

Biblical Prayer: 2nd Person-Oriented Relationship with God

Rejoice always,
Pray without ceasing,
In everything *Give Thanks*;
For this is the will of
God in Christ Jesus
for you.
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Biblical prayer is entrance into a second-person living relationship with God. Prayer instantly takes us from, for example, from 1st person orientation of "me and my experiences of knowing God is faithful" or 3rd person orientation "God/He, is faithful" to a conscious 2nd person relationship: "You are faithful."

There is a radical difference between saying to myself "He is faithful" (3rd person) and being in the presence of God, "You are faithful" (2nd person).

The same holds true when we talk to another person. We can sit across the table from another person with 1st person orientation (e.g., "I can't wait to talk"), 3rd person orientation ("why doesn't he let me talk"), or 2nd person connection that involves a mutual sharing of thoughts and affections—a true fellowship. In all three cases, the person could be sitting across the table in a face-to-face relationship, but only in 2nd person is there real fellowship, a sharing of life. In 1st person, my thoughts are all about me. In 3rd person, my thoughts are about him, but somewhat detached. Can you imagine talking to a person and using "he" to refer to that person as he sits across the table—treating the person as if he was not even present, like you are talking about him instead of to him?

A prayer life with God is a 2nd person living relationship, which far exceeds some dutiful talking to God in 1st or 3rd person orientation about a list of things we want Him to do.

In 2nd person orientation, we pray without ceasing and with alacrity because we are sharing in His life. This not only enables us to truly live in fellowship with Him in the most powerful manner. It changes us. Not only does it fill our lives with consciousness of His presence, we become very interested in God, His ways, His doings, His words. Moreover, we find ourselves agreeing with Him about a great many things we were tempted not to agree about before.

Given the nature of 2nd person life with God, it is no wonder that such prayer is "always" and include a life of "thanksgiving," and "is the will of God."

Only such a prayer life enables one to "rejoice always." There is always rejoicing in the conscious presence of God.

In His Matchless Grace,

Pastor Don