

sus – (John 14:13-14). Jesus emphasized to His apostles that whatever they asked “In My name He would do it.” Jesus is our mediator – Ephesians 2:18 says, “For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.” Hebrews 4:25 speaks of Jesus as our High Priest who goes to God on our behalf. Hebrews 7:25 also says, “Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”

b. And since He bids me seek His face, believe His word and trust His grace. In this expression I am reminded of our need to believe as we petition Him. James 1:5-8 speaks of our prayers being asked in faith. To His disciples Jesus said, “Assuredly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea’, it will be done. And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive” (Matthew 21:22) – NOTE: The context is addressing specifically miracles in the first century, but the fact of belief is still as true. We will NOT receive anything without that belief. 1 Timothy 2:8, “I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without anger and doubt.”

c. I’ll cast on Him my every care, and wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer. 1 Peter 5:7 says, “Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.” Philippians 4:6 says, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.” ALSO, do not forget to WAIT! Remember that God doesn’t work on OUR time schedule – Luke 18:7-8

3. It Describes the Hope of Prayer—Vs. 3

a. May I thy consolation share. Prayer offered properly should give comfort to us. Philippians 4:7 says, “Pray and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

b. Till from Mt. Pisgah’s lofty height, I view my home and take my flight. What is Mt. Pisgah? Deuter-

onomy 34:1 records that “Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is across from Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land...” This is where Moses would die and his bones be hidden from Satan. Remember that Moses was forbidden from entering Canaan because of his sin. But the Lord let him see the Promised Land before He took him. The POINT of the song – we pray to God IN HEAVEN knowing that ONE DAY we will be there with Him. Everything we do as Christians in this life is with the hopes of heaven.

c. This robe of flesh I’ll drop, and rise to seize the everlasting prize. Another observation I consider in this verse: How long do we need to pray? AS long as we live on this earth. God said via Paul that we are to, “pray without ceasing” 1 Thessalonians 5:17. NEVER let us quit praying while on this earth. You need to keep praying as long as there is breath within you. PRAY with HOPE – because one day we shall all be changed 1 Corinthians 15:50-55.

The last phrase of vs. 3 describes our hope finally realized.

And shout while passing through the air, ‘Farewell, fare well, sweet hour of prayer.’ We look forward to that day when we will no longer cherish the sweetness of our prayers BECAUSE faith will become sight.

In place of prayer we will meet our Saviour and Creator face to face. What a blessed day that will be. This grand old Hymn truly is a song of comfort and hope. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

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So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. - John 8:36

Sweet Hour Of Prayer





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SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER

We need to ensure that what we sing is “with the Spirit and with the understanding” (1Corinthians 14:15). In this study, we will consider a song that reminds us to pray. The title, “Sweet Hour Of Prayer” reminds us of a time, when we come together to pray. While we do not devote a specific service to prayer, there are places that do so. And as I examine scripture I do not believe it would be wrong to do so.

We know that we are encouraged to pray and how much we are to pray is not specified (1Thessalonians 5:17, 1Corinthians 14:15, Colossians 4:2, Ephesians 6:18, etc.). We know that when early church came together they did pray, as we read in Acts 2:42, 12:5 – “*but constant prayer was offered to God for Peter by the church*”, and 2Corinthians 1:11, says, “*you also helping together in prayer for us*”, etc.).

We also know that as Individuals we need to pray often (Matthew 6:6-7; Luke 6:12 – Jesus continued all night in prayer; James 5:13, etc.). It is a key to proper spiritual growth. Therefore, it could be something we need to consider.

Regardless, when we go to God in prayer, it ought to be a sweet time. Why? The song “**Sweet Hour Of Prayer**” gives some reasons. This is an old song dating to the mid 1800s (around 1842). There is some dispute about who the author was. It is believed to be a man names William W. Wallford who in England gave the poem to Thomas Salmon, a Congregational minister, who brought it to the United States where it was published in 1845. It was put to music by William Batchelder Bradbury and published with music in 1861.

‘Sweet Hour of Prayer’

Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father’s throne
Make all my wants and wishes known.
In seasons of distress and grief,
My soul has often found relief
And oft escaped the tempter’s snare
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!
Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!

Thy wings shall my petition bear
To Him whose truth and faithfulness
Engage the waiting soul to bless.
And since He bids me seek His face,
Believe His Word and trust His grace,
I’ll cast on Him my every care,
And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!

Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
May I thy consolation share,
Till, from Mount Pisgah’s lofty height,
I view my home and take my flight:
This robe of flesh I’ll drop and rise
To seize the everlasting prize;
And shout, while passing through the air,
“Farewell, farewell, sweet hour of prayer!”

I. It is a Call to take time to Pray - Vs. 1

a. That calls me from a world of care – truly we live in a busy world. We have to find time to prioritize our activities. Ultimately, for most of us we can’t do everything we want to do in a day – so we eliminate some things. Is one of the things we eliminate time to pray? If so, we are foolish.

I think of the many great examples of prayer in the Bible. Daniel prayed 3 times a day (Dan. 6:10), Jesus prayed so often (cf. Luke records His continued prayers and teaching on prayer). Paul prayed often – in nearly every epistle he wrote he spoke of prayer and emphasized its importance. NOW, I ask, WERE THEY BUSY? We know they were! But they MADE TIME to pray!

Taking time to pray is NOT something we can afford to give up. It is when the cares of this world are pressing us the most that we MUST go to God in prayer.

b. And bids me at my Father’s throne – Let us continually realize that our prayers are directed to God, our heavenly Father. Cf. Matt. 6:9, 1 Peter 1:17, “*And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear,*”

c. Make all my wants and wishes known – We can go to God in prayer with ANYTHING! Of course this MUST be

according to His will (cf. James 4:2-3). 1 John 5:14-15 says, “*Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.*”

d. In seasons of distress and grief, my soul has often found relief – James 5:13 says, “*Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray...*” An example of this would be Paul as he prayed for God to remove his thorn in the flesh (2Corinthians 12:7-10). While God did not remove the thorn, he gave him grace to deal with it. That is all Paul wanted. Consider ALSO Jesus in the garden as He prayed that “this cup” could pass. It was followed by submission (Luke 22:41-46). In the midst of Jesus requests, Luke records that an angel appeared to strengthen Him. NOW, we will not receive miraculous strength with our troubles, but Jesus can still calm us and help us face whatever adversities come our way.

e. And oft escaped the tempter’s snare, by thy return, sweet hour of prayer. Going back to the Garden in Luke 22:46. When Jesus found His disciples asleep he told them, “Why do you sleep? **Rise and pray**, lest you enter into temptation.” In His model prayer in Matthew 6:13 He said we should pray, “*And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one...*” When we are tempted WE NEED TO PRAY! I can assure you that if you pray regularly and when you face temptations, it becomes easier to resist!

2. Our Prayers ascend to Heaven –Vs. 2

a. Thy wings shall my petition bear. To Him whose truth and faithfulness engage the waiting soul to bless. Where do our prayers go? Scripturally prayers are offered to God through Jesus.

Again we note Matthew 6:9 as it is addressed to God. BUT note that our prayers are offered THROUGH Je-