

The book cover is a dark blue, textured material, possibly leather or faux leather. It features a prominent embossed decorative border. This border consists of a series of interconnected circular and oval shapes, each containing a stylized floral or scrollwork motif. The text is centered within this decorative frame.

# The Ministry of Prayer

A.J. Baughey



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## BY WAY OF EXPLANATION

Sunday morning, December 2, 1945, I was led to preach to my people on the subject of Prayer. I did not intend to give a series of messages on the subject, but one morning in my private devotions the Holy Spirit opened the subject to my mind, and gave me four outlines. As I gave these messages, the Holy Spirit continued to enlarge the subject and gave me additional outlines. While preaching these messages, I felt led of the Lord to put them in print.

There is something about a message when it comes direct from the Lord to the heart of the minister, that seems to stir his hearers in an unusual manner. Not only that, but it has a glorious effect on the heart and life of the minister himself. It surely pays a minister to live close enough to God that He can unfold His Word and reveal His way, for this gives a preacher fresh messages for his congregation. The inspiration of the Spirit in unfolding these messages and the giving of them to my people has been a delight and blessing to my own heart.

One of the richest rewards of secret prayer is that in these “alone times” with Christ, He reveals His mind in a most delightful and beneficial way. Information concerning divine things are at these times given to a praying man, that can never be secured by human instruction.

If these messages are of any spiritual blessing to you, please give God all the glory, and pray that your servant shall always live so “near to the heart of God” as to understand His will and minister helpfully to his congregation. It would encourage me if you would write and tell me that you are praying for me and my work. Thank you, and may God bless you for your kindness.

### INTRODUCTION By Dr. John Paul

New books on Prayer are scarce. This is a singular comment upon where the emphasis is turning in our busy age. Many fine and fortunate books are coming from the press; but since their authors have not felt drawn to turn the spotlight on Prayer and use their talent to promote a forward movement in this “most essential and most neglected exercise of worship,” let us be glad that Rev. A. J. Baughey has “felt led of the Lord” to supplement Finney and Bounds and others in sounding a more down to date word of emphasis on this marvelous instrument which God has ordained for operating His program of redemption in the world.

God has blessed the Author of this little book with a ministry in soul-winning which we should recognize as his credential to speak to us upon the neglected theme. I have often exhorted young preachers never to lose the sense of mystery and romance and wonder which rightly belongs to the ministry of God’s Word. It is too bad that sometimes we see learned preachers, with a voice of finality, who no longer feel the grip of mystery, and who have lost the wonder from their eyes, which comes from seeing God’s mysteries. The Author of this book preaches and prays with the wonder in his eyes. His instructions on the subject are clear, competent and sound. The average Christian will owe it to himself to read and heed the instructions and exhortations contained herein.



# 01 -- THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER

“And it came to pass, that, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray.” (Luke 11:1).

The word Prayer comes from a Hebrew word which signifies “appeal,” and “intercessory” Prayer has eight parts or phases, namely, invocation, adoration, confession, petition, pleading, dedication, thanksgiving, and blessing. Every phase of praying is in common use by God’s people. We invoke His blessings, we adore His matchless holy Name, we confess our faults and our needs, we petition His divine assistance, we plead for lost, dying humanity, we dedicate all which He has so bountifully given us to His glad service, we thank Him for His mercy, love and grace, and we bless His Holy Name.

Prayer is, no doubt, the most essential exercise of our Christian worship, and, likely the most neglected. What a pity! Prayer is the “vital breath” of the saint, and absolutely necessary. Someone has said, “Activities are multiplied that meditation may be ousted, and organizations are increased that prayer may have no chance. Souls may be lost in good works, as surely as in evil ways. The one concern of Satan is to keep the saints from prayer. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, and prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray.” It has been fittingly said, “Away with work that hinders prayer. ‘Twere best to lay it down; For prayerless work, however good will fail to win the crown.” All our human efforts, no matter how good, are in vain without the energizing force of prayer to make them effective.

1. Prayer is necessary for a Christian experience. There are multitudes of deceived souls, resting in a false supposition that they are “saved,” who have never prayed through to a clear, personal experience of Bible Salvation. What a pity! There is not anything so needful at the altar as sincere, fervent praying. As a rule, when souls are seeking God it is not the proper time to push a Bible before them, asking that they read certain promises, nor the time to insist they walk in some specific light that you may have had in your early experience; it is a time for genuine, sincere praying both by the altar workers, and the seeker. Pray until sin is confessed, the devil routed, and Jesus saves. Prayer unlocks heaven to the honest waiting soul of the penitent seeker, God answers and “His Spirit beareth witness that we are the sons of God.” Then the seeker knows that his sins are forgiven, and his name written in the Lamb’s book of life. Praise the Lord! Men are saved by praying for God has graciously promised, “Call upon me and I will answer thee.”

As prayer is necessary for regeneration, so it is necessary for entire sanctification. We read in 1 John 5:14, “And this is the confidence we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us,” and in 1 Thessalonians 4: 3, “This is the will of God, even your sanctification.” The Thessalonian passage says it is God’s will to sanctify His people; the one in 1 John says, “If we ask anything according to His will,” He will surely answer. The next thing then is to “ask.” In Luke 11:13 you will find these encouraging words: “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Ghost to them that ask Him?” A sinner cannot pray this prayer, for he needs forgiveness; this is speaking of those who are forgiven, who, as this verse implies, can call God their “heavenly Father” when asking Him to sanctify them.

2. Prayer is necessary for daily victory over sin. The Saviour said, “Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.” Mark 14:38. Nearly, if not all backsliding can be traced to a lack of prayer. Jesus demonstrated prayer before His disciples, and upon their request taught them the sacred art of praying. They became cognizant of its importance and said, “Lord, teach us to pray.” If after we are regenerated and sanctified, we fail to pray, we will gradually drift, become indifferent, and lose God out of our life. There is no other alternative, it is either pray or fail; “Watch and pray,” or “enter into temptation.” Is it any wonder then, that Paul admonishes the Thessalonian brethren to “Pray without ceasing?”

The celebrated George Muller who prayed in \$7,500,000.00 for the Lord’s work, told how he asked God for greater real spiritual prosperity among the saints, with whom he labored in Bristol, than there had ever yet been among them: said he, “And now I have to record to the praise of the Lord that truly He has answered this request; for, considering all things, at no period has there been more manifestation of grace and truth, and spiritual power among us, than there is now while I am writing this (1845).”

Yes, prayer is the secret to spiritual success. May the Lord help us to clearly understand

3. Prayer is necessary for building Christ’s Kingdom. In Matthew 9:36 to 38 we read, “When He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest.” I believe this solemn request of the Master has been sadly neglected. What a scene! Let us try to visualize Jesus with His disciples, as they viewed the multitudes who followed to see His mighty works. An expression of deep emotion covers the Saviour’s countenance as He looked upon them for we read, “He was moved with compassion on them.” He knew the value of their souls, saw their appalling spiritual condition, and immediately conveys His Spirit of sympathy and compassion to His disciples, and tells them to pray over the situation. Notice, here He did not say, preach to them, sing to them, or



teach them, but He said, “pray ye.” Preaching, teaching, singing, and other forms of worship and service are essential, but prayer is the most essential phase of Christian service and worship.

Prayer means “intercession.” We are to plead with our heavenly Father in behalf of sinners, and “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” James 5:16. Many of you are saved today as a result of the prayers of others, and you ought to pay your debt by praying for the deliverance of others from the thralldom of sin. Do not fail them, but faithfully comply with the Saviour’s request and pray for them. Remember, no amount of service or liberality can suffice for prayer. Oh that the Church would go to her knees until God sends a mighty revival! Some one has said, “If the world is ever again to get on its feet, the Church will have to again get on its knees;” and “A praying Church at home means a conquering Church abroad. Nothing so much encourages the missionary as the knowledge that those at home are bearing him (or her) up on the wings of their prayers.”



## 02 -- THE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER “Lord, teach us to pray.”

There is no greater privilege afforded us, than that of “praying in the Holy Ghost.” Jude

20. I say this thoughtfully. Who can suggest a greater privilege than that of holding communion with the heavenly Father? He knows what things we have need of even before we ask Him for them. Matthew 6:8. This should encourage praying. Your problems and perplexities may be too many and complex for you to explain to the heavenly Father, but when we realize He “knoweth what things we need,” then we have a clear assurance that He can understand our mortal stammering in asking! Simply lay the needs and problems in His hand and trust Him to bring everything out for His glory and your highest good, and He will do this. A poet has beautifully expressed the privilege of prayer thus:

“In solitude, on wings of prayer  
My soul ascends before the throne; My only hope of help is where  
My heart the Father meets alone.”

1. The privilege of “Communion with God.” The word communion, signifies “fellowship, concord, or agreement.” Life is miserable and not worth living without fellowship with the heavenly Father. In 1 John 1:3 we read, “. . . truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.” Without this divine fellowship, religion is merely an empty form. Do not forget, however, that to have fellowship with God, we must walk close to Him. We read of Enoch in Genesis 5:24, “Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.” That is why “God took him,” because for about three hundred years he had faithfully “walked with God.” Oh what blessed communion. The hymn writer knew of this communion when he wrote:

“Alone with God, the world forbidden,  
Alone with God, O blest retreat; Alone with God and in Him hidden,  
To hold with Him communion sweet.”

The average person would deem it an honored privilege to have fellowship with the President of the United States, the Governor of the state, or with someone else of fame and notability, but anyone who surrenders his heart and life to Jesus, and desires to live for Him, may have a privilege that exceeds any of an earthly nature, namely, to commune with Almighty God, our Creator, and heavenly Father.

Dr. Andrew Murray has declared that, “Prayer is the strategical point where Satan watches. If he can succeed in causing us to neglect prayer, he has won, for where communion between God and His people is broken, the true source of life and power is cut off. In how large a measure has he succeeded in causing the Church of Christ to neglect prayer, faithful, constant, prevailing prayer! wrote:

Prayerlessness shows that we do not value communion with God.” Charlotte Elliott

“Lord, till I reach that blissful shore  
No privilege so dear shall be  
As thus my inmost soul to pour, In prayer to Thee.”

2. The privilege to “Petition God.” Although petition does not have first place in our prayers, it does have its place. It means, “that which is asked or supplicated” in prayer. If you will excuse a personal reference let me say, it has become a habit with me to begin my prayers “with thanksgiving.” This always blesses us when we begin giving thanks to God for what He has already done for us, and soon we are in a good spirit of prayer, and know better how to make our petitions known to God.

This experience will throw some light on the thought: I retired on Saturday night with a sore throat; upon arising for my early prayer the next morning, I discovered my throat was still sore although before retiring I had asked the Lord to touch me. I had begun to pray however before I paid much attention to my feelings, and was thanking the Lord for His manifold blessings when I noticed I still had a sore throat. At once I was impressed to ask God to touch me, but I realized if I did, it meant I would have to stop thanking Him for all He had done, and I had not finished as yet with praising God. The Spirit seemed to check me at this point, so I continued praising the Lord, and by the time I got through with my praises I discovered to my delight that the soreness was gone from my throat. Probably had I broken off my praise and prayer of thanksgiving to petition God for my throat, I would not have been relieved as quickly; however, you see God knows our needs and granted my petition before I asked Him, for He knew I was going to ask Him to touch my throat after I had finished praising and thanking Him.

