

## Section 13: Prayer

### I. Introduction

Recommended reading is Praying Hyde by Francis McGaw, Revival Praying by Leonard Ravenhill. A cassette tape on prayer by Vesta Mangun is highly recommended. (Tapes on prayer by Sis. Mangun are available through the Greater First Pentecostal Church of Alexandria, Alexandria, LA. [www.poa.church](http://www.poa.church))

- A. Prayer and fasting will be discussed in separate lessons. However, it is very difficult to separate the two. They are an inseparable team. The full effect of one is not realized unless the other partner is also utilized.
- B. The Bible contains many examples of men and women who had a powerful walk with God. And though they came from various backgrounds, they possessed common elements of prayer and fasting.

### II. How Bible Characters Prayed

- A. Jacob - persistent (Genesis 32:24-32, Luke 12:5-13)  
This type of prayer does not easily give up. It is making petitions known to God again and again. It is not growing weary in well doing. Continuation of this type of prayer not only allows petitions to be granted, but brings a change to the one praying. Participants receive a touch of God.

This touch prevents one from acting the same after prayer as before prayer. It allows an encounter with God in a fashion the casual prayer will never accomplish.

- B. Hannah - travailing prayer (I Samuel 1:17, 10, 12, 15)  
Travailing prayer is agonizing. It involves weeping before God (V. 7). This prayer promotes commitments and consecrations (V. 11). And like the persistent prayer it involves continual prayer (V. 12). This is more than just an appeasing the conscience prayer, but a pouring out of the soul to God (V. 15). Travailing prayer produces sons and daughters for God (I Samuel 1:20, Isaiah 66:8).
- C. Cornelius - prayed always, prayers as memorial to God (Acts 10:1-4). Cornelius was a very devout man, and because he continued praying, he was led into salvation.

- D. Elijah - effectual, fervent, earnest prayer (James 5:16-18) Elijah's prayers were effective. Others asked for rain and nothing happened. Yet, when Elijah prayed, results came. To be effective, prayer must be earnest and sincere. There are some Ingredients that answered prayer must contain.

### III. Answered Prayer

#### A. Prayer is answered in one of three ways.

1. Yes is one answer. If one prays in God's will, and approaches God correctly, prayers can be answered. Of course, requests must not be asked amiss (James 4:3). There is at times anxiety on the part of some when praying for salvation of souls. The question is, why pray, since people are free moral agents. And they must decide for themselves about making things right with God. This is true, however travailing prayer can cause an unconcerned person suddenly to make a move toward God. But if an Individual has really determined to go to hell, he can stumble over your prayers right into hell. The cliché "you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink" is appropriate. However, if one takes the same stubborn horse, and scatters salt all over his pasture, chances are the horse will not have to be led to water. But he will run to water. This is what effect prayer has. It puts salt in the field. Those Individuals who in the past did not seem thirsty for God, suddenly start running to the alter, to drink that living water! It is still true, if they choose to remain thirsty, they can. But It will be a miserable experience. So, keep praying and pouring the salt into their field.
2. No is also a possible answer. Hindsight is better than fore sight. When looking back, how thankful one should be that God did not answer all one's prayers the way we wanted them answered. Disaster would have resulted in some cases. An Individual is not able to see the future or all the consequences of a particular request. But God, who knows all things, in His infinite wisdom answers "no" sometimes.
3. Wait! Is the answer at other times. The prayer may be proper, but the timing may be wrong. And for many of the same reasons He says "no", God also says "wait". There is a time and a season for everything.

#### B. Importance of Relationship

1. The relationship that an Individual has with God determines the extent of answered prayers. Some are complete strangers and approach God only when they want something. Their concept of God is one of a slot machine. Put a magic coin (prayer) Into the machine and hope that it is their lucky day to get an answer. And if God does not answer satisfactorily, they will gamble on some other means working.

2. Abraham had a totally different relationship. He was known as the friend of God (James 2:23). That unique relationship was the reason God was willing to change His mind and save a city from destruction (Genesis 18:27-33). When Abraham prayed, he was not approaching a stranger or someone he feared. He could come boldly to the throne (Hebrews 4:16), knowing God would receive him. To gain the reputation of friend of God, required Abraham to build altars and offer sacrifice many times.
3. Moses, also enjoyed the friend relationship with God (Exodus 33:9-14). The Lord spoke to Moses as a man would speak to a friend. (v.11). The Lord assured Moses that His presence would go with him. It is possible to have a relationship with God in such a way that the Lord is known as a “friend that sticketh closer than a brother”.<sup>233</sup> To have a friendship relationship involves both parties communicating. It is not a one sided conversation. The more two converse, the more they know each other. The reason some have limited knowledge of God’s greatness, is their lack of conversation with Him.
4. Paul’s desire was to know God more and more (Philippians 3:10). To really know God, one must associate with Him. Yes, it is wonderful to feel the power of God’s resurrection. But a prerequisite to that power is the fellowship of His suffering. One must not desert the Lord when the cross becomes heavy. If a person will be faithful to God, God will be faithful to him.
5. Having a right relationship with God (righteousness – James 5:16) effects the outcome of requests also. The prayer of a righteous man receives Heaven’s attention.
6. The relationship with other people is a key factor in answered prayer (Mathew 4:23-24).
7. The relationship with one’s immediate family is especially important. As a matter of fact, prayer will be hindered if an improper relationship is present (I Peter 3:7). There are several scriptures which will aid in the proper relationship of husband, wife, and children. Some very good scriptures are found in Ephesians 5:21-33, 6:1-9.

