

The Importance of Prayer

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Jerry French

Revivals have always been preceded by prayer

The church was born when the Holy Spirit descended during a time of concentrated prayer

Acts 1:14: "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication."

Jesus said in **Matthew 21:13:** "My house shall be called a house of prayer"

Paul tells us in **1 Thessalonians 5:17** to "pray without ceasing"

Ephesians 6:18: "praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication"

1 Corinthians 14:15: "What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also."

Philippians 4:6-7: "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."

Colossians 4:2: "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful."

Mark 11:24: "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."

Jeremiah 29:12: "Then you will call on me and come and pray to me and I will listen to you."

Romans 12:12: "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."

Matthew 6:7: "And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words."

James 4:2: "You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God."

One of the greatest lies of Satan is that we don't have enough time to pray. Considering this lie, it stands to reason that if Satan tries to tell us we don't have enough time to pray, that means prayer is **SO** important to the believer!

If prayer is this important that it is mentioned so many times in the Bible, then we need to consider doing it as the Bible says: "**without ceasing**"

How do we pray without ceasing?

Get up in the morning with God on your mind thanking Him and praising Him for the new day and that "His mercies are new every morning" (**Lamentations 3:23**)

As you get ready for the day, keep God's Word in your mind, meditating on His Word thinking on His greatness, His love, the love of Jesus, what He has done for you, thanking Him for His provision, thinking on what He has already done for you and the promises He has for you.

You can do this all throughout the day. Instead of having thoughts of worries about something, keep your thoughts and minds on the good things of God as **Philippians 4:8** says: "Finally brethren, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of a good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praise-worthy - meditate on these things."

When the enemy comes to throw negative thoughts to you, immediately take it and throw it out and replace it with God's word to counteract what the enemy has just told you.

This can all be done throughout the day. We choose what we will think on. We have to **desire** to pray.

How can we develop the desire to pray?

We must see the eternal and temporal benefits of prayer.

Look at **Moses**: he developed a life of prayer. When he prayed, plagues came to Egypt, the Red Sea opened up.

Joshua: developed so much power with God that mighty cities fell before the untrained army that he led. He did this through prayer. While Moses was praying in the mountain, Joshua spent the night at the foot of the mountain in prayer.

David: spent much time in prayer which brought him to a place of trusting God. He waited years for God to place him on the throne. When we look at the power in the kingdom and life of David, we see that the source of his power was a life of prayer.

Elijah: prayed powerfully, challenging the prophets of Baal. He would spend hours and days in prayer.

Jesus: no one ever manifested the power of God like Jesus. He would always spend time in prayer before entering his public ministry. Many times in the scriptures, it tells of how Jesus went up into the mountain to pray, and that He never did anything without hearing from His Father first.

When we look at the past people of God and see the magnitude of their prayers answered, we begin to see how powerful prayer is. Also when we look today when we pray, or when others pray and see how their prayers are answered, and the power of God manifested through their prayers, we begin to see the power of prayer.

Prayer not only produces corporate power, but it produces individual power as well. We must depend on the power of the Holy Spirit. It is not by might or natural power, but by the Holy Spirit that great things are accomplished for God.

When we look at the great men of God like Billy Graham, John G Lake, TL Osbourne, Smith Wigglesworth, Kenneth E Hagin, to name just a few, the power of God was manifested through them through prayer. God answers prayer, and it is the prayers **spoken in faith and believing** that what you are praying for will be answered, that God is pleased to hear and answer.

We can all have power in prayer if we are willing to pay the price. What is this price we have to pay?

Change our attitude. Jesus reveals what this attitude is that is necessary to develop spiritual power in **Matthew 11:12**: "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the *violent take it by force.*"

It will take violent dedication to prayer to bring the power of God into our lives. This violent earnestness will be most evident in discipline. Power in prayer takes much time. We need to set priorities for our time. There are many things that crowd around us keeping us from spending the necessary time in prayer to develop power in prayer. And as I mentioned earlier, Satan comes and tries to get us to think on things that need to be done to distract us from prayer.

But by God's grace we are able to win if we have the proper attitude.

1. **When we come to God in prayer, we need to come broken.** By this I mean we need to not be arrogant or proud, but humble. When a man is broken, his heart resists pride, and therefore he can be used to a greater degree.

1 Peter 5:5b: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

2. **We need to surrender ourselves to God.** Our natural inclination is to want our own way; however the ways of the Lord are not our ways. **Isaiah 55:8**: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts and your ways are not My ways."

Someone has to give in. We need to give in to the Holy Spirit who has been given to us to lead us and guide us into the ways of God.

Let's look at David. In spite of the crimes he committed, God used him because he humbled himself and repented. With the Holy Spirit, if we continue to walk in His presence, we are to remain broken and humble.

James 4:6 says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

1 Peter 5:6: "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."

We cannot do anything successful on our own merit, but by His divine grace we can do all things. What we need to be successful is more grace. How do we get more grace? We get it by being broken in humility before God.

After brokenness, comes surrender. With a non conditional surrender, there comes a total yielding to the will of God. Surrender means we give up our natural rights to do what we want to our new Master, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Satan is deathly afraid of genuine prayer. He will do whatever he can to defeat us to get us not to pray. You may find yourselves in great opposition as you develop more and more into the life of prayer. He will try to destroy your prayer life through finding means to delay or cause you to not pray.

Genuine prayer is powerful. We need to be persistent and know that we have been given the power over all the power of the enemy. (Luke 10:19)

Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we also have been given authority over Satan and his works. Therefore, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. (Romans 8:37)

As i said, Satan opposes the prayer of God's people. Let's look at Daniel.

Daniel prayed an intercessory prayer for his people. **Turn in your bibles to Daniel 9:16-17**
Read

As he continued in prayer, his supplications became more impassioned: **read verse 19**

As Daniel continued in prayer, God sent the angel Gabriel to visit him. Gabriel then reveals the way Satan opposes the prayer of God's people:

read Daniel 10:12-13

Later in the chapter, Gabriel shows the battle he will face when he leaves Daniel:

read verses 20-21

On the basis of the fact that Jesus has won all authority in heaven and on earth, we are commanded to go into all the world and disciple nations in the kingdom of God. Our problem has been that we have thought about prayer, received teaching about prayer but we have not really prayed. We need to realize that prayer is not just something that we do when all else fails. we need to realize the power of prayer. **Prayer is the source of power!**

We need to allow the Holy Spirit to bring a new brokenness and surrender and learn how to use our spiritual authority to hinder the work of the devil.

