

A Simple Prayer

*"Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.'
Jesus answered him, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.'
Luke 23:42-43 (NIV)*

*"...he was heard because of his reverent submission."
Hebrews 5:7 (NIV)*

I will call her "Anna". I met her at the request of her Christian physician. She had endured much adversity. She and her husband had a son who died at age 8. Their daughter was tragically killed in a car accident age 23. Then she nursed her late husband through a debilitating illness for several years before he passed away. Now it was finally her turn to soon leave this tragic world.

I visited with her weekly and sometimes twice a week. I was not able to share the Gospel with her because she would mock my faith. However, I kept visiting her, helped her by running a few errands and sought to show the love of Christ in various ways.

When Anna was moved into a palliative care facility for her final weeks with us, Susan and I visited. She was out on the back deck and when we greeted her she asked me to teach her to pray. Such a request shocked me. I asked her what she wanted to talk to the Lord about. Her simple yet profound response was, "I am not ready to die." After explaining the Gospel, I said that I would lead her in a simple prayer of repentance. I suggested we pray in a manner similar to how the minister leads a couple through wedding vows. So, Anna willingly repeated bit

by bit after me a simple prayer.

Everything went well until I finished leading her in prayer. When I said "Amen" she immediately began her own prayer and it was a most humble petition. I am sure she was heard. When she was finished, she had a peaceful expression on her face. She had assurance she had been heard and the peace of God filled her heart and mind (Philippians 4:7).

When a person seeks the Saviour, the Holy Spirit guides their thoughts, and they offer their own simple prayer to the living God. Such prayers take their own shape and expression. The repentant thief offered a one sentence prayer, and he was heard. Anna offered a prayer several sentences long and was heard.

Believer, your prayer may be brief or long. What matters is your attitude of heart as you pray. Your loving Father in heaven delights to hear your petitions and invites you to come anytime for any reason. So come to Him and come now.

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!
The joys I feel, the bliss I share,
Of those whose
anxious spirits burn
With strong desires
for thy return!
With such I hasten to the place
Where God my Savior
shows His face,
And gladly take my station there,
And wait for thee,
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!

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