

Hints on Prayer

by George Mueller

George Mueller emphasizes the importance of prayer and faith in our lives, encouraging us to roll our burdens on the Lord and wait patiently for His answers.

Scripture: Matthew 7:7

Topics: "The Power of Prayer", "Faith and Patience"

Description

George Mueller emphasizes the importance of prayer, encouraging believers to bring their burdens to God, who is intimately aware of their struggles. He highlights that prayer should be in accordance with God's will, in the name of Jesus, and with faith in God's willingness to respond. Mueller reminds the congregation that persistence in prayer is crucial, as answers may take time, and encourages them to wait patiently for God's timing. He shares personal experiences of waiting for answers to prayer, reinforcing the idea that God delights in blessing His children. Ultimately, Mueller presents prayer and faith as the universal remedy for life's difficulties.

Transcript

Mr. Muller prayed, and then spoke on Prayer from Matt. vii. 7, 8:-

I have it laid on my heart to throw out some hints with reference to prayer. The first thing that I would observe is this: our heavenly Father knows how we are situated. All the trials, difficulties, perplexing circumstances, and temptations to which we are exposed, He is intimately acquainted with; and for that very reason His word is full of promises, so that we should be encouraged to roll our burdens on Him. For it is not His will that we should carry them in our own strength; but that we should speak to Him about everything, walk with Him continually, and so roll all our burdens on Him that we may find ease and comfort in our trials and difficulties. And it is because we do not make a good use of the help of our God that we find things so trying in this world. Were we habitually to roll our burdens on the Lord, our position would be a hundred times better than it is.

Are you in the habit of rolling all your burdens on the Lord? As trials come, do you bring them back to your heavenly Father? This is the reason why He lays them on you. And if you make the attempt to carry them in your own strength you will oblige your heavenly Father to increase the trial and burden, so that by the very weight you may be at last forced to come to Him, and leave all with Him.

Then again, our precious Lord Jesus Christ has passed through this vale of tears, and "was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." All His temptations were from without, none from within, because He was the spotless One. Nevertheless Christ was abundantly tried, difficulties befalling Him without number or measure. And He knew how it would fare with us who would be left in this world, and thus His love led Him to make this provision for us, that by prayer we should bring the burden back to Him.

Now let me affectionately ask you, my beloved brethren and sisters, Do you take the advice of our precious Lord Jesus Christ? And do you believe what He says when He speaks, as in these verses, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." He means us to understand literally what these words convey. "For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

But wide, and broad, and deep though these promises be, they must be taken in connection with other portions of Scripture. We must compare Scripture with Scripture, because again and again we find that one part supplies what is wanting in another.

(1) Let us commence with 1 John v. 13-15. Here is the first condition to be attended to. If we desire our petitions to be answered, we have to ask God for the things which are according to His will. And should we be little acquainted with the will of God about any matter, we must first ask Him to teach and instruct us. We may also ask the help of our brethren. But this point must be attended to, that we ask for things according to the will of God; for He loves us with an infinitely wise love, and not like foolish parents who give their children all they ask for. He desires true happiness and blessing for His children, and therefore only gives what would be for their blessing and profit to receive.

(2) But while this is one condition, it is not the only one. The Lord Jesus said we should ask in His name if we wish our petitions granted. (John xiv. 13, 14.)

Beloved elder brethren here all know what it means to ask in the name of the Lord Jesus, but, for the sake of young believers present, I will say that it means this—we have to ask in union with Christ, as members of the body of which He is the Head. We stand before God in His righteousness; we are justified by faith in His name, and therefore we come before God as those who are one with Christ. We - so to speak - put Christ forward, and ourselves we put in the background. We are in ourselves entirely unworthy of receiving one blessing from the hand of God. Ask God to show you that all you deserve is hell and eternal torment. Nothing else do we deserve; and therefore all we receive (out of hell) must come in the name of Christ. And this is very precious, that we are not only permitted, but commanded, to come in the name of Christ. I have been made clean by the power of the blood of Christ. I myself deserve nothing but punishment; but the Lord Jesus Christ is worthy to receive the choicest blessings which God has to give. Therefore, if I put myself in the background, and put Christ forward, and in His name ask the choicest of God's blessings, they are granted to me. Do we habitually plead the worthiness of Christ when we come before God with our petitions?

