

LIVING, LEARNING, LISTENING

We have some good things in our world today that makes our lives better. One of those things is the computer. You know, a computer, just sitting on a desk and not being turned on is not impressive. If you think about it, most of the time the reason it is not turned on is because we do not understand how it works. There was a time when I did not understand about the computer so it spent most of the time turned off. Even today, I still find myself learning more about the ways of a computer every day. A thought.....perhaps a computer is much like our prayer life. Many times we just sit there with it turned off, because we don't understand about prayer.

Some people may say "What are you talking about Pastor, we don't understand prayer?" After all everyone prays. We go to Sunday School to learn to pray, read books on how to pray and there are some Seminaries that teaches us how to pray. All that is true, but my question is do we really understand the concept of prayer?

There are times when we ask God "Did you not hear my prayer?" Then we say to God, "I've been asking and You have done nothing." One thing we must know is the Bible tells us that God hears and knows all. Do you think it is possible that God has been answering our prayers, but we are not ready to receive His answer?

There are two things we have to do before we can receive God's answer. We can see that in a story found in Mark 9:22-24. The story tells us about a father and his son. The son is possessed by an evil spirit. Peter, James, and John went to the top of the mountain with Jesus to pray. While on the top of the mountain, Jesus' face was changed and His clothes had become as bright as a flash of lightening. The burdens of the earth had been replaced with the splendors of heaven. On the way back down from the mountain, they heard and saw something that had to break the heart of Jesus. Jesus saw a group of disciples and religious leaders, not praying but arguing. Never had the arena of prayer been so poor. The disciples had failed. The religious leaders were amused. The demons were victorious and in the middle of all this was a father who was desperate. The father had brought his son who was in need of a miracle to the disciples and they had failed. The father of the son shows us two things we have to know about prayer.

First, when you ask for a miracle, be sure to ask with humility. His prayer was humble, not boastful "but if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." The prayer was more meek than mighty. More like a crippled lamb coming to a shepherd than a proud lion roaring in the jungle. God rejects pride, but sends mercy to the humble. His prayer began with a yearning, an honest appeal. The prayer was not dynamic, but the answer was.

The second thing we have to do to receive God's answer is to conquer our "unbelief" and say with tears, Lord I believe; please help me with my unbelief. You have to believe that God is able. Believe that He can and will answer your prayers. How many times have you prayed, but still wondered if it could happen? We can't understand what God will do if we keep on wondering if He will answer our prayer. We have to know in our hearts that when we ask Him, He will do what is best for us. We have to learn how to praise Him for what He does for us. In order to do this we have to praise God first. We must believe He is able. We need to praise Him before the promise ever comes. We need to praise Him while the winds blow, while the rains come, and in the middle of the lightening. We will praise Him because He is bigger than any storm. He is greater than the enemy we will face. He will never leave us. When we praise Him with all our belief, it will get His attention.

God Bless You,
Brother Jimmy