Before we leave this thought, it is important to remember, that our petitions should always harmonize with God’s will. This is clearly



taught in 1 John 5:14 and 15. “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.” If we ask “anything according to His will,” we may rest assured that God hears us, and will grant our petitions in His perfect time and manner. Should we ask anything outside of His will, it is not for our good, nor should we expect to receive an answer to such requests. If our petitions, when granted, will bring honor, praise, and glory to God’s Name and cause, then we may “Come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16.

3. The privilege to “Praise God.” It is a delightful privilege to praise the Lord. There are many ways to do this, namely, by conduct, by testimony, by obedience, by singing, but probably none is as important as by prayer. In his epistle to the Philippians (4:6), Paul said, “. . . in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.”

Well balanced praying necessitates praise and thanksgiving. Let us go back for a moment to our previous thought; it is a great privilege to praise God. David said, “Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness.” Psalm 107:8. “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His Name.” Psalms 100:4. And in Psalms 50:23 we read, “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me.” This comes to our hearts with the new nature we receive in the new birth.

George Watson said, “As the greatest thing with a bird is its contact with the air, and the greatest thing with a fish is its contact with the sea, so the greatest thing with a creature man is his contact with his God.” How true! It has been fittingly said, “God does not count our prayers, He weighs them.” It is important that we keep our prayers well balanced with praise and thanksgiving.

My friend, Rev. F. Lincicome, said: “Prayer is more than a medium of securing blessings. It is a channel through which we build ourselves up in God. A means by which we lift ourselves to newer and higher heights and levels of living, by which we keep ourselves in a heavenly frame, up above the world’s magnetism, and out of the cellar and basement of our natures.” Yes, prayer is our greatest privilege, therefore, let us not neglect it.



## 03 -- THE SCOPE OF PRAYER “Lord, teach us to pray.”

The scope of prayer is universal, yea, it goes beyond this universe, and reaches the magnetic throne of God. Some one has said, “Nothing lies beyond the reach of prayer except that which lies outside the will of God.” How true! How limited we really are in our realization of God’s immense universe! Could we have a better understanding of its immensity, we could better realize the scope of prayer. In Revelation 4:11 we read, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” David speaks of this in Psalms 19:1 to 6. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.”

Suffice to say then, if as David declares that “nothing is hid from the heat” of the sun, how much more can He who created the sun in the midst of all His other glorious handiworks, hear the faintest whisper emanating from the sincere heart of a man, no matter where on earth he may be? Truly this is possible, for our God is omnipresent! Let us notice--

1. The Scope of God’s promises. Paul declares in 2 Corinthians 1:20 that “. . . all the promises of God in Him (Jesus Christ) are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” Notice particularly Paul’s words, “All the promises of God.”, God’s Word contains many “exceeding great and precious promises,” and if we are in Christ, we are the recipients of them. I was told that an old man took pains to carefully count all the definite promises contained in God’s Word, and that he found 1,728. It is certainly encouraging to know that, “All (these) promises of God in (Jesus) are yea, and are Amen.” Why should we doubt Him? Prayer is the means by which we lay claim to these promises, and declare them ours. These “precious promises” would be void without prayer. God told Solomon one night, “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” God’s promise to Israel of forgiveness and healing, hinged entirely upon the condition that they “humble themselves, seek God’s face, turn from their wicked ways, and pray.” So it is today; as we meet the required conditions, God graciously fulfills His glorious promises.

2. The Salvation of Souls. The most essential work in which we may engage is that of soul-winning, and prayer is our most effective means. God has given us a great challenge found in Psalms 2: 8. “Ask of Me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” This probably has reference to Christ’s mediatorial office as Dr. Adam Clarke says, “Having died as an atoning sacrifice, and risen again from the dead, He was now to make intercession for mankind. He was to become supreme Lord in the mediatorial kingdom; in consequence of which He sent His apostles throughout the inhabited globe to preach the gospel to every creature.” However, this great work did not stop with His apostles, but His great command “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,” is handed down to us in this century. We too may “Ask of (God), and (He) shall give (us) the heathen for (our) inheritance.”

Charles G. Finney related an incident told him by another minister as follows: “In a certain town there had been no revival for many years; the Church was nearly extinct, the youth were all unconverted, and desolation reigned unbroken. There lived in the town, an aged man, a blacksmith by trade, and of so stammering a tongue that it was painful to hear him speak. On one Friday, as he was at work in his shop, alone, his mind became greatly exercised about the state of the Church and of the impenitent. His agony became so great that he was induced to lay by his work, lock the shop door, and spend the afternoon in prayer.

“He prevailed, and on the Sabbath called on the minister and desired him to appoint a ‘conference meeting.’ After some hesitation, the minister consented; observing, however, that he feared that but few would attend. He appointed it the same evening at a large private house.

“When evening came, more assembled than could be accommodated in the house. All were silent for a time, until one sinner broke out in tears, and said, ‘if anyone could pray, would he pray for him?’ Another followed, and another, and still another, until it was found that persons from every quarter of the town were under deep conviction. And what was remarkable was, that they all dated their conviction at the hour that the old man was praying in his shop. A powerful revival followed. Thus the old stammering man prevailed, and as a prince had power with God.”

Oh, that we who know the Lord would earnestly pray until we see the salvation of many precious souls. Someone put it this way, “Pray until you want to pray, pray until you can pray, and then pray until your prayers prevail -- at all seasons.” Finney’s motto was, “Souls at any price, and under all circumstances.” Certainly, there can be no more effective way to win souls than through Holy Ghost inspired prayer, and without it we cannot win them.

I once saw an illustration that deeply impressed me; I believe it was in a Sunday school paper. It pictured a young man kneeling beside a large rock on one side of the world, with black infernal beings grabbing furiously at his heels, as if they were contending



to see which might claim his soul first; but from the other side of the world came a strong hand of deliverance, attached to the long arm of “prayer” which made the great reach of the loving hand possible. Yes, prayer can reach where airplanes and submarines cannot reach.

They say that sound travels more than twelve miles a minute, that light comes from the sun, ninety millions of miles, in less than eight minutes, that an electric signal is nearly instantaneous in its action at the other side of the world. But “faster than light, quicker than electricity, the voice of prayer travels round God’s world.”

3. The Scope of God’s Call. This is given in one word, and that is “Whosoever.” Revelation 22:17 says, “And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.” Jesus did not die to save a certain cast or nationality; Jesus died for the whole human race, and “whosoever” includes you. “Whosoever” will hear His tender call, and come to Him, He has graciously promised He will “in no wise cast out,” but “will give you rest.” John 6:37 and Matthew 11:28. Let us pray then, for all who are outside the ark of safety. We must pray for them! Never dying souls are now at stake, and are desperately needing our prayers. It has been rightly said that, “God will, do, if we pray, what He cannot, or will not do otherwise.” This little poem is very fitting:

“Our work is solemn; Therefore we dare not trifle, Our task is difficult;  
Therefore we dare not relax. Our opportunities are brief; Therefore we dare not delay. Our path is narrow;  
Therefore we dare not wander. Our prize will be glorious; Therefore we dare not faint.”



## 04 -- THE MINISTRY OF PRAYER “Lord, teach us to pray.”

True prayer is a powerful ministry in itself. It is a neglected ministry. We often hear of some who desire to “work for the Lord,” and say they are “willing to do just anything He tells them to do,” but too often the case is that of someone wanting to preach, be Sunday School Superintendent, or teach a class rather than become engaged in the ministry of prayer. By careful observation, I know it is easier to get people to sing, testify, teach, or even attempt to preach, than it is to pray. Announce a fifteen-minute prayer service before the regular service in any church and notice how many will respond! Very few indeed; however, thank God there are some exceptions. There are some folk who will rally for a little while, but to call together a good group who will unite in prayer continually, is practically out of the question. Is it any wonder the churches are cold and powerless? Is it any wonder that crime and juvenile delinquency are ever increasing? Recently, J. Edgar Hoover “with a voice like a preacher” was heard on the air, “advising church and home to help check the postwar crime wave, which is not coming, but is here. He thinks it is underrated by the press.

Arrests of young boys greatly increased in 1945, and arrests of girls under twenty-one for crime and lawlessness, more than doubled any former year’s record.” The best way I can propose to “help check the postwar crime wave” is by the powerful ministry of prayer.

Satan struck a staggering blow at the American home when he succeeded in tearing down the family altar. The ministry of prayer has its genesis around the good old-fashioned family altar. We must take time to pray, and to teach our children to pray as soon as they are able to talk. A wise man once said, “Train up a child (anyone) in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6. The criminal records of America prove that the majority of parents have sadly failed their children in this respect. That is not all, for the records are continually showing the appalling increase in crime. An Associated Press dispatch said, “Criminal offenses jumped 10.3 per cent during the first nine months of 1945 compared with the same period of 1944.” Did someone say, “The world is getting better and better?” It does not look that way to me. During 1945 in this state (in Oakland County) there were 2,005 marriage licenses issued, and 2,227 divorce bills filed in the same year; 222 more divorces than marriages in a single year in one county. The report went on to say, “This was the largest number of divorces ever filed in the county in one year.” This is a sample of what is going on the nation over. Shameful indeed!

Every form of sin likewise is showing increase. According to data on Federal luxury taxes furnished by the Tax Institute, the American public is buying \$1,000,000,000 worth of jewelry a year. Just the taxes on cosmetics cost Americans \$45,000,000 in 1944. Tobacco taxes the same year cost them \$988,000,000, and liquor taxes amounted to \$1,618,000,000. Contrast this with the small amount given for the true cause of Christ! Church members who rather “paint up” than “pray through,” who rather adorn themselves with jewelry than with “the beauty of holiness,” who spend more time before the mirror than before the throne of grace, will some day answer to God for part of the above mentioned extravagance. 1 Peter 3:1-5. Paul said to the Corinthians, “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” 2 Corinthians 7:1. Dr. Godbey commenting on this verse said, “Tobacco, opium, intoxicants and gluttony; these all must go. You will get so near God you will be afraid He will smell your filthy tobacco breath when you pray. Jewelry and all needless ornamentations and gaudy display pollute your body, and disqualify it to become the honored and beautiful temple of the Holy Ghost. If you get sanctified, you no longer need artistic beauty

in any of its forms or phases, as you have the beauty of holiness which so eclipses all others as to bury them away in eternal oblivion.”

It is heart breaking to see mothers and grandmothers, and young boys and girls puffing on cigarettes.. They are becoming more audacious with it constantly; and hardly ever do you hear a preacher’s voice raised against these sins. It is high time as the prophet Isaiah suggests, to “Cry aloud, (with the throat) spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression.” Isaiah 58:1. If there was ever a time for sincere praying on the part of God’s people it is now! Christian friends, if we wish to see the salvation of those we know and love, it is high time for each of us to enter the powerful ministry of prevailing prayer; there is no time for delay.

