

RELUCTANCE TO PRAY

“You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. Before a word is on my tongue, you, LORD, know it completely.” —PSALM 139:1-2 & 4

It is not easy to be exposed, to have our hearts open and naked before God. Some of us are frightened of this sense of intimacy, and consequently, are reluctant to pray. We instead keep things buried inside for protection or as a defense mechanism. Nothing is hidden from God.

Henri Nouwen, author of 39 books on spirituality, writes this about prayer: “Prayer is no easy matter. It demands a relationship in which you allow the other to enter into the very center of your person. You allow Him to speak there, to touch the sensitive core of your being and allow Him to see so much that you would rather leave in darkness, to let Him into that place where your life gets its form. And that is dangerous to us and it usually calls for defense.”

It is in that secret place of communion with God our hearts are scrutinized. Sometimes our lack of communion with Him is a defense against parts of our hearts we would rather leave untouched, because sadly, some of our sins we actually enjoy.

Though we know they always pay a bitter price at the end, in our weakness, we still hold on to them. We all battle with sin and temptation, but if we cherish sin, accept it, tolerate it, defend or rationalize it, rather than battle with it, we will lose touch with God.

Sin gives its rewards only for a season, but when we come to God in prayer, our sin is dealt with, and the reward is huge. Prayer is both the cause and effect of our intimacy with God. We may have to wrestle with getting into that place of being alone and honest with Him; this will be the door opening for a deeper fellowship and the way paved for God to work in our lives.

The one place we can be absolutely disarmingly honest about our hearts is alone with God. He will not be shocked; it will not be out of His depth. In our reluctance to pray, we not only deprive ourselves of intimacy with God, but all that He would otherwise do in our lives. We have nothing to lose, but everything to gain when we come in humility before God; get honest with Him, and expose the truths of our hearts.

PRAYER: Help me in my weaknesses, Lord. I am unable to do it on my own, and pray for Your strength and Spirit to fill me. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I reluctant to pray because of a persistent sin in my life?