

Why God Likes Your Prayers

The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend. –Exodus 33:11

Evangelist J. John told me about a trip he made to India a few years ago. Shortly after he arrived, he heard about a saintly lady called Sister Theresa (not Mother Teresa) and that she had a powerful gift of the word of knowledge. J. John was able to meet her, and he said to her, “If you have a word for me, I would be so grateful.”

He said that she turned around and left. He feared he had offended her. But she came back to him an hour or so later with a list of thirteen items (some of which almost bowled him over they were so accurate), ending with these words, which he will never forget: “God likes your company and asks that you give Him two hours of your time every day.

That’s all. Good-bye.” Wow!

J. John took her seriously, and I can tell you—he has told me more than once—he was never to be the same again. I personally think it explains, at least in part, why J. John is one of the greatest evangelists today, not just in Britain but also throughout the world.

What does prayer do for God? For one thing, He likes your company.

I cannot imagine a greater motivation to pray than that God enjoys having me in His presence. He enjoys my company. He delights in listening to me! He doesn’t get bored with my repeated requests. He doesn’t moralize me if I get it wrong in what I ask for. He doesn’t laugh at me if I put out silly, even impertinent, requests. He never makes me feel stupid. There is no rejection, only total acceptance.

It doesn't get better than that. Said David: How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you. –Psalm 139:17–18

When God speaks to us face-to-face, as He did with Moses, it is impossible to say who enjoys it most—God or us. I am moved to know that God spoke to Moses face-to-face, “as a man speaks with his friend” (Exod. 33:11).

God loved Moses's company. He loved Abraham's company, also calling him His friend (Isa. 41:8; James 2:23). What a compliment to the disciples that Jesus would say, “I have called you friends” (John 15:15). Friendship is developed by spending time with another person.

The thought that God likes my company thrills me more than I can explain to you. And if He likes my company, He likes yours too—He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34; 1 Pet. 1:17). The same blood that purchased Peter's and Paul's salvation bought yours and mine. Moreover, it is that blood that gives all of us equal access into God's presence (Heb. 10:19). Therefore, I can put out of my mind the thought that some people are more acceptable to God than others. One's profile in the church has nothing to do with being accepted by Him—or loved . . . or enjoyed. We are all on level ground. No one is at the head of the line just because he or she has a higher profile in the church, has been a Christian a longer time, has been on a forty-day fast, or has fame in the world. Being a head of state gives you no leverage.

As St. Augustine put it, “God loves every person as if there were no one else to love.”

I hate the thought of being a bore. I hate wasting people's time. I can sometimes tell by the look on their face if they are not happy to see me. I fear rejection. And if I'm not careful, I can carry this fear of rejection right into the

presence of God, assuming I am boring Him too. Why should God care about me? Why should He listen to what I have to say?

And why would He like my company? It is such a dazzling thought, that the same God who has countless billions of angels worshiping Him sixty seconds a minute, day and night, to whom the nations are but a drop in the bucket, and who knows all about every leaf on every tree in the world, also welcomes my company—because I am very important to Him.

Indeed, I can think of no more amazing thought than this: “God loves me as much as He loves Jesus.” That’s right! You and I are coheirs with Jesus (Rom. 8:17). Jesus even prayed that we would grasp the fact that the Father loves us just as much as He loves Jesus (John 17:26).

If there is anything that will make us blush in heaven, it will be the realization of how much we were loved on this earth—but didn’t appreciate it.

And if we knew how much God welcomes us when we turn to Him, we would almost certainly pray more than we do. God likes our company.

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