1. The greatest need of the world. Many and great minds have suggested what they believe the world’s greatest need to be, but I believe it is praying people. Men of all walks of life are crying, “peace, peace,” and in their way, trying to bring about “a lasting peace,” but as one has truly said, “Nothing is lasting and blessed of God except what is born of prayer.” I believe there is no world problem or perplexity that could not be solved and adjusted by sincere prayer to Almighty God. This world would not be in the frightful condition it is in today if we had more praying instead of bridge-playing, mothers. It seems unbelievable, but I read, and clipped it from the paper that, “An Oregon woman has spent five hours every day for the last twenty-six years playing solitaire.” Who can tell what would happen if we could persuade the Christians to spend time like that in prayer? Every mother owes it to her daughter to be a praying woman: and every father owes it to his son to be a praying man. Yes, a thousand times yes, what this sin-



sick, sin-ruined, intoxicated world needs more than anything else is praying people. Let me ask, Are you a praying person? If not, seek God, and enlist immediately your best of service in the holy ministry of prayer.

In Isaiah 61: 6, we read, "Ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord." Commenting on this Andrew Murray said, "All redeemed ones are priests, fellow-partakers with Him (Jesus) of His anointing with the Spirit as High Priest. This is the high calling of every believer: 'Such honor have all His saints.' They have been redeemed with the one purpose to be in the midst of the perishing millions around them, God's priests, who, in conformity to Jesus, the Great High Priest, are to be the ministers and stewards of the grace of God to all around them."

2. The greatest need of the Church. As praying men and women are the greatest need of the world, so holy intercessors are the greatest need of the Church. The life of Christ was one of intercession. Paul declares, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Romans 8:9. In Luke 22:44 we read, "And being in agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." While on the earth, Christ was the greatest preacher; He was the greatest teacher; He was the greatest prophet; but His earthly ministry was outstanding and distinguished by prayer. We too must offer ourselves unto God as holy intercessors if we would be included among those mentioned in 1 John 4:17 which reads, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world." As His life was distinguished by the gracious ministry of prayer, so must ours be. This is possible by His grace and help.

Said Herbert Lockyer, "The church was born in a prayer meeting, and her life can only be sustained in the same atmosphere, as the story of the Acts of the Apostles so clearly proves.

'They gave themselves to prayer,' 'They went where prayer was wont to be made,' are key words of the book. In fact, the Acts extols the power of the Holy Spirit operating through a praying Church. Think of the miracles performed as prayer was exercised: for example, Peter's deliverance from prison; as well as that of Paul at Philippi. In the course of the ages, the Church has made progress in so far as buildings, wisdom, and wealth are concerned; but does she still advance upon her knees? Although in any given town or city you have scores of churches, how many are there within such who believe prayer to be their vital breath? Let us take twelve churches, with an aggregate membership of 300 each. That would total 3,600 members. Visit the weekly prayer meeting in each place of worship, and if fifty people are attending, it is reckoned to be extremely good in these hard days; 3,600 professing Christians -- 600 who turn out to pray! Is it not a disgraceful percentage? Then we wonder why our church life is stagnant! But once the Church restores prayer to its rightful position, and rolls away the reproach of prayerlessness, the revival will be here. Therefore we urge all ministers and evangelists and Christians, both at home and abroad, to further the 'Prayer Campaign' for Revival."

3. The greatest need of each individual. As the greatest need of the world is praying people; the greatest need of the Church is holy intercessors, so the greatest need of each individual is the spirit of intercessory prayer. This is necessary both for keeping the victory over sin, and building God's kingdom in this world. William Bramwell was quoted as saying, "I find it necessary to begin at five in the morning and to pray at all opportunities till ten or eleven at night." Most people cannot understand such language as this. Martin Luther said, "I have so much to do that I cannot get on without three hours a day of prayer." There is little wonder that people backslide; they fail to pray! That is why so few are being added to the Church these days; there are too few Christians who have the Spirit of intercessory prayer. Annie Woodworth wrote:

"There's a holy, high vocation  
Needing workers everywhere;  
'Tis the highest form of service,  
'Tis the ministry of prayer."



## 05 -- THE DEFINITIONS OF PRAYER “Lord, teach us to pray.”

No doubt it is impossible to fully explain this mighty force we call prayer, which, comparatively speaking, is known to a minority. The fact that we cannot fully explain it, is a proof that prayer is a divine exercise. It is a spiritual practice, hence if we are spiritually minded we will pray! To maintain any degree of spirituality we must continue in prayer. Prayer, too, is the only means of increasing our spiritual life. This friends, is probably as good a reason as we can advance for the terrible universal lethargy among God's people. People do not take time to pray! One can no more be spiritual and fail to pray than one can omit breathing and remain alive. It is imperative that each of us maintain a daily, hourly, and momentary contact with the heavenly Father, and, this is gloriously possible through prayer. Paul instructed the Colossians to, “Continue in prayer.” (4:2). John Wesley warned the early Methodists that, “There can be no expecting the blessing of God without constant prayer and steady watchfulness.” Please take note of his words “constant prayer.” Charles Wesley prayed for “A spirit prepared, and armed with jealous care, forever standing on its guard, and watching unto prayer.”

While it is impossible to fully explain prayer, yet we wish to pass on to you seven definitions of prayer, that the Holy Spirit has given us.

1. Prayer is that force behind our human efforts, that brings results. This thought at once suggests to our minds the vast importance of prayer. Prayerless efforts will not convert sinners. We want our service to be effective toward the advancement of God's cause, therefore, we must first realize our efforts will be in vain and end in failure without the backing of this heavenly force, prayer. If there was sincere prayer back of all the good efforts that are now being put forth in the Lord's work, who could tell the outcome of such efforts?

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, reporting on the great Welsh revival said, “A praying remnant has been agonizing before God about the state of the beloved land (Wales), and it is through prayer the answer of fire has come. If you and I could stand above Wales, looking at it, you would see fire breaking out here, and there, and yonder, and somewhere else, without any collusion or prearrangement. It is a divine visitation in which God -- and let me say this reverently -- is saying to us: See what I can do without the things you are depending upon; see what I can do in answer to a praying people; see what I can do through the simplest, who are ready to fall in line, and depend wholly and absolutely upon Me. Within five weeks, 20,000 have joined the churches.”

2. Prayer is the key to every difficult situation. Life is filled with problems and perplexities, and mankind is ever looking for the solutions. All of us are faced with difficult situations with which if we try to cope without much prayer, we are very likely to utterly fail. As a general rule, the worldling turns to a lawyer or other sources of earthly counsel which oftentimes dangerously misdirects him, causing the situation to become even more difficult; but we have the answer if we are on “praying grounds and interceding terms with God.” Yes, the key is prayer. How very true is the little motto with which we are all familiar: “Prayer changes things!” It is true that “Honest, importunate praying will bring heaven to our aid.” There is no situation so difficult that it cannot be entirely prayed through. It may take time and much patience, but God will not allow the situation to overcome you while in the struggle to cope with it in sincere prayer. Take courage brother, sister, for “Jesus never fails.”

3. Prayer is the secret of all spiritual success. Someone has said, “Desire is the foundation to all true prayer.” It goes without saying, that, no one will ever be spiritually successful unless he or she desires to be. This is just why the churches are loaded down with people who are “carnally minded,” rather than “spiritually minded;” Romans 8:6.

Men go the limit to be a success in science, politics, business, education and otherwise because they deem it worth the while. They spend large sums of money, devote many years to hard, tedious study, and exert great energy to become a success in the eyes of the world. Some accomplish their aim, others miserably fail, but, even those who succeed (in the eyes of the world) utterly fail in the eyes of Him with whom we have to do, if they leave God out of their plans. What a pity! It is certain that if one fails spiritually, he has failed entirely.

Sometime ago our paper carried bold headlines telling of the suicide of one of the county's leading business men, a leading politician. It told of his accomplishments and good standing among a large circle of friends. At the end of a day in his office in the Oakland County building, he dialed the telephone number of a friend, and spoke a few words to him, then, so his friend would know what had taken place, pulled the trigger and sent his own soul out into an endless eternity. The thing that interested and saddened my heart, when I read the account of his suicidal death, was that he had at one time attended an orthodox Bible Seminary to prepare for the ministry. Probably the lure of the world, and its offers of financial, political, and social success overwhelmed his desire to be a spiritual success, and Satan perfidiously gave him his desires, but with it came damnation to his poor never-dying soul. How tragic!



The question is, do we want to be spiritually successful? If so we may, but sincere prayer is the secret. Success is not determined by the number of friends, amount of money, or property, rank, prestige or position, or by anything pertaining to the natural for God determines success on the basis of the humility of a soul who in His sight is perfectly submitted to His will; who loves the Lord supremely, and does not count his life dear in his service and fidelity to God. This sort of person is a magnanimous soul and is a spiritual success. Thus he became, and continues to be successful in God's sight by sincere prayer; always with an open heart to His heavenly Father.

4. Prayer is the vital life of the Church. The Church is comprised of those who have heeded the call of the Holy Ghost and come out of the world, identifying themselves with God. The name Church comes from a Greek word "ekklesia," and means "the called out." In Romans 12:4 and 5 we read, "For as we have many members in one body... so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Dr. Godbey commented on these verses thus: "Precisely as the corporeal members, actuated by five hundred muscles and a thousand nerves, all have a diversity of office and work, equally dependent upon one another, and all equally important and honorable in the human organism, so every member of God's kingdom in all the earth has a grand, glorious and important office to fill in the gracious economy, all equally honorable and remunerative in the sight of God. You cannot fill my place, and it is equally true that I cannot fill yours. There is no room for us to envy another, as we all have enough to do in our appointed sphere, while the angels look down with sympathy and admiration, and God is ready to say, 'Well done,' and place upon our brow a never-fading crown if we will only be true."

We conclude then, the Church is constituted by "members," or individuals, hence the Church is what we are, or what we make it. Prayer is the main issue to the true believer. What is true of one, is true of us all. It being necessary for one to pray, makes it necessary for all to pray. The life of the Church in spiritual accomplishments can be no greater than her spirit of intercessory prayer. "God's promises are conditional, and are of no particular value to us until prayer helps us to claim them for ourselves and others."

5. Prayer is the instrument of soul-winning. We all agree that the principal objective of the Church in this world should be to win souls to Christ. "God gave His only begotten Son" for this purpose, and Jesus saves a sinner that he might be a servant of the living God. Whenever churches go into civic and social, or into political fields of venture, they have missed the mark for which they should strive. The heart of God is certainly grieved to see sales, socials, suppers and sacrilege pervade the churches of today. Prayer is largely a forgotten art among a majority of churches. I say this thoughtfully, but with a full assurance that I am correct. If you doubt this, simply investigate the situation in the most spiritual churches you can find, and even there you will find a terrible lack in prayer-life, and, really only a few in any group are carrying any soul-burden in prayer. Brother E. E. Shelhamer wrote, "Who can tell the outcome of a prolonged season of wrestling with God in prayer? We should court and invite such seasons, rather than neglect or relegate them to a more convenient time. God knows His business, and generally draws the soul out in prayer, either to bring about some glorious end, or to frustrate some hellish design. The devil knows this, and will enlist feebleness, interruptions, wandering thoughts, perplexing cares and a multitude of other things to sidetrack the prevailer from persistently following the line of thought upon which God is pleased to answer prayer. But everything must stand aside! More than millions are at stake! No small victory is sufficient, when God is anxious 'to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.' There is double advantage in taking time to pray through."

