

I Got You!

When my granddaughter Gabrielle was three years old, she lived with us for a time. Many times in the evening she played near me while I sat in my chair working on my computer. She would often interrupt me, wanting attention (which Grampy, of course, gave her).

She loved to play a game where she backed into my chair, wanting me to wrap my legs around her. Then she would try to get away. But when she did this, she would say something a little odd—like she did not quite understand the concept of the game.

“I got you, Grampy,” she would say.

“No, Gabrielle, I got you,” I would reply.

“No, Grampy,” she would insist, “I got you.”

On and on it went.

But as I thought about it, she really was correct. She had me! She had my full attention. I dropped everything I was doing to focus totally on her. Smart girl!

A Benefit of Prayer

When I think about it, this is one of the benefits of prayer. We often come to God needing something—dare I say it—“wanting His attention.” But, we get God Himself. And God loves that.

“Call to me,” the Father says, “and I will answer” (Jer. 33:3). “Come near to God,” James tells us, “and he will come near to you” (James 4:8). As intercessors who desire to pray for God’s purposes on earth, we sometimes lose sight of this incredible promise of prayer. No matter what we pray about or

when we pray it, we have God's attention on us—His gaze, His love, His joy, His comfort and peace.

Often we come to Him in prayer, frustrated and concerned about situations, but we leave feeling peace and contentment. Why? Because we have spent time in God's presence. Like a child sitting on his or her father's lap, or a granddaughter contented in the arms of her grandfather, there is a sense of safety and protection. Everything is all right.

When too many of my prayers quickly move into the asking part (something that happens a little too often), I find I need to step back and take some time to just sit in His presence. Those times bring perspective, hope, and peace. Paul had it absolutely spot on when he told the Philippian believers, "The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (4:5–7).

I want to encourage you, intercessor. Don't neglect those times. It really is the ultimate benefit of prayer. We may pray about stuff, but we get God Himself!

—Jonathan Graf is the publisher of Prayer Connect and a popular speaker on prayer.