#### IV. When and How to Pray

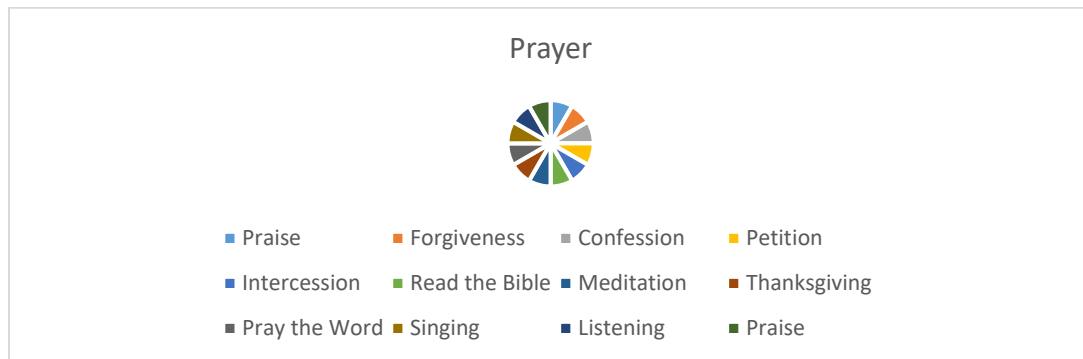
##### A. Daily (I Corinthians 15:31)

To maintain proper relationships, prayer should be offered daily. Daniel sought God three times a day (Daniel 6:10). God expected to hear from Daniel and Paul daily. If a person seeks God daily, God will expect to hear from him. Should sickness or tragedy prevent one from talking to God, is it not feasible to think that God will contact that person to inquire of his situation? If a son calls his folks every day at eight o’clock, and one day does not call. The parents will become concerned and try to call their son. It is possible for God and His children to treat each other with the same concern. Prayer to God should not be an afterthought. But should be a scheduled priority on one’s list each day. God deserves His portion. A portion of each day is reserved for work, sleep, eat, entertainment, and relaxation. But what about God’s portion? Designate Him a portion.

##### B. Pray without ceasing (Acts 12:5, I Thessalonians 5:17)

Have a prayerful attitude throughout the day.

- C. The following chart made available by the Arkansas District Home Missions Department of the United Pentecostal Church International lists some ingredients of a complete prayer.<sup>134</sup>



#### THE COMPLETE PRAYER

1. **PRAISE** - Psalm 22:3; 63:3; Heb. 13:15 Begin all prayer with praise. Whatever your ultimate goal may be, first praise God. In praise you esteem God for His greatness and virtues
2. **FORGIVENESS** - Mt. 6:14-15 Nothing will block your spiritual progress more fatally than an unforgiving spirit. Forgiveness is a complete pouring-out of any feeling that might develop against anyone during the day. Even a small "root of bitterness" will quickly grow into a serious problem.
3. **CONFESSION** - Psalm 139:23-24; Psa. 66:18 Early in the complete prayer clock we must deal with sin. If you hide sin in your heart God will not hear you. Rid yourself of sin and you will clear the road for **POWER PRAYER**
4. **PETITION** - James 4:2-3; Matt 6:9-13 This aspect of prayer deals with our personal needs. Take them to the Lord, and leave them there. "Cast" them upon Him.
5. **INTERCESSION** - I Tim. 2:1-2; Matt. 9:37-38 Intercession is prayer for others - and it involves the most intense dimension of prayer. Intercession is God's love flowing through us.
6. **READ THE BIBLE** - II Tim. 3:16 It may surprise you to hear the suggestion that you should read the Bible during prayer. However, the Word is enlightening to the eyes (Psalm 19:9). When you read the Bible, new possibilities are made clear.
7. **MEDITATION** - Psa. 1:1-2; Psa. 77:12 Take time to "think on these things". God will open your understanding.
8. **THANKSGIVING** - Phil 4:6 Although this will probably be throughout your prayer, spend a special time thanking God out-loud for his provision and goodness to you.
9. **PRAY THE WORD** - Personally apply, out-loud, the precepts of the Bible.
10. **SINGING** - Psalm 100:2; Eph. 5:19 Singing refreshes and comforts the soul. Try singing in the spirit!
11. **LISTENING** - I Kings 19:11-12 Prayer is not all talking to God. Prayer is also listening for direct orders.
12. **PRAISE** - Matt. 6:13 Conclude every prayer with Praise. Again we exalt the nature of God.

