

Ps 4.1—The Saints' Refuge

Three reasons why saints pray to God

- I. We pray to God because it's our duty, 1Thes 5.17; Eph 6.18; Isa 55.6. But *why* has God commanded that we pray to Him?
 - A. He would have us acknowledge His propriety over us.
 - B. He would have us acknowledge our dependance upon Him.
 - C. He would have us approach Him by His appointed Mediator, Jesus Christ.
 - D. He would have us call on Him by His Spirit, the spirit of supplication.
- II. We pray to God because it's our privilege, Heb 4.15-16.
 - A. The way is open (Heb 10.19-22) and Christ has given us access. Therefore we're not only commanded, but invited to come to a reconciled God.
 - B. It's our duty because we're His people in Christ and it's our privilege because He's our God through Christ.
 - C. What a great privilege prayer is!
- III. We pray to God because He's our refuge.
 - A. Andrew Gray: "prayer is the sweet traveling and trafficking of the soul betwixt its emptiness and God's fullness, between our inability to help ourselves and God's ability to help us. It's the one deep in want calling to the One deep in supply."
 - B. God is an all-sufficient Refuge and prayer is the key by which we access His all-sufficiency.
- IV. Do you pray?
 - A. Think of all the blessings that come to those who pray and how ready God is to give you what you need.
 - B. What if prayer were taken from you; would you miss it?

Three reasons why God answers our prayers

- I. Because He's promised to answer us, Mt 7.7; 1Jn 5.14-15; Isa 58.9; 65.24.
- II. Because He delights in our prayers, Prov 15.8.
 - A. He delights in us for Christ's sake and therefore He also delights in our prayers for Christ's sake.
 - B. He delights in our prayers because it is His own work in us.
 - C. He delights therefore to answer our prayers, Lk 12.32; 11.13.

- III. Because His glory is bound up with our prayers, Ezk 20.44; Jer 14.7.
 - A. By answering our prayers, God gets the glory of His faithfulness, His truth, His justice, and His grace.
 - B. What great encouragements these are to pray!

Three arguments which we plead in prayer

- I. God is our righteousness, Jer 23.6 (cp. Ps 129.4; 145.17).
 - A. It is God who justifies the ungodly by faith, 1Cor 1.30; 2Cor 5.21; Phil 3.8-9.
 - B. What a powerful argument this is! To be found acceptable in His sight, pleasing to His heart, and have our prayers pleasing to Him, all for the sake of Jesus Christ our Righteousness.
 - C. What if God heard us according to our own righteousness? The door of prayer would be forever shut to us!
- II. God has answered us before.
 - A. If God has ever been disposed toward a sinner, then He is so always, Mal 3.6.
 - B. This is therefore a strong argument in prayer, to know that we approach a God who's predisposed toward us, Jer 31.3.
- III. God is in covenant with us, Gen 17.7. This necessarily undergirds the previous two arguments.
 - A. We pray to a God who's not only all-sufficient, but pre-committed to meet our needs for Christ's sake.
 - B. We pray to a God who took the initiative with us and whose hand is already extended. How easy does this make prayer!

The ground upon which God hears our prayers

- I. God hears our prayers solely because of His grace and mercy towards us.
 - A. We tend to think we somehow "earn" the answers to our prayers by praying "well" or doing "well". But let us be reminded that God answers us for no other reason than His grace toward us in Jesus Christ. His is a throne of grace and He Himself has made it so.
 - B. We have no hope but for the doctrine of divine mercy!
- II. Thank God for prayer. Use it fervently; use it frequently; and expect everything to come to you by it, for Christ's sake.