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# *1 Prayer*

When we pray we speak to God.

We enter into the heavenly sanctuary. There we place ourselves before God's throne. And we address Him, God Himself, on the basis of promises He Himself has given us, and in the firm confidence that He listens to us.

Prayer is that mighty.

## **Indispensable**

*Inst.3 20:2*

In his Institutes Calvin says that through prayer the treasures of God's promises are uncovered and won. And further he says that through prayer we draw near to the Lord, that He may indeed grant us His presence and help.

*Matt.7:7-12*

Prayer has been called the breathing of our spiritual life. And the Lord Jesus compares it with a child knocking at a door and asking for bread. Prayer is that indispensable in the life with the Lord.

## **Beyond prayer and contemplation**

Praying is so simple that a small child can and may do it: Lord, bless this food. Amen.

It is also so difficult that adults in all their life are never finished with it: Lord, teach us to pray.

It is so powerful that we may do it in all circumstances and for all needs.

Do we actually do this?

A young man was unable to find a girlfriend, and as a result he became lonely and despondent. He discussed the matter with his minister, who asked him: Have you ever prayed about this? No, never. He had never put this need before God's throne.

Someone complained about the sermons of his minister. He had listened to them for several years, Sunday after Sunday, but had not received any benefit from them, he said. Finally he came to talk to the minister.

Again the question: Did you pray about it?

And again the reply: No, never.

Not for himself; not for the church; not for the minister.

*Ps 81:10*

Were these people unbelievers? Certainly not. But in their prayer life they were below the level God has established. He said: "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it." He makes that word come true, beyond prayer and contemplation.

Many of God's children can testify to this.

### **Prayer in occupied territory**

*John 12:31*

We live and pray in territory occupied by the ruler of this world; Satan.

In this world we are no heroes of prayer.

The devil has to make but a small effort and our trust in the Lord is no longer highly charged.

*Heb. 12:15*

So easily we come short of the grace of God.