

Keysis Outline

11/8/06

BATTLE OF PRAYER (Rom 8:26) Gift of grace + a determined response = prayer

Readings: Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) paragraphs 2725- 2745
Jn 12:24; Jn 15:5; Mt 26:41; 1 Thes 5:17

BATTLE OF PRAYER

Which Master do we serve?

Prayer is a battle against ourselves and the Evil One. (If we do not want to act habitually according to the Spirit of Christ, neither can we pray habitually in his name)

We pray as we live, because we live as we pray.

PRAYER OBSTACLES

1. Erroneous Notions of Prayer. Prayer is NOT a simple psychological activity, an act of concentration to reach a mental void, it cannot be reduced to ritual words and postures, it is not incompatible with other things you have to do, it is not from you alone but from the Holy Spirit as well.

2. Worldly Mentalities. Prayer goes beyond reason and science, prayer will not bring about production, profit, comfort, or sensuality of this world, prayer is not an escape from activism. **If I don't feel anything. It's pointless. It's a waste of time. Where's the proof this is doing any good? Some of the Saints levitated when they prayed, but they didn't pray to levitate.**

3. Experiencing Failure in Prayer. Discouragement, sadness because we have not given all to the Lord, disappointment, wounded pride as sinners, resistance to the idea that prayer is a free and unmerited gift, etc.

4. Difficulties of Prayer.

- Distractions: reveal to us what we are attached to.
- Dryness—**Jn 12:24** If we can keep our faith through the dryness, then we become new creations, stronger Christians. This dryness was experienced by most of the saints.
 - a. If dryness is do to the lack of roots, then conversion is required (**Lk 8:6, 13**)
- lack of faith **Jn 15:5**
 - a. We think we are in control or that God can't handle it
 - b. We forget that God is the Master
- acedia (or sloth, sin of laziness) **Mt 26:41** **"The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak"**
 - a. a form of depression when you are lax in your prayer life

WINNING THE BATTLE

1. **Humility.** Realize that “we do not know how to pray as we ought.” This will lead to *trust*.
2. **Trust (Filial).**
 - When we praise God or give him thanks, we are not particularly concerned with whether or not our prayer is acceptable to him. On the other hand, we demand to see the results of our petitions.
 - Are we asking God what is good for us? **Mt 6:8**
 - “If prayer is resolutely united with that of Jesus, in trust and boldness as children, we obtain all that we ask in his name...” CCC 2741
 - The deeper we immerse ourselves in prayer, the more we can see that God constantly answers our prayers. This builds trust, which will lead to *perseverance*.
3. **Perseverance.** We are told to “pray without ceasing.” 1 Thess 5:17 When we persevere in love, we learn that
 - a. It is always possible to pray.
 - b. Prayer is a vital necessity
 - c. Prayer and Christian Life are inseparable
4. **Good habits.** Sacrament of Reconciliation and Eucharist, regular prayer, fasting, almsgiving, self-mastery