(3) But these are not the only conditions that we need to remember in order that our petitions may be granted. There is another point, and that is, that we exercise faith in the power of God and in His willingness to hear us. (Mark xi. 24.) We must be looking out for the answer. There are few children of God who doubt His ability to give, but many doubt His willingness, forgetting that large word of the apostle "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" It was in the way of grace that He gave His Son for me; so is He, in the way of grace, willing to

give me with Him, everything that will be for my good. What more can we have than this?

(4) Now suppose those three things are found in us with regard to prayer, there is another in Ps. lxxvi. 18, which is an important one, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

(5) Then, if we habitually walk in the fear of God, and we do not allow anything in us contrary to His holy will, there remains one thing more-that we continue to wait on God till the answer comes. Here we frequently break down. We begin well, but we do not go on. If month after month, and year after year, we have been praying, and if our petitions have not been granted, the thought comes, Will God answer? Many break down because the petition is not granted so quickly as they expected. Parents pray for their children. They begin to do so; but we should never forget that we have to continue, day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year, until the answer comes. For God knows the best time for us, and He will in His own time give us our requests. It may be for the trial of our faith, or of our patience, or to see if we are in earnest, that He waits. For these and other reasons the petitions may not be answered so quickly as we desire.

Young evangelists ask God for the conversion of many souls. They go on praying and preaching, but do not get the answers. It may be that they are not prepared for the blessing. If their petitions were granted, it might be an injury to their souls. Therefore He waits till they are prepared to receive the blessing. So with Sunday-school teachers. They ask God for good things for their children, yet do not receive the answer. Now let us go on, and patiently, quietly wait on the Lord. The blessing most assuredly will come.

Now are we all in the habit of thus going on patiently, perseveringly, month after month, and year after year, waiting on God? Then let us set out afresh with renewed earnestness and faith. To all our petitions, if they have been according to the will of God, and in the name of the Lord Jesus, and with faith in the willingness of God to give what we have asked, the answers must come. I have myself had to wait for a long time to get certain blessings. In many instances the answer has come instantaneously, or in the same hour, or the same day; yet in other things I have had to wait years-ten years, fifteen years, twenty years, and upwards-yet invariably at the last the answer has come. And I say it to encourage my brethren and sisters in Christ, Go on waiting, waiting, waiting. Begin afresh to bring your petitions before God. He will hear you. For one thing I have been praying for thirty-nine years and nine months, and the answer has not yet come. Last evening I prayed for it, and the evening before last I prayed again. When travelling in India and in America, year after year I have been praying, and I am sure that in the end the answer will come. I have received tens of thousands of answers to prayer; but in this particular I have to wait. Many of you remember our departed brother R--. For his parents I prayed that they might be converted. At last the answer came, when the father was between eighty and ninety years old. This very individual had cast off his son entirely; for years he did not allow him to come into his presence. At last he sent for him, and then would scarcely allow him to go out of his sight; yet for twenty years I had to pray for his conversion. So with the mother. She had lived a very moral life outwardly, very pharisaically; but at last she saw that nothing but Christ would do for her, and she was saved.

Therefore, beloved younger brethren and sisters, begin afresh with greater earnestness than ever, and you will receive the answers at the last. The Lord delights to bless His children, to give them everything that is for their blessing and comfort; and especially does He delight to bless parents in praying for their children. But if we have set them a bad example, and have let them go on in a self-willed course, then the first thing is to make honest confession of our sin and to own that we deserve all that may have come upon us; and let us humble ourselves in the dust before God, yet pleading the merits of Jesus, and we

shall find that God is ever ready in His pity and compassion to forgive us. Then with renewed earnestness let us begin to pray.

My universal remedy for every difficulty, for every trial, is prayer and faith. And in this way for fifty-five years I have been going on. For three and a half years after my conversion I did not do so, but for fifty-five years I have been walking in this way, and I desire on this very ground to encourage my beloved brethren and sisters in Christ who have not tried this universal remedy, and they will find, as I have, that it suits every difficulty and trial.

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