

Relentless

Day 13



Today's Passage

⁷Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹Lament and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy into dejection. ¹⁰Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

James 4:7-10 NRSV

Today's Thought

One of the purposes of prayer is to know God, as creator, Lord of the universe, and intimate friend. The believer can accumulate a lot of knowledge about God and his attributes through the study of the Bible. It can provide instruction about sin, heaven, hell, and how to live in a righteous manner on the earth. However, the believer cannot develop an intimate relationship with God by only reading the Bible - even though it is the greatest and most important book in the entire world. Acquiring information about God and knowing God is two different things.

God wants to reveal himself to the believer and develop an intimate relationship with him. A friendship that allows the believer to share with God his joys, sorrows, needs, and secret desires. God created prayer as a way for him to fellowship with his children. God is not lonely, but he wants a relationship with people, if they will let him. Obtaining physical needs or material possessions from God is only a small part of prayer. One of the greatest wonders revealed in the Bible is that the believer has been granted the ability to communicate with the creator of the universe, and have a relationship with him. Yet, to know God requires a lot of time. The believer cannot have a quality prayer life without quantity time in prayer. *"Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you"* (Jam. 4:7). The believer should not merely "fit" God into his busy schedule. God desires pre-eminence and priority in the believer's life. God is a jealous God and not willing to be second priority. It appears that God has reserved his manifest presence for those who truly desire to know him.

To know God requires two way communication. The believer must learn how to communicate with God. Prayer can be defined as talking with God. The believer should be daily repenting of his sins, praising God, bringing petitions (praying for personal needs and wants), and making intercessions (praying for others). God also wants to communicate with his children. The believer must learn how to hear the voice of God. Many do not understand how God communicates with them. The believer should not necessarily expect to hear an audible voice or words spoken in his mind, or he may be lead astray in all sorts of foolish behaviour. But he can expect that God will speak to his heart on various issues. This requires the believer to quiet his heart before God and not allow his mind to be cluttered with the daily concerns of this life. Prayer over time will teach the believer to know the difference when it is God, Satan, or his own human thoughts and vain imaginations communicating with him.