As can be seen by the chart, prayer involves more than petition. The Lord's prayer also reveals various ingredients of prayer (Luke 12:2-4). His example of prayer has elements of praise, petition for God's will, request for daily provisions, forgiveness, and request for deliverance. Also Luke 22:42 is an example of praying by Jesus. True prayer must include the attitude portrayed by Jesus in the Garden, "Not my will, but thine, be done".<sup>135</sup> King David also offered a beautiful prayer to God in Psalms 51. And the writer of Hebrews reminded people of the wonderful privilege that saints of God have: "we have an altar" (Hebrews13:10).<sup>136</sup> It is a privilege to have a time and place of prayer.

#### V. Closing Remarks – Updated

##### A. Don't be discouraged

1. When it appears your prayers are not heard, sometimes there are other issues involved.
2. Daniel 10:12-11<sup>13</sup> "From the first day...they words were heard" but the enemy interfered for 21 days.
3. Luke 1:13,18 "Thy prayer is heard". Just think how many years Zacharias and Elisabeth prayed before their desire to have a child was granted when John was finally born in their old age.
4. Acts 10:2,4 Although Cornelius prayed to God always it was sometime before he heard the words "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."
5. KEEP PRAYING: Romans 16:7,11,13 many don't realize it, but the apostle Paul actually had relatives in the church before he was converted! How many prayers were offered for Paul's salvation by his relatives while he continued to persecute the Christians? Again, just keep praying. You never know what may be the results of those heart felt prayers for souls. That soul you agonized over may become the next apostle Paul. You and your prayers may seem to fade with the passing of time. However be assured your prayers live on.

##### B. The Life Cycle of a Prayer

When the prayer leaves the lips of a child of God, it starts a chain of events that may have eternal consequences. There is a ceremony. The prayer doesn't just linger in the atmosphere or evaporate into thin air. The scriptures give us a little glimpse of what happens when sacrifices and prayers are offered to God. By reading just a few of those scriptures the chain of events that transpires through prayer is revealed.

1. Genesis 8:20-21 from an altar to a sweet incense in God's nostrils
2. Psalms 56:8 tears into God's bottle and book
3. Psalms 141:2 prayers as incense while lifting up hands as an evening sacrifice
4. Malachi 1:11 as incense
5. Acts 10:4 as a memorial before God
6. Revelation 5:8 golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints

7. Revelation 8:3-4 Prayers of all saints upon the golden altar before God's throne ascend as incense to God

Just as Cornelius' prayers went up as a memorial to God, so does our prayers today enter into the very throne room of God!

- C. A prayer room experience as written by Chris Waessil a member of Van Buren, AR U.P.C. This paper was written as a college English assignment.

By: Chris Waessil April 25,2008

### The Prayer Room

I awakened early in the morning. I was energized by the sweet -moving Spirit of God building within me. My thought was stirred, and my heart was flowing at the remembrance of the gift that was given to me. My belly tingled and my mouth smacked with saturation as a warmth fell upon my head and rolled slowly down my body. I uttered praises of thanksgiving. Streams of salted tears rolled down the sides of my face, fallen from desperately seeking eyes.

The hunger was strong for communication that would not be stopped by the ceiling of my living room. My knees dug into the carpet. I was at the foot of the blue recliner which was snuggled neatly in the corner of the room. My face was planted into the seat cushion. I was seeking and yearning for God. Reverence, severity, urgency, and now confirmation came from speaking directly to God. I have his ear. Through the utterance of a language that I do not understand, my spirit is conversing with the Spirit of the Almighty God. Thousands of pinpoint chills begin to form around the back of my neck and flow through my arms and legs causing my hairs to stand on end. I raise up from my knees and begin to walk the space of my living room with my hands raised up. Glancing at the walls, I see pictures of churches. My heart wells up inside of my chest and the warmth intensifies in my body. The thought of the most important thing to God, His church, becomes the focus of my prayer.

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I cannot say that I know exactly what I ought to pray for, but I can feel the power of the Holy Ghost working through me. There is such a need bubbling up inside to see a connection. To see this power working in the body of Christ. "Oh God, this truth is so wonderful," I say, clapping my hands. I continue to pace the living room floor, thanking God for his goodness and his mercy. Oh God, that I would learn to hear your voice more clearly. That selfishness and self-seeking would continue to slip away, leaving a knowledge of your will for my life gleaming in plain view. Thank you for caring for me when I couldn't, thank you for sharing with me when I wouldn't. Your kindness, your love, your faithfulness, and your righteousness I pray that I will continue to seek. Now that I have prayed this prayer I begin to feel a sense of peace. Joy takes over where fear and doubt would like to have entered in, scrambling my thoughts and emotions. My day is set in order. I have a better focus. I

know my place. The time I spend in my prayer room is the best part of my day. I can feel the oil of the anointing poured out upon me. This time I spend with the Lord is very exhilarating and satisfying.