God places within everyone He draws to Himself, a strong desire to win others to Jesus; they set out at once to do this, and it seems to me whenever anyone of us lose this desire to win the lost to Christ, we have "left (our) first love" as did the Ephesian Church. It goes without saying, that we are not likely to pray for the salvation of souls, unless we have a deep concern for them. The Spiritfilled Church is constantly using the powerful instrument of prayer in soul-winning, for that is her one and cardinal objective.

6. Prayer is the earthly audience with the heavenly Father. This is hard to fully understand, but is true. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to get an audience with high ranking officials of this world. Some people boast over their ability to do so, but there is no higher honor known to mankind than an audience with the Creator of all things. Sam Jones said, "The mountains are God's thoughts piled up. The ocean is God's thoughts spread out. The flowers are God's thoughts in bloom. The dewdrops are God's thoughts in pearls." God is our loving heavenly Father, and is concerned with our every need. There is however, only one way to get an audience with Him, and that is by prayer. If I desire an audience with Him I will pray; if I do not regard this privilege, I will not pray. When once we have found the Lord, and that can only be through prayer, we must keep in daffy contact with Him through prayer. We may confidentially tell Him about the many trials of our life, and receive from Him divine counsel, grace, wisdom and strength to carry us through every step of the way on our pilgrimage to the "holy city." For your highest good, and for God's glory, do not neglect the privilege of prayer.

7. Prayer is the bond of connection between Heaven and Earth. There is a divine, unseen wireless between this and the glory world, from which no child of God is barred. This wireless was used by Elijah on Mount Carmel; by Daniel in Babylon; by Jonah in the Mediterranean Sea, inside a whale; by Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail; by Stephen even while he was being stoned; and we too, as did these and millions of others, may use this heavenly wireless which will connect us with the divine powerhouse above. Prayer is this glorious bond of connection between us and the heavenly Father, between Heaven and earth. We cannot afford to be out of touch with Heaven, therefore let each of us continue earnestly in true prayer.



## 06 -- THE DELIGHT OF PRAYER “Lord, teach us to pray.”

The natural man, and perhaps at first the immature child of God, may not fully understand, but there is a glorious delight in true prayer. The delight of prayer is expressed in the words of the old hymn we all love:

“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.”

What could be more delightful? In prayer we are “called from a world of care,” and’ are privileged to come before the heavenly Father’s throne and “make all (our) wants and wishes known.” Yes, this is the God-given privilege of every true Christian.

We find a similar expression in another hymn as follows: “Steal away with Jesus awhile, Steal away with Jesus awhile; He will hear you when you pray He will brighten all your way, Steal away with Jesus awhile.”

Truly, there can be found in no other phase of our worship, or spiritual exercises, such delight as can be found in true prayer. The Lord helping us, we wish to give you six reasons why we believe this is true:

1. Prayer is a delight, for it brings one into the immediate presence of God. Keep in mind, that when the soul has been delivered from all sin, and is imbued with God’s holiness, instead of shrinking from His divine presence, there is always a longing to be nearer, and every effort is made in that direction, for the soul finds its delight in Him who hath “called us unto holiness.” This is one strong reason why many “religious” people do not pray; there is sin in their lives, and to any such person there cannot be a real delight in prayer, nor hardly an interest. “Prayer will make the heart get honest with God, or it will have to quit praying: Real praying will destroy sinning, or sinning will destroy real praying.”

When all sin is burned out of our hearts, in a sense, the heart goes to its knees in humble submission to God, and remains there as long as it is clean. Jesus reigns supremely within the seat of our affections now, and all our life is in subjection to His divine will and holiness. This produces genuine happiness. One may ask, If our heart is always on its knees in prayer to God, why then must we take time to withdraw in secret for prayer? Will not the fact that our hearts are in a constant spirit of prayer suffice? No, because not only our hearts, but our minds and entire being also must periodically withdraw from the earthly, that it may focus full attention on the divine! We are sanctified wholly... “spirit and soul and body;” 1 Thessalonians 5:23; therefore we must enter wholly into frequent seasons of secret prayer to maintain this blessed sanctity, for in this connection, prayer is vitally essential.

Jesus warned, “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with... cares of this life... Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be able to escape all these things (the woes of the great tribulation) that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” Luke 21: 34-36. Let each of us seek to know the art of praying, until we realize personally the glorious delight of prayer.

2. Prayer is a delight, for it necessitates solitude. In true secret prayer, not only is the outside world shut out, but even those dearest to our hearts. Solitude is essential and blissful! One must not be disturbed when in touch with Heaven no more than a long distance line of communication can be disturbed, and at the same time maintain proper connections. This is one good reason why each of us should seek the most opportune time for regular secret prayer. Personally, I find the early morning hours the most convenient.

An incident was told of a minister who was making calls. He rang the doorbell at a certain home, and a little girl opened the door. He asked for her mother, and she said, “Are you sick?” He said that he was not and she asked, “Are you hurt?” Again he said “No.” Then she asked if he knew of anyone sick or injured. When he replied that he did not, she said, “Then you cannot see mamma, for she prays from nine to ten o’clock.” It was then twenty minutes after nine, but he sat down and waited forty minutes to see her. At ten o’clock she came in with the light of glory on her face; and he knew why that home was so bright; he knew why her two sons were in the theological seminary and her girl was a missionary.

Keep in mind that Satan will do his best to interrupt you in private devotions, but there is a possibility of working conscientiously at the job, and winning the victory over every obstacle with the Lord’s help. Amen.

In Matthew 14:13 we read, “When Jesus heard of it (the death and burial of John the Baptist), He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart.” The word “apart” suggests solitude to me. Jesus often prayed alone; we too must “spend much time in secret



with Jesus alone.” In the time of crisis, or deep sorrow, there is no greater source of solace and comfort than to be alone with the heavenly Father; nor do we need to wait for crisis hours, or troublesome times to enter this blessed sanctum; the privilege is ours momentarily.

3. Prayer is a delight, because of what God says to us. True prayer involves both the human and the divine. We are not to do all the talking! If we will get quiet before the Lord, He will whisper many startling and precious things to our heart. There is a time for loud prayers and, equally true, there is a time for silent prayers; then there is a time for quiet meditation, so that we may “sit and learn at Jesus’ feet.” David declared, “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will shew them His covenant.” Psalms 25:14. Daniel the prophet declared, that God “revealeth the deep and secret things.” (2:22). When we take time to get alone with God, He will recompense us with heart-warming and encouraging words. An old poet said, “And He walks with me, and He talks with me, And He tells me I am His own; And the joy we share as we tarry there, None other has ever known.”

You have read in Luke 24 of the two disciples, who with heads hanging low, and minds in a dilemma walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus; suddenly the risen Saviour “drew near and went with them.” But “their eyes were holden that they should not know Him.” He proceeded to ask them “what manner of communications are these that ye have to one another, as ye walk and are sad?” Cleopas, who thought Jesus was a “stranger in Jerusalem,” began to tell Him the story of the deeds and death of Christ, and expressed their doubts concerning His resurrection. Then Jesus, “beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” After He had “vanished out of their sight,” they “said one to another (it had the same effect on each of them), Did not our hearts burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?” His magnetic life-giving words will certainly burn within us too, if we will come apart from earthly cares and go into His holy presence.

He will never tell you anything in secret that is contrary to His Word and will; but He will teach you to serve Him better and to rely fully upon His promises. Prayer is not only to ask of God that which we wish Him to do for us, but also to give Him opportunity to say what He wishes of us.

4. Prayer is a delight, because we have the assurance of the answer. We have a faith-inspiring promise in Isaiah 65:24 which reads: “And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” This is assurance enough to cause the weakest believer to pray. It actually puts great delight into prayer just to know that God is hearing and will answer our prayers. He promises to “answer before we call” on Him. This is not fantastic; it is true. I have experienced answers of this kind. Many have been gloriously converted in this manner. God knew their hearts were fully surrendered, and saved them before reaching the altar. God always goes farther in our direction to save, keep and help us than we deserve. This is an expression of His great mercy. “No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.” Psalms 84:11.

In that blessed 91st Psalm we read, “He shall call upon me, and I will answer him.” Jeremiah 33:3 says, “Call unto Me and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things (hidden things) which thou knowest not.” With these and many more of God’s unshakable promises to hear and answer our prayers, we have great delight in prayer for we earnestly believe every promise; therefore, let us pray with these precious promises in mind, knowing that God will answer our prayers in His own good time and manner.

5. Prayer is a delight, because At brings one into a state of rest and relaxation. Please do not confuse this phase of prayer with the effort one must put forth to enter the prayer-closet. Jesus said in Matthew 6:6, “But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.” It is said that Andrew Bonar affirmed that he never entered into a season of pure prayer without a fierce battle at the threshold. There is nothing that Satan so dreads as to see the child of God on his knees, imploring divine guidance and help. “The portal of the prayer chamber is where he stations his strongest forces, not in open attack, but simply diverts the mind and heart from its source of divine strength.” It will take some wrestling, and vehement effort to enter the closet, and then time is required to “shut the door,” but after this is all accomplished, there comes a blessed sense of rest and relaxation to the weary pilgrim who has thus nobly fought Satan’s sentinels.

“Oh, how praying rests the weary! Prayer will change the night to day; So when life seems dark and dreary, Don’t forget to pray.”

No other thing can more efficiently serve to rest the mind, relax the body, and bless the soul than a season of secret prayer. This is one of the many benefits of God’s great salvation.

“From every stormy wind that blows, From every swelling tide of woes, There is a calm, a sure retreat: ‘Tis found beneath the mercy seat.”

6. Prayer is a delight, because the Holy Spirit prays through us. In Romans 8:26 we read, “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” John Wesley comments on this verse as follows: “The Spirit of God also Himself, as it were, groaneth, while He helpeth our infirmities, or weaknesses.

Our understandings are weak, particularly in the things of God; our desires are weak; our prayers are weak. ‘We know not’ many



times, 'what we should pray for,' much less are we able 'to pray as we ought.' 'but the Spirit maketh intercession for us' -- in our hearts, even as Christ does in heaven. 'With groanings,' the matter of which is from ourselves, but the Spirit forms them; and they are frequently inexpressible, even by the faithful themselves."

There come times in the prayer-life of every saint when mere words fail to express the anxiety, pressure, and burdens of this life, and "we know not what we should pray for as we ought," but it is certainly encouraging to have the Holy Spirit take up the prayer where we must leave off, and "make intercession for us." As Wesley said, the Holy Spirit makes intercession in our hearts, "even as Christ does in heaven."

