we will always struggle to know and ask in the will of God.

1. What difficulties do you have with unanswered prayer?

2. What are some examples of inappropriate prayer requests we might make without even realizing it? Can you name some inappropriate prayer requests you have made?



3. What are typically the motives behind your prayer requests? How does our living in an "instant" society affect our prayer lives?

4. Have you ever told someone you would pray for them and then felt guilty later because you forgot? What are some ways that you can protect yourself from doing that?

5. Read James 4:1-4. What is the problem that James is stating with regard to our prayer requests? Or... What is the reason God will not answer the request?

6. Read Luke 11:11-13. In the parable the father gives his children what is good for them, not what will harm them. Can you think of things which Christians ask for that are harmful and or sinful and God cannot or will not give them?

7. Why is it important to have a set time for prayer? What are some things that you can do in your schedule to assure that you have a segment of private time to pray?

