

Effective!

If there is such a thing as effective prayer, then there also must be defective prayer! Many people think they are praying but all they are engaged in is a religious form of complaining. God never looks at the form; He always looks at the heart. If we keep our heart open, if we keep our life open and exposed, actively moving forward in Jesus Christ, our prayers will change.

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”

Philippians 4:6 NKJV

Everything in life requires prayer and, everything in life requires some thanksgiving to be mixed with it. To live above anxiety will require a radically different kind of heart! A heart filled with faith and praise. Martin Luther declared, *“Praise makes our prayers bold, and strong, and sweet; it feeds and rekindles them as with coals of fire!”* Prayer creates that supernatural connection of heaven to earth. But here's the challenge:

“If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear.”

Psalms 66:18 NKJV

Do people ever say things to God which they really don't mean? Unfortunately, we do it all of the time and, most of the time, when we do such things, we aren't aware of what is going on inside our heart! If our heart is in that kind of place we really aren't praying! We may recite words; we may cry aloud; we might kneel or lay in His presence; but there is no genuine connection with God. We may say we receive Jesus as Lord, that we love Him, and yet show that we love the world and serve sin more. To have a true spirit of prayer we must be honest with God; we must keep back no sin; we must not preserve any hiding place for any idol; we must allow God to search our heart and try our ways. This is not a bad thing, this is a wonderful thing! If there is something harmful hidden in your life, don't you want it exposed? If anger is lodged within you, if pride has taken over, if you are distracted by the comforts and indulgences of life ... all of these kinds of things collect in our heart, and they will condemn us. But the Bible says, when your heart condemns you, God is still greater than your heart! Don't allow anything to prevent you! As we learn to come to Jesus, it is amazing how effective our praying becomes!

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