This is one reason why Jesus told His disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter (the Holy Ghost) will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." Make certain the blessed Holy Ghost abides, and He will "help your infirmities," and will "make intercession" for you in those times of special need when mere words seem to fail to convey your heart's desire to God.



## 07 -- THE APPROACH OF PRAYER “Lord, teach us to pray.”

Our approach in prayer is very important. Prayer is definitely a fine art, and must be scripturally practiced. Do not let this discourage you in the least, if you have recently come into the Christian warfare, for the Holy Spirit will lead you out into the holy exercise of prayer and teach you the art of praying, as well as teach you to pray.

We might profitably, at this point, indicate by the process of elimination what true prayer is not, but it will suffice to say that prayer is ineffectual, or to say the least very feeble unless offered in the proper way. Answers to prayer do not come about by freak occurrences or haphazard accident. We must, as one great man of prayer, said, “First... quietly, carefully, examine and see whether what I was trusting (or praying) for was something in accordance with His promise in His written Word. If I found it were, the amount of difficulties would be no more hindrance to my trust.” Then said he, “Fifty-one years, and God has never failed me;” Let us notice the attitude of prayer under the following heads:

1. Prayer must be offered in Jesus’ Name. In the gospel according to Saint John we read, “Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My Name, I will do it. I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My Name, He may give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. At that day ye shall ask in My Name.” John 14:13, 14; 15:16; 16:24, 26.

Andrew Murray said, “Hitherto the disciples had not asked in the Name of Christ, nor had He himself ever used the expression. The nearest approach is, ‘met together in My Name.’ Here in His parting words, He repeats the word unceasingly in connection with those promises of unlimited meaning, ‘Whatsoever,’ ‘Anything,’ ‘What ye will,’ to teach them and us that His Name is our only, but also our all-sufficient plea. The power of prayer and the answer depend on the right use of the Name. The name of a king includes his honor, his power, his kingdom. His name is the symbol of His power. And so each Name of God embodies and represents some part of the glory of the Unseen One. And the Name of Christ is the expression of all that He has done and all He is and lives to do as our Mediator.”

When we have fully surrendered to Jesus our all, we have a perfect right to use His Name in prayer, for as Christians we represent Him in the world. We must do all things in His Name, and for His glory. 1 Corinthians 10:31. We must pray for the glory of God, never out of selfish desire: James calls this “asking amiss.” (4:3). A selfish prayer must not be prayed in Jesus’ Name, for His was a life of unselfish devotion to mankind. To pray in His Name, means to pray in His Spirit as well. “Our power in using that Name, (Jesus) whether with God, or men, or devils, depends on the measure of our spiritual life-union.” We are known by His Name, Christians, and must have His nature. This being true, we pray in His Name the prayer of faith, and, as one has said, “Such asking is the cry of His own Spirit in our hearts.”

2. Prayer must be offered in the Spirit. In Jude 20 we read, “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.” You realize there is a great difference in prayers. Any prayer, no matter how poorly phrased, or with what improper use of grammar, if it be in the Holy Ghost, will bless the saints, and put sinners under conviction. You must agree with me that too often public praying is prearranged and well worded, so as to sound commendable and praise-worthy in the ears of the people, rather than being the “heart cry” of deep sincerity and holy piety. This is another reason so many prayers are unanswered. Prayers of this sort are only wasted on the empty air. One who is really spiritual can generally tell the difference between carnal and spiritual prayers.

True prayer is a spiritual exercise, hence must be of the Spirit of God. Paul tells us this in Romans 8:26, “the Spirit maketh intercession for us.” Andrew Murray said, “It is in the intercession of Christ that the continued efficacy and application of His redemption is maintained. And it is through the Holy Spirit descending from Christ to us that we are drawn up into the great stream of His ever-ascending prayers. That Spirit prays for us without words: in the depths of a heart where even thoughts are at times formless, the Spirit takes us up into the wonderful flow of the life of the Three-One God. Through the Spirit, Christ’s prayers become ours, and ours are made His: we ask what we will, and it is given to us.”

Let us each examine the foundation of our Christian experience and make sure that all is clear between us and the heavenly Father, and between us and our fellowmen; and let us each make certain the Spirit of God dwells within; then our prayers will be in the Holy Ghost, and will be effectual. This kind of praying brings results and changes things.

3. Prayer must be offered in faith believing. As Jesus was returning from Bethany to Jerusalem one morning, He hungered. When he saw a fig tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon but leaves only, and said to the tree, “Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.” Then the disciples seeing it as they went by the next day,



“marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!” To this, Jesus made a startling reply saying, “Verily I say unto you, if ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

Dr. W. B. Godbey comments on these verses as follows: “While prayer in the Divine order is the invariable antecedent to the blessings involved in the gracious economy, yet we must remember that we do not receive what we pray for, but what we believe not, faith being the measuring-line of our reception from God. Then what is the utility of prayer? It is to bring us up to believing ground. Hence prayer and faith are like the two oars of the boat which row us across the river. The genuine ‘faith of God’ is very scarce upon the earth, and it is because there is not enough of genuine, importunate prayer. We must so pray into the Divine presence and get in touch with the Almighty that the Holy Ghost will inspire our prayers as well as our faith. In a mysterious way we must sink into God, utterly abandoned to His will for time and eternity, getting away from self and humanity where we can fall prostrate on the great and precious promises, and there abide at the feet of Jesus, so illuminated and inspired by the Holy Ghost that we can receive and appropriate His infallible promises, and get where we can ask Him for great and wonderful achievements in the spiritual kingdom without wavering or doubting, and thus, by importunate prayer and indefatigable faith, take the kingdom of heaven by violence.”

James, who himself was a great man of prayer, touches this phase of truth in the first chapter of his epistle; “ask of God... in faith, nothing wavering. He that wavereth, (or doubteth) is like a wave of the sea driven by the wind and tossed.” Says Dr. Godbey, “Faith is the hand by which we receive the salvation of the Lord. Doubt is a paralysis, more or less affecting that hand, and defeating our efforts to receive the needed grace. Sanctification is the only doubt-killer. The unsanctified man, beleaguered with doubts, is the ship on the stormy sea, tossed by the merciless waves and driven by the angry tornadoes, while the sanctified soul is the ship safe in the harbor, secure from the raging tempest, never again to drift, the sport of the stormy billows.”

4. Prayer must be offered in His will. Let us remember our text, “Lord, teach us to pray.” Most certainly Jesus teaches us to pray as He prayed. His prayers were always in accord with the Father’s will. So must our prayers be. In the very shadow of the cross, under the deepest pressure of soul agony over a world that was lost, the spiritual conflict was so great that it became necessary for an angel to come from heaven to the Mount of Olives where He was praying, and strengthen Him. In such a time as that Christ prayed, “Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done.” Luke 22:42. Verse 41 says, “And He was withdrawn from them (His disciples) about a stone’s cast, and kneeled down and prayed.” I can conceive no greater expression of love and humility, nor complete surrender of will than that manifested by Jesus as He tenderly prayed, “nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done.” This must be our approach in prayer as we come to the heavenly Father in Jesus’ Name; then as we pray, “Thy will be done,” it gives us confidence that we are asking for that which will be granted of the Father in the time and manner He sees best to give it to us. It is important to first know the will of God in our subjects of prayer; then upon a full persuasion that what we are about to ask is His will, hold on patiently and faithfully in prayer until God definitely answers, for He will answer every prayer in accord with His will.

5. Prayer must be offered in full surrender. There is a difference between praying in the will of God, and in full surrender to God. The act of full surrender immediately brings one in accord with the will of God. Full surrender is the prerequisite to our getting into the will of God. We must surrender our plans, programs, preconceived ideas, ambitions, wishes, talents, in fact, “present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service.” This is full surrender. Romans 12:1. If I expect God to hear my prayers, and send the answers, I am to surrender my human ways by which I expect Him to grant my desires, and again say, “Not my will, but Thine be done.” Perhaps the best human reason we can advance for this is supplied in this verse:

“All as God wills, who wisely heeds  
To give or to withhold;  
And knoweth more of all my needs  
Than all my prayers have told.”

6. Prayer must be offered with thanksgiving. In Philippians 4:6 we read, “Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” In this verse the words “prayer,” “supplication,” and “thanksgiving” are quite synonymous and constitute a basic practice of worship and devotion. Praise has an important place in the Christian’s life. The word “praise” is found 13 times in the last Psalm, three times in the first verse and twice in the other five verses. The word is found about 300 times in the Bible. Our hearts should be filled with the praises of God, and this being true, praise and thanksgiving will automatically enter into our prayer-life.

It has become a practice in my prayers to begin with thanksgiving to God for His many wonderful blessings to me, and for the many previous answers to my prayers. This always makes a good start, and brings God’s blessing on the soul, and helps to bring us into the spirit of prevailing prayer for those things we yet desire and need. Paul told the Philippian brethren “in everything by prayer with thanksgiving” to let their “requests be made known unto God.” John Wesley said, “The surest mark of a soul free from care, is prayer joined with true resignation. This is always followed by peace. Peace and thanksgiving are coupled together.”

In Luke 11:2 Jesus instructs the disciples saying, “When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name.” Wesley enlarged the thought as follows: “And what He said to them (concerning prayer) is undoubtedly said to us also. We are



therefore, here directed, not only to imitate this in all our prayers, but to use this very form of prayer.” After addressing “Our Father which art in heaven,” Jesus then said, “Hallowed by Thy Name.” The word “hallowed” has reference to deep reverence, humility, and godly fear. Our very approach in prayer should be in this manner, which necessitates deep Christian piety, and begets praise and heartfelt adoration and thanksgiving to God.

I think it was Matthew Henry who said, “We must make God our heart’s delight, and then we shall have our heart’s desire.”



## 08 -- THE HINDRANCES OF PRAYER “Lord, teach us to pray.”

Satan hates prayer and has many angles of attack against it. If he does not succeed in causing you to entirely neglect prayer, he will do all he can to hinder the prayers you offer to God. The devil is viciously opposed to any means that will win souls to Jesus, and build us up in our “most holy faith.” As one means of hindrance, he promotes a “form of godliness” which is void of the power thereof, incessantly striving to defeat every effort that tends to make us deeply spiritual and godly. Satan knows something about the effectiveness of prayer. He knows it is the strongest weapon the weakest child of God can wield successfully against him, and come out of every battle “more than conqueror.” Is it any wonder then that Satan ever seeks to destroy our prayer life and hinder our prayers?

We do not in this message mention all the hindrances to prayer, for there are many, however, we do wish to point out at least six.

1. Indifference hinders prayer. Indifference has a broad scope of meaning, applicable, in some respects to the majority of professors of religion of this day.

First. It means “having a neutral disposition.” This is a neither for, nor against; an on the fence position. No one can remain neutral; we each must be for or against. Either we are in favor of everything that goes toward the advancement of God’s cause, or we are against it. Obviously, if you oppose one means that is used of God in the upbuilding of His kingdom, you cannot with sincerity and propriety support another means of doing it. There may be some efforts that interest you more than others, but nevertheless, you are ready to fill any place in God’s great work for which He may equip you. You are always in Savor of it, and respond accordingly.

