

St James News: Thought for the day – Friday 26th June 2020

What is prayer? - By Revd Funke Ogbede

Hymn 531 in the Redemption Hymnal sums it up like this:-

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed!
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer, the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air:
His watchword at the gates of death,
He enters heaven with prayer.

The saints in prayer appear as one,
In word, and deed, and mind;
While with the Father and the Son,
Sweet fellowship they find.

O Thou by Whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way!
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod,
Lord, teach us how to pray!

- (Hymn written by Jas. Montgomery)

The disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray and He taught them to say - Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come --- and so forth. (Luke chapter 11: 1-13 and Matthew chapter 6:15)

Prayer is the most personal way to experience God's love, to encounter Him and grow in the knowledge and confidence in Him. An effective prayer comes from the heart. Therefore, with a humble and open heart, let us be true to ourselves and approach our heavenly Father in faith, hope and love. God knows all our needs, knows us more than we know ourselves and will meet us at the point of every need.

In Ephesians 6:18 - God's desire is for us to pray on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. In Luke 18:1, Jesus told His disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

The promise and encouragement of Luke 11 verse 13 is also to us: 'ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you'. As we ask, seek and knock, may we know the gift of God's love, through the Holy Spirit, in our life today and always in Jesus name.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you because you know us more than we know ourselves, you know what is good for us and what we truly need. As we call on you in these changing times, hear us in heaven and help us to feel your presence; let your Spirit constantly move within us and fill our heart with your great love; lead us not into temptation but deliver us from all that is evil through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen