



A PRIVATE LINE

We all use our phones for a lot of reasons. We use them to visit with family and friends, to call for information or help, to share some exciting news, to inquire about something or someone, to pass the day a little more quickly when we are alone, to order something we need, to set up appointments, or to hear some words of encouragement from someone special when we are having a “bad” day.

In using our phone, we also run into some problems - a wrong number, a busy signal, an answering machine that we don’t want to talk to, a phone that just doesn’t work for some reason, someone else on our phone, or being put on hold by someone. Each of these causes us to get a little upset, or even quite upset, depending on the need for the call we want to make.

Wouldn’t it be nice if we had a private phone line that would work perfectly every time? A phone that we could take everywhere and use anywhere, a phone with no more wrong numbers, no more busy signals, no more answering machines, no more having no one answer the phone, no more being put on hold, no more high phone bills, no more static on the line, and no more being transferred back and forth.

Each of us has our own private line to the Greatest Listener of all times. This private phone line can go anywhere and work everywhere. We will NEVER get a busy signal; NEVER the wrong number; NEVER an answering machine; NEVER a transfer; NEVER any static. We will ALWAYS get the right number; ALWAYS get an answer; and ALWAYS find someone with time to listen. By now, I’m sure that you have figured out that this amazing phone line is PRAYER. PRAYER is simply talking to God.

Most of us began praying before we could talk; we’d follow the example of our parents or grandparents and fold our hands and bow our heads as they said their prayers. As we got older, we learned our own special prayers; some of which we still say today, I’m sure.

Let’s take a little time and share some thoughts on this very special part of each of our lives.

First of all, **WHY** pray?

Matthew 7:7-8 _____

Matthew 11:28 _____

John 14:13 _____

WHEN should we pray?

1 Thessalonians 5:17 _____

Psalms 50:15 _____

Psalm 55:16-17 _____

WHERE should we pray?

Matthew 6:6 _____

1 Timothy 2:8 _____

Psalm 26:12 _____

HOW should we pray?

Luke 11:1-4 _____

Romans 8:26 _____

Matthew 21:22 _____

As in everything He did, Jesus gave us many examples of prayer. On many occasions, in many places, Jesus prayed. Let's look at some of these to better help us see the many aspects of prayer.

John 11:38-42 _____

Luke 24:28-30 _____

Mark 14:32 _____

Matthew 21:12-13a _____

Matthew 14:23 _____

Matthew 27:46 _____

Our whole look at prayer can be wonderfully summarized in Ephesians 6:18. In this one verse, we can see the who, what, when, where and why of prayer. And like the little "calling" card reminds us, our prayers are all toll free. **JESUS HAS PAID THE BILL IN FULL FOREVER!** We have our satisfaction guaranteed: Mark 11:24; Matthew 21:22; and John 16:23b. What more could we need?

We began looking at our daily use of the telephone, and hopefully, the time we've shared will have given us all a little better look at our daily use of prayer. Let us close this study with a favorite hymn, *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*. (LW 516; TLH 457) It is a perfect summary of PRAYER - our conversation with God.