Second. Indifference means, “not concerned about something; and without choice.” Building God’s kingdom in men’s hearts demands grave and constant concern. If we who name His Name and claim His Spirit are not concerned for the souls of men, who will be? The Church of Jesus Christ is the instrument or agency of God in this world through which the Holy Spirit operates for the one purpose of winning the lost to Christ. We who are redeemed comprise the Church, and unless each of us has a deep concern souls will die eternally, for there is no other agency in the world to win them to Jesus. We must always choose the course in life outlined by the Word of God, and by His Holy Spirit, if we are to successfully accomplish our mission for Christ.

Third. Indifference means, “having no influence or value,” and is “characterized by lack of active quality.” We can understand then, how that any person described as being indifferent would fail in the gallant warfare of the prayer life. Reader, does this description in any way apply to you? John Wesley said, “One of the principle rules of religion is to lose no occasion of serving God;” and as Rev. Warren C. McIntire puts it, “Our service cannot, in any sense, be a price by which we buy answers to prayer, but is, to our Lord, an evidence of integrity and good faith on our part.”

D. L. Moody once said, “A great many people are afraid of enthusiasm. If a man is enthusiastic they cry, ‘Zeal without knowledge!’ I should rather have zeal without knowledge, than knowledge without zeal. I know men as wise as owls without any fire in their souls. Enthusiasm means ‘in God,’ and I cannot understand how any man can realize this standing before God and not be on fire 365 days in the year. Any man who goes into business and does not throw his heart into it does not succeed. Now why not go into the Lord’s work as earnestly as into athletics?”

We may add this verse of Scripture on the thought of indifference: “Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully.” The word “deceitfully” in the marginal reading is “negligently.” Jeremiah 48:10. God save us from an indifferent spirit is my sincere prayer.

2. Unconfessed sins hinder prayer. The apostle James tells us to “confess” and “pray,” (5:16): and the prophet Isaiah declares, “Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear.” (59:2). I believe if everyone who claims to be a Christian would thoroughly confess his sins to God, and to those to whom confession is due, a mighty revival would break out in our churches such as this generation has never seen. If we could see what is concealed in the hearts of people, as God sees it, we could hardly believe it! No Church can have a revival without folk confessing their sins, nor can anyone have victory until he honestly confesses his sins. This is a prerequisite to becoming a Christian, and to an effectual fervent prayer life. We must first do business with God before we can do business for God. A false religion will not require confession, neither will it give peace of mind, nor power in prayer.

We all want results; all would like to pray and receive something their hearts desire, but if the heart has not been emptied of sin and self, and cleansed by the efficacious blood of “the Lamb of God,” its desires, if granted, would be a curse rather than a blessing to the individual.



The operation of sin is two-fold: sins of commission and sins of omission. We seem to think the latter is less evil in God's sight, but there is a verse of Scripture which reads, "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17. Perhaps it is the sins of omission that hinder prayers more than sins of commission, for those who pray are professors at least, while non-professors, as a rule, do not try to pray, although there are some exceptions. In Hebrews 10:24 and 25 we read, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." John Wesley said this "assembling of ourselves together" means, "in public or private worship." Commenting on these words "as ye see the day approaching," Wesley went on to say, "The great day is ever in your eye." Those who forsake "the assembling together," do so in direct violation of God's Word. This is a sin of omission. Alice Mortenson gives us this poem:

"Where would I be on prayer meeting night, If my Lord should suddenly come?  
At Church, in my place, or out with the crowd  
Just having some innocent fun?

Where would I be? Getting food for my soul And praying for those who are lost; Or, absent again, forgetting the One Who bought us at infinite cost?

Where would I be? I've excuses enough, But how would they look in His sight? Where would I want Him to find me at last, Should He come on prayer meeting night?"

When light comes across your pathway, concerning sins of omission as well as sins of commission, there is but one thing to do; confess your failure to measure up to God's full requirements, then pray for grace to, in the future, do those things that God has revealed to you. This will bring you into a fitness for real intercession, and the heavenly Father will answer your prayers.

3. Domestic infelicity hinders prayer. We read in 1 Peter 3:7, "Husbands, dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life that your prayers be not hindered." Next to the Church of Jesus Christ, the home is the greatest institution in the world. If all goes well in the home, it helps to make things go well elsewhere. You cannot have a family quarrel at home, and get your prayers through at Church. You cannot be possessed with a bad spirit in your home, and come to the place of worship with a good spirit. If you are grouchy and critical with your wife or husband in the home, you will certainly be toward your pastor and others in the Church. This will hinder your prayers and cause you to backslide.

There are men who will get angry, be sulky and mean to an overburdened wife on Sunday morning because she does not have all the work done, and the children ready for Sunday school at the time he is ready to leave, (although he did not lift a finger to make a bed, dry a dish, help dress the children or do other chores that he should do), and perhaps go out and sit in the car and blow the horn until finally the wife arrives in a nervous and spirit-depressed condition. That man may go on to Church, teach a Sunday school class, shout and pray, but his prayers go no higher than the ceiling. With people such as this in the churches, is it any wonder that more is not being accomplished for God and souls?

A religion that does not keep one sweet under every circumstance in the home will certainly fail in the dying hour. The prayers of persons like the one above described, have no effect on the hearts of their unsaved sons and daughters or friends. That is one reason why some are constantly asking others to pray for their children; they are aware of the fact that their prayers are of no avail. Unless our children see the beauty of Jesus in our daily living, hear us read God's Word and pray in the Spirit around the family altar, our loud profession in Church will only cause them to doubt that there is anything to salvation after all.

4. Unbelief hinders prayer. In the wonderful faith chapter, Hebrews 11, verse 6, we read, "Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." The word "believe" is the key word in this verse. Reflection on God's mercy and love in answers to prayer in the past, should serve to stimulate faith for those things we now need and desire for His glory.

Bishop C. H. Fowler said, "Prayer has divided seas, rolled up flowing rivers, made flinty rocks gush forth into fountains, quenched flames of fire, muzzled lions, disarmed vipers and poisons, marshaled the stars against the wicked, stopped the course of the moon, arrested the rapid sun in its great race, burst open iron gates, recalled souls from eternity, conquered the strongest devils, commanded legions of angels to come down from heaven. Prayer has bridled and changed the raging passions of man, and destroyed the vast armies of proud, daring, blustering atheists. Prayer has brought one man from the bottom of the sea, and carried another in a chariot of fire to heaven; and what has not prayer done? Let us pray."

In Mark 9:17 to 27 you will read a thrilling account which clearly teaches us the importance of believing. It tells of a man having a son who was possessed with a "dumb and deaf spirit." He brought his son to the disciples, but they were unable to cast the foul spirit out. The man told this to Jesus and Jesus replied, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him to Me." The man brought the lad to the Lord, and when he saw Jesus, "straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming." Here the evil spirit made his last effort to destroy the boy. After explaining to Jesus



how the foul spirit had reacted on his son, the man cried out in desperation saying, "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." To this Jesus replied, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." John Wesley comments on this verse as follows: "'If thou canst believe' -- As if He had said, The thing does not turn on my power, but on thy faith. I can do all things; canst thou believe?" Then with deep emotion and great earnestness the needy father cried out, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." Exercising what little faith he had, and realizing he needed more, he prayed accordingly. That is about all any of us can do. Jesus always honors that kind of prayer with an encouraging answer. Then Jesus "rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him," and in verse 26 we read, "And the spirit... came out of him."

I would like to pass on Adam Clarke's comment on these words, "If thou canst believe." Said he, "Why are not our souls completely healed? Why is not every demon cast out? Why are not pride, self-will, love of the world, lust, anger, peevishness, with all the other bad tempers and dispositions which constitute the mind of Satan, entirely destroyed? Alas! it is because we do not believe; Jesus is able; more, Jesus is willing; but we are not willing to give up our idols; we give not credence to His Word; therefore hath sin a being, and dominion over us."

5. Withholding the tithe will hinder prayer. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Malachi 3:10. Verse 8 teaches that anyone who fails to pay his tithe into God's work to support the greatest institution on earth, the Church, is a robber. Some may object to this, saying that "tithing is an Old Testament doctrine and has nothing to do with New Testament Christians," but systematic tithing is also taught in the New Testament. Read Matthew 23:23; Luke 18:12 and 1 Corinthians 16:2.

In Malachi 3:8 through 12 you will see the results of failing to tithe, and you will also see an eight-fold promise given to those who obey the Lord, and tithe their income for His work.

One has not given anything to God when his tithe is paid, for that belongs to God, and if he withholds it, he is robbing God. All we give over our tithe is a love-gift to God's cause; and let it be remembered, no one can out-give God; and "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Paying our tithe opens the windows of heaven, and with heaven's windows opened you can understand it is easy to get our prayers answered.

6. Iniquity in the heart will hinder prayer. David declared, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Psalms 66:18. God is no respecter of persons, nor will He allow in one person that for which He would punish another. We must all despise sin in its least degree. God's Word says, "Abhor that which is evil." Romans 12:9; "Abstain from all appearance of evil." 1 Thessalonians 5:22. To "regard iniquity" in one's heart is to sanction and condone it, and if it is allowed to remain there, in time and upon the right occasion it will break out into overt acts of open transgression. If one does not oppose sin, he will soon condone it; if he condones it, he will soon embrace it; and if he embraces it, he will soon practice it, hence we dare not regard (be easy on) sin in the least degree.

I like Rev. Warren C. McIntire's statement on this subject: "To regard iniquity in one's heart means to excuse or attempt to justify evil dispositions, or cover some pet sin that gives special satisfaction. Basically it is a love and protection of carnality with all its ugly manifestations, in particular those inclinations and tempers to which one gives way most easily and frequently."

Our hearts must be clean and open channels through which the Holy Spirit actually transmits heavenly communications, both to and from the Throne of grace. The least degree of conscious iniquity will interfere and break divine connections, and leave the heavens brass. If David realized he could not get an audience with God and have iniquity in his heart, why should any of us attempt it, or expect it? It can never be done. My friend, open your heart to the thorough searching of the Holy Ghost and as He reveals your condition, plead the blood of Jesus to cleanse and make you free. If you will do this, God will certainly answer your prayers.



## 09 -- THE RESULTS OF PRAYER “Lord, teach us to pray.”

Prayerlessness will reduce any Church to a mere social organization, and bring inevitable leanness to the souls of its members. When the Church prays she is more than a match for Satan, and can be victorious over sin and the world. Our churches may increase numerically, but unless we increase proportionately in our prayer life, we have taken the first step in retrogression.

It was recently reported that Church membership in the United States increased 32.8 percent during the 18-year period from 1926 to 1944. In 1926 the census showed a total membership of 54,576,346, and in 1944 placed the total at 72,492,669, or 52.5 percent of the nation's population. In the face of this gain in Church membership, we are confronted with the fact that sin is running rampant in all the world with seemingly little or no restraint. There must be a reason for this! We believe if the churches today were endowed with the power of God as was the Church on the day of Pentecost, (Acts 2:1 to 43) conditions would be entirely different the world over. We cannot expect “moral reform movements” to solve the problem, and save the situation! They can never do it. You might get the bottle or flask from a man's pocket, but if that hellish desire for liquor is still in his heart he will get another. There must be a change of heart in every creature!

