

a different way to pray
(a repeat daily)

"but you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly." matt 6:6

so many out there do not have the prayer life they really want. maybe they have good intentions, but just cannot ever feel really connected. i well remember how i used to get antsy and view the clock often. our flesh begins to burn the closer we draw to the holy.

the following story might give you an intro into an intimate and cherished connection with our Lord.

we all take baby steps to where ever we're going. they may be small, but if we persist, they will get us there. this is something we all need if we are to "endure" to the end.

a man's daughter had asked the local pastor to come and pray with her father. when the pastor arrived, he found the man lying in bed with his head propped up on two pillows and an empty chair beside his bed. the priest assumed that the old fellow had been informed of his visit.

"i guess you were expecting me," he said.

"no, who are you?"

"i'm the new associate at your local church," the pastor replied.

"when i saw the empty chair, i figured you knew i was going to show up."

"oh yeah, the chair," said the bedridden man. "would you mind closing the door?"

puzzled, the pastor shut the door.

"i've never told anyone this, not even my daughter," said the man.

"but all of my life i have never known how to pray. at church i used to hear the pastor talk about prayer, but it always went right over my head.."

"i abandoned any attempt at prayer," the old man continued, "until one day about four years ago my best friend said to me, 'joe, prayer is just a simple matter of having a conversation with Jesus. here's what i suggest. sit down on a chair, place an empty chair in front of you, and in faith see Jesus on the chair. it's not spooky because he promised, 'i'll be with you always.' then just speak to him and listen in the same way you're doing with me right now."

"so, i tried it and i've liked it so much that i do it a couple of hours every day. i'm careful, though. if my daughter saw me talking to an empty chair, she'd either have a nervous breakdown or send me off to the funny farm."

the pastor was deeply moved by the story and encouraged the old guy to continue on the journey. then he prayed with him, and returned to the church.

two nights later the daughter called to tell the pastor that her daddy had died that afternoon.

"did he seem to die in peace?" he asked.

"yes, when i left the house around two o'clock, he called me over to his bedside, told me one of his corny jokes, and kissed me on the cheek. when i got back from the store an hour later, i found him dead. but there was something strange, in fact, beyond strange-kinda weird.

apparently, just before daddy died, he leaned over and rested his head on a chair beside the bed."

- author unknown

you know, i like stories most that were composed by unknown authors. they seek no glory or praise for themselves. they want it all to go to God. it seems to me, that's as it should be. "for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." eph 2:7-9

there is no boasting that we have earned our way to heaven. we are all unworthy of the great gift He has

given. any good works we might have accomplished since we came to Christ was just His working in us and through us. that is dependent on how much we yield ourselves to Him. even then, it is His precious love that draws us.

"[for my determined purpose is] that i may know Him [that i may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly], and that i may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection [which it exerts over believers], and that i may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed [in spirit into His likeness even] to His death". phil 3:10 ampc