

# RUNNING A REALITY CHECK ON OUR PRAYERS

Matthew 26:40-41

**Introduction:** We see in our Lord Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. He has taken His disciples to the Garden to pray. He invites them to share in His hour before His arrest. His words are reality to us. ***"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*** We all want to pray like the Lord wants us to do. But our flesh is weak and does not want to be powerful. It is not an excuse but it is reality.

Is this the time for us to examine your prayer life as a measure of your soul's maturity and growth? Are you still praying the same prayers you prayed years ago? Are you going through the motions of "nice" prayers and forgetting to pray about the heart of the matter? Are you seeking to change your own soul as you pray for others?

It is time to strip away the personal self-interests in your soul. It is time for us to stop our requesting for the Lord and expecting answers to come according to your ideas of what is best. It is time to stop giving God special instructions on how the prayers should be answered. It is time to pray that God's will be done.

Let's examine our prayers by asking yourself some important questions.

## 1. HOW ARE YOU PRAYING FOR THOSE WHO HAVE USED AND ABUSED YOU?

Are you praying so purely for them that you can ask God to bless them right now with a double portion of everything you're still waiting to have?

## 2. HOW ARE YOU PRAYING FOR YOUR STRAYING CHILDREN AND FAMILY MEMBERS?

Are you praying for God to use you in any way He wants, no matter what the cost to you, in order to bring them back to Himself? When I read this, my mind goes to the story of the Prodigal Son. In many ways I feel this parable in regards to my oldest son. I have asked the Lord to make my heart as pure as the father in the parable. My wife and I are not the only ones who have gone through this. I challenge us to pray for our children. In fact, I will preach on this subject very soon to help us in this area of life.

## 3. How are you praying for that spiteful, back-stabbing person you on the job site?

Are you asking God to show His blessings, goodness, and grace upon him or her through your every word and deed in spite of his or her united efforts to harass you? One of the benefits you have with a pastor who works a public job is that I understand the problems you face on your job. I have faced some of the same problems you have. It is not easy to pray for those people but we should do so by the example of our Lord Jesus who did just that.

Luke 23:34

***"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots."***

## 4. HOW ARE YOU PRAYING FOR YOUR MARRIAGE?

Are you praying daily for your spouse that he or she may know God more deeply? Are you asking for guidance and strength to make you a nicer person to live with, less critical, and more loving? This is a tall order but the Lord can change us in ways that we would not believe could happen.

## 5. HOW ARE YOU PRAYING FOR YOUR MONEY?

Are you asking God to direct your spending, or hiding from Him what you spend?

Hebrews 4:13

***"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."***

Are you tithing or beyond? What is a tithe? It is ten percent of all of your income.

Tithing is spiritual.

Malachi 3:8-10

***"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." "Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."***

Tithing is fair. You are not required to give more. But if you are giving less, then this is a good time to ask the Lord to forgive you and give as you know you should. Are you trusting God to provide for your needs? Then do what is right.

**Conclusion:** You and I should take this time to do the reality check on our prayer list. Today is the day we should do what we know is right.