In Isaiah 55:11 we read, “So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please.” God tells us His word will “not return void,” but it “shall accomplish” that which He pleases: therefore, if the Church will preach the positive message of God's Word uncompromisingly, it “shall accomplish” the salvation of never-dying souls. Our efforts, being backed by prevailing prayer, will bring glorious results wherever or whoever we are.

The full results of sincere prayer cannot be measured this side of heaven. Eternity alone will reveal this; but when the revelation is made it will be amazing and wonderful beyond human anticipation. Pilgrims, let us not be weary, but let us continue “instant in prayer,” and we will see the salvation of precious souls for whom Jesus died. Let us notice a few results of true prayer.

1. Prayer results in testimony. After conversion, testimony is the first public spiritual exercise of the child of God. He has something he wants to tell the whole world about and share it with them. He becomes very liberal, and wants everyone else to have what he has found -- full and free salvation! Having been thoroughly regenerated and pardoned from all sin, there is now begun a life of efficient witnessing both by word of mouth and by silent consistent living, which is glorifying to God; and more illustrious as time goes by. This, is a normal result of the new birth. The new birth is a normal result of honest praying; hence, prayer actuates testimony.

It may be well to drop this word of advice at this point. You may not always feel along through your Christian life, exactly as you did the night or day you were converted: you would not have felt that way then had you refused to pray; therefore, if you fail to pray after you are converted and sanctified, the results are likely to be the loss of testimony. On the contrary, if each of us keep well “prayed-up,” we will always be “ready to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is within us with meekness and fear.” 1 Peter 3:15.

Recently Dr. John Paul conducted a three-day convention at our Tabernacle here in Pontiac. On Sunday morning he spoke on the subject, “Witnesses That Win the Case.” He told us, “A witness communicates evidence; and is one who knows something.” This being true, it necessitates an intake of knowledge, so that we in turn can communicate it to those around us.

Paul prayed for the saints at Colosse desiring that they might “be filled with the knowledge” of God's will “in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;... being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.” Colossians 1: 9-10.

Testimony is a very interesting and effective exercise. Many have been brought under conviction for sin because of another's testimony, and later led to yield their lives to God. Testimony serves to encourage both the witness and his hearers. In Revelation 12:11 we read, “They (our brethren) overcame (their accuser the Devil) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.” We must not lose our power to witness for Christ, hence we must not cease to pray, for as surely as we do, our testimony is lost. Faithful prayer will actuate efficient testimony.

2. Prayer results in sound teaching. Perhaps we scarcely realize the great responsibility that goes with teaching God's holy Word. Mistakes in money matters and things otherwise pertaining to this life may be adjusted and reconciled, but if we should misguide an immortal soul with erroneous teaching, the mistake would be eternally irretrievable. No amount of human learning will suffice for divine communications of heavenly wisdom. I think Paul has reference to this when he asks, “Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?” Romans 2:21. We must have a continuous source of intake, if we are to constantly impart understanding of spiritual things by way of teaching. There is no greater source of learning for the teacher, or those he teaches, than that found with Christ in the school of prayer.



David prayed earnestly for God to “wash him thoroughly from his iniquity, and cleanse him from his sin.” He also prayed, “Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.” Had David never prayed, he could never have taught. Psalm 51.

Teaching is an important phase of God’s work, and demands much prayer. While it is true no teacher should go before a class with an unstudied lesson, it is equally true no teacher should go before a class unless well prayed-up! If it were necessary to omit one or the other, I would rather omit the study than to neglect the prayer. Prayerless study and prayerless teaching are inadequate to produce the results intended by Christ when He commissioned the eleven saying, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations.” Matthew 28:19, 20. This word “teach” as used by the Lord does not refer to a dry procedure of instruction; it has a deeper meaning. The marginal reading is, “Go ye therefore, and make disciples, or, Christians of all nations.” Mere human instruction can never effect this: there must be a supernatural spiritual touch to both our hearts and minds as the Holy Spirit reveals His Word and will to us, as we in turn gladly pass it on in meekness and humility. Let us sit often at the feet of the greatest Teacher, that He may teach us how we may best teach others His Word, way and will.

3. Prayer results in whole-gospel preaching. Paul declared to the Corinthians that “Christ sent him to preach the gospel,” and that such “preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:17, 18. We cannot help but think of Paul’s glorious conversion and his reply to the Son of God, when He said, “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.” Paul trembling and astonished said, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” Among other things, Christ told him to preach the gospel. Had Paul refused to ask, “What wilt Thou have me to do,” he would never have had the high privilege of preaching Christ’s gospel. Paul also became a great prayer warrior. He told the saints at Rome that “without ceasing he made mention of them always in his prayers.” It is comparatively easy to preach to people for whom one is praying. Paul was a great preacher because he was a good pray-er. One may have talent and natural ability in public speaking, but be sadly lacking in that quickening, energizing heavenly something which carries truth to men’s hearts, unless he is a man of prayer.

It is said that George Whitefield before entering his pulpit to preach, would lie for an hour on the floor in his room in agonizing fervent prayer; scores would be swept into the kingdom as a result of his earnest pleading for souls. Prayerless preachers are powerless preachers. Well prepared sermon outlines are good, well phrased sentences are fine, and Bible preaching is essential, but without the backing of true prayer it cannot accomplish that which God designs.

4. Prayer results in soul-winning. David tells us in Psalms 126:6, “He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” He that goeth forth with a soul-burden and in a spirit of prayer is certain to win souls to Christ. It is surprising how God will go before, soften people’s hearts, and make them receptive to the message and exhortation of personal evangelism, if the effort is preceded by earnest prayer.

Much of the present day evangelism is on the humorous and entertaining side: it draws big crowds over which carnal preachers boast, but does not actually win souls to the lowly Nazarene. The shallowness of many present-day so-called revivals, accompanied as they are with worldliness and popularity, is indeed pathetic and shameful. Revivals of old-time religion today, as in former days, must be prayed down, not worked up. True it is we must make plans and arrangements for a revival, but unless we set our spiritual house in order, and solicit divine intervention through earnest prayer, we are defeated at the start. It takes more than big crowds, large offerings, and wide interest to bring about a soul-saving revival. When the Church has power with God in prayer, she has power with men and succeeds in leading them to Christ. A praying Church is a soul-winning Church: a praying person is a soul-winner.

Our primary qualification for winning the lost to Christ is to be on speaking terms with the Father. As we pray about lost souls, God will tell us how we may win them. The “harvest is great, but the laborers are few.” People are dying all around us without God. Deaths in the United States average about 1,330,000 per year. If we knew how few of that great number of people are ready to meet God when they make their exodus from this world, it would stir us to “weep o’er the erring ones, lift up the fallen; tell them of Jesus who is mighty to save.” Beloved, the least any of us can do is pray, and I believe as we do this the Spirit will open to us new avenues of opportunity and service whereby we all may have a part in the greatest enterprise on earth -- that for which Christ was born, lived, died, arose, ascended, and sent His Spirit -- to win the lost to Himself.

5. Prayer results in consistent Christian living. The holiness folk do not claim absolute perfection; we realize we are liable to make mistakes, but a mistake is not a willful “transgression of God’s law.” However, we do claim Christian perfection as taught in holy writ, preached by the early Church, the Wesleys and others.

In Psalms 37:37 we read, “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.” There are three very important words in this verse: “perfect,” “upright,” and “peace.” These are pertaining to man. Were it an impossibility to be “perfect” and “upright” while living in this world, this verse would be contradictory: the fact is, it beautifully correlates with many other such verses in God’s eternal Word, bearing on the subject of Christian perfection. Nowhere in the Bible is there a verse to the contrary!



Holiness is essential to consistent Christian living. There is no better way to convince people that salvation is what they need, and that it does for one all that we claim, than by the daily demonstration of it in our lives. Satan magnifies inconsistencies so as to make their influence more destructive. We must “watch and pray” in this respect for unless we do we may be inconsistent in one way or another. We must “watch” our actions, conversations, associations and intentions so as to be sure they are consistent with holiness, and “pray” for grace, strength and wisdom thus to live. Much prayer is required along this line. “He stands best who kneels most.”

E. E. Shelhamer said, “If God could only have His perfect way, He would get the noisy people quiet and the quiet people noisy, more or less. He would not rob us of our natural temperament, but He would balance us up. I have been praying for years, ‘Lord, weaken me where I am too strong and strengthen me where I am too weak.’ John Wesley tells of a certain class of believers who had fallen into the error of ‘stillness.’ They said the Lord had written His law upon their hearts, therefore they need not read, pray or shout. They adopted Isaiah 30:7 as their standard of piety. ‘Their’ strength is to sit still.’ Then there was another class who had gone to the opposite extreme, and adopted Isaiah 12:6 as their standard, ‘Cry out and shout, thou inhabitants of Zion.’ How easy it is to become lopsided.” 6. Prayer results in spiritual maturity. Andrew Murray said, “A life marked by daily answers to prayer is the proof of our spiritual maturity; that we have indeed attained to the true ‘abiding in Christ;’ that the Name and nature of Christ has taken full possession of us, and that we have been found fit to take place among those whom God admits to His counsels, according to whose prayers He rules the world. These are they in whom a something of man’s original dignity has been restored. Prayer is very blessed; the answer is more blessed still as the response from our heavenly Father indicates that our prayer, our faith, our will and our service are indeed as He would wish them to be.”

O the far-reaching influence of a mature Christian life! Who can fathom it? Spurgeon once said, “The serene, silent beauty of a holy life is the most powerful influence in the world, next to the might of the Spirit of God.”

It is delightful to an earthly parent to observe the physical development of a child, and so it pleases the heavenly Father for His sons and daughters to grow strong in faith, wisdom and grace, and eventually come into spiritual maturity. I can think of no more effective means to make this possible than that of sincere prayer. Prayer promotes spiritual maturity, and spiritual maturity in turn will promote effectual fervent prayer.



# 10 -- THE “DO NOTS” OF PRAYER “Lord, teach us to pray.”

John Wesley, commenting on our text, said, “The Jewish masters used to give their followers some short form of prayer, as a peculiar badge of their relation to them. This, it is probable, John the Baptist had done. And in this sense it seems to be, that the disciples now asked Jesus to teach them to pray. Accordingly He here repeats that form which He had before given them in His sermon on the Mount, and likewise enlarges on the same head, though still speaking the same things in substance. And this prayer (Luke 11:2 to 4) uttered from the heart in its true and full meaning is indeed the badge of a real Christian.”

While it is true that the Holy Spirit leads us out in prayer and teaches us what to pray for, there are some simple rules which are necessary for us to follow if we expect to obtain full fruitage from our praying. If we wish our prayers to be effective, perhaps the following instructions will be helpful.

1. Do not be in a hurry. We believe the words of Solomon in Ecclesiastes 5:2, have some bearing on this thought. “Let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God.” In Proverbs 21:5 we read, “The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteous; but every one that is hasty only to want.” We must take time to think things through; to be well composed so that we can present our petitions in prayer to God intelligently. Effectual prayer requires definiteness of aim, for which we must devote plenty of time. No time is more profitably spent than while engaged in prayer. It is spending time with our best Friend. If you pray in such a hurry that you can scarcely remember what you prayed for, you have undoubtedly prayed “amiss.”

Few people really pray through. We can pray until there comes an assurance from heaven that our prayer has reached the throne of grace and that all is well. These are the prayers that are really answered. O friend, take time to be holy spend much time in secret with Jesus alone. It certainly pays!

2. Do not “waver.” James 1:6 says, “Ask in faith; nothing wavering.” The word “waver” here is another word for “doubt.” James goes on to say, “He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.” Doubts will drive the soul out of its course and keep it from reaching the throne of grace, as wind will drive a rudderless ship at sea and keep it from reaching its harbor. This is the comparison the apostle James is making. We will do well to heed his instructions for James was a great man of prayer. In a sermon on prayer Charles G. Finney said that after James was dead it was found that his knees were callused, like a camel’s knees, by praying so much. To this Finney added: “Ah, here was the secret of the success of those primitive ministers! They had callused knees.”

Let it be remembered that many people have occasion for doubt: they are not walking in the light; they are not sincere; they are not praying in divine order, and they are asking “amiss;” but when we are certain that our sins are all under the blood, and we are faithfully walking in the light “as He is in the light,” and those things for which we are asking are in accord with God’s perfect will, there is no reason for doubting, for we can boldly lay hold on the promises of God, for they are “yea” and “Amen” to those who believe. All will be tempted to waver, but this we must refuse to do having the personal assurance that God lives today and answers prayer in the same old-fashioned way as He did in Elijah’s day.

3. Do not try to pray around certain issues. One man prayed until daybreak, but did not receive the blessing of the Lord until he confessed His Name: In Genesis 32:27 the angel said to Jacob, “What is thy name?” and when he confessed, saying, “Jacob,” (which means “supplanter,” that is, “to supersede (another) especially by force, trickery or treachery”), then the Lord blessed him saying, “Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” His new name “Israel” means “A Prince of God.” In Genesis 27:19 you will read where Jacob lied to his aged, blind father saying, “I am Esau, thy firstborn,” thus stealing Esau’s blessing. This sin had to be confessed. Jacob could not pray around the issue and obtain the blessing of the Lord.

Honest praying will bring the soul face to face with any unfinished business, or unpleasant situations which must be adjusted and cleared up if we are to expect an answer to our prayers. As long as any business is left unfinished our prayers will be hindered and unanswered. It takes courage and grace to pray through, and say yes to every suggestion of the Holy Spirit, but God’s grace is sufficient. Make it a rule never to attempt to pray around any issue which the Spirit may bring to your attention, but courageously pray “Thy will be done,” and faithfully follow the leading of the Holy Ghost.

4. Do not ramble in prayer. Ramble means, “without an aim or goal,” and “to talk in a desultory or pointless fashion.” This is the way some people pray! God is an intelligent being and must be addressed in an intelligent manner. This is not to say He will not hear and understand the prayers of the uneducated! Although prayer is a matter of the heart, we are to use our best thoughts as we present our requests unto the Lord. This does not mean that we are to elaborate on the requests we bring to Him; this would create bondage; but just simply pray as the Holy Spirit leads, and God will hear and answer that which is in accord with His will. Pray to the point; tell Jesus plainly how you feel, and just what the need is; He is waiting to help you now.



John T. Hatfield told of a peculiar incident which occurred in one of his revivals. "An aged German lady had attended the services faithfully and one day was brightly converted. She was very happy, went home and related her wonderful experience to her husband, who had not attended the services. He became hungry for an experience that would make him happy too. On a certain day the old lady was seen coming to church leading her husband by the hand. She directed him to a front seat where he listened while the Word was preached. At the close of the sermon when the altar call was made she took him by the hand and led him to the altar, where he knelt and buried his face in his hands. The old lady stepped back and looked very critically at her husband, and his exact position at the altar, then she said brokenly, 'Shust about nine inches to the north, Shames.' The old gentleman immediately removed the required distance and the old

lady said, 'Dat will do, Shames.' The old man at once arose and said, 'I haf got Him! I haf got Him! Shesus saves me. Praise te Lort!' Undoubtedly the old lady had acquainted her husband with the minutest details of her conversion and she had instructed him to kneel in the identical position and location where she had received the blessing. In simple, childlike faith, the old gentleman followed directions, and, sure enough, God blessed his soul."

My friend Evangelist James Miller tells of an occasion when "Uncle Bud" Robinson was called to pray for the healing of a saint of God. Brother Robinson prayed this prayer: "O Lord, we love Thee too well to doubt Thee, and Thou lovest us ,too well to disappoint us, Amen." Certainly; God will answer such simple prayers of trust and faith in Him as they ascend from an honest heart.

5. Do not use prayer as a mere convenience. The majority of people say prayers and receive no attention from God. Some folk use prayer merely as a fire escape -- only when in trouble. We need not go outside the churches to find this type of people. There were many who prayed during the war who never tried it before. They were willing to try anything to bring their soldier boys home safely; yet many of these people never offered a prayer of praise to the Lord for their son's safe return! They are like the ten lepers whom Jesus healed: only one returned to give God praise. Jesus said to him, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" Luke 17:17.

Prayer is not merely a convenient tool for use at crisis times and in adverse circumstances: it is the very spiritual breath of the child of God, and his means of communion and fellowship with the Father in heaven. He who does not commune and fellowship with God in prayer cannot reach Him in the hour of distress and need! What parent would want a child to ask, or make an appeal only when in want or in distress? Neither does our heavenly Father want us thus to pray. There are times to pray purely in adoration, thanksgiving, and praise to God without a mention of petition. These times are the richest and sweetest in one's prayer-life, and are always accompanied with a special blessing from the Lord. This lesson well learned, will afford a new joy and delight in prayer which the majority of people have not experienced.

6. Do not expect God to grant that which His Word denies. This is one of the main reasons we should read the Bible daily. The Word of God reveals the will of God! Seek earnestly to know His will, then pray accordingly.

Jesus speaks of those who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain." They failed however, to consider the will of God in the matter; nor did they seek to know what the will of God was. James continues by saying, "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow... Ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that." James 4:13-15.

Rev. Forman Lincicome says, "We should make a study of God's will. There is His will of grace, and His will of government. His will of grace is plainly revealed in His Word. It is that we should be saved and cleansed from all sin and by and by be glorified in His presence. His will of government is His particular plan for my life. God has every life planned, and if we find that 'plan or place, we will be happy and labor at a very great advantage. The will of God should have the largest place in our prayers. So let us see that our prayers run parallel with God's will so that God may have the chief place."

By careful study of God's Word, and by humbly asking Him, we can know what His will and plan is for each day in our lives. Upon knowing this, we can pray intelligently for the needed grace, strength and wisdom to carry us victoriously through; "more than conquerors through Him that loved us, and gave Himself for us." Praise the Lord.

7. Do not expect an answer to faithless prayers. The Word of God teaches us that it is "the prayer of faith," that brings results. James 5:15. Not only is this true in regards to the healing of our bodies, but it is equally true concerning any prayer we pray. The apostle James also tells us if anyone does not pray in faith he need not think he shall receive anything of the Lord. (1:7). Too many people pray as if they were participating in a chance game -- "if it works, alright, but if not, I am not out anything." This type of praying is never answered. When we pray we must believe: as we believe we shall receive.

When praying, faith is vitally necessary; in fact "without faith it is impossible to please Him." Hebrews 11:6. Faith is the connecting channel between our needs, whether they be of a physical or spiritual nature, and God's limitless resources to supply those needs.



All doubt must give way for believing faith in any approach to God. Paul ascertained this for he said, "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath or doubting." Timothy 2:8.

It would surprise us to know how many people there are who pray as a force of habit, and never really expect any answer to their prayers. Such have never been taught to pray by the Saviour. Still others pray, but if the case seems hard or impossible to their thinking they take an attitude of, "I hardly think it will work this time, but if it does not, I am not out anything." This is a faithless prayer, and most certainly will not be answered. We must know beyond question, we are asking in accord with God's will, then lay hold on the infallible promise, "Ask, and it shall be given you," never doubting, and it shall come to pass in due time. We must literally repose in the arms of faith.

Never worry about results: that is in God's hands, now that you have committed all to Him, and in His hands is the only safe place to leave all. "He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against that day." Someone said, "Worry kills more people every year than all other diseases combined. It is the malady that opens the way for the entrance of a very large percent of the other disease with which the human body is afflicted." It has also been fittingly said, "When you worry, you cease to trust; when you trust, you cease to worry." Let us all pray for such faith as is expressed in the following lines:

"O for a faith that will not shrink, Though pressed by every foe;  
That will not tremble on the brink  
Of any earthly woe.  
"Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,  
And looks to that alone; Laughs at impossibilities, And cries, 'It shall be done.'"

8. Do not give up until the answer comes. In His own good time and manner, God will answer every request and grant every petition that ascends to Him out of a pure heart in faith believing, provided it is within the bounds of His will. Multiplied millions of prayers have been answered: prayer is an art and practice as old as the creation of mankind. It is God's signal manner of communication with His highest creation -- man! He devised and inaugurated prayer for His glory and man's good. Being the Author of prayer, He will most certainly answer. Therefore, let us not waver nor worry, but trust and believe, Perhaps the thing that causes much impatience on our part is that we do not always receive the answers to our prayers as soon and in the manner we had expected! There is a secret to learn at this point -- "wait on the Lord; wait patiently." Psalms 27: 14, and 37: 7. David prayed thus: "Let none that wait on Thee be ashamed." Psalm 25:3. By not "waiting on the Lord" we automatically give up the hope of receiving the answer: we will not receive an answer if we give up.

Daniel prayed three weeks, but finally prevailed and the Lord answered him. (10:2). Some have prayed for years before receiving a certain answer; others have died without seeing the answer to certain of their prayers, but God in His great mercy, love and grace will most surely answer in His time and way. Pray on dear Pilgrim: God hears you and will answer your prayer.

## **A PRAYER**

By A. J. Baughey

Search my heart, try my reins, Know my thoughts, Oh Lord; Make me pure within, without, According to Thy Word  
Let the holy fire descend, Burning out the dross;  
Refine my gold and make me whole, My heart fill with Thy love.  
Teach me Lord, to watch and pray, And keep my eyes on Thee;  
Then shall I claim Thy promises, And sinners win to Thee.  
Then when my work on earth is done, And I have "kept the faith;"  
I too shall join that blood-washed throng,  
And sing, "Redeemed by grace."  
O, come along, dear brother, come, And know this joy within;  
Look to the mighty Lamb of God, To free you from all sin.  
Then when upon the streets of gold, In heaven's home so fair;  
We'll meet again our loved ones dear, There'll be no parting there.

(Composed January 15, 1946.)



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