

Prayer: Power and Intimacy with God

by Dr. Gary S. Linton, Ph.D.

Copyright: Ministrymaker Ministries, Inc. 2017

Websites:

Ministrymaker Ministries <https://www.ministrymaker.com>

Ministrymaker University <https://www.ministrymaker.com/mmu/>

Ministrymaker Ministerial Fellowship <https://www.ministrymaker.com/mma/>

Those who have left the
deepest impression on this
sin-cursed earth have
been men and women of
prayer.

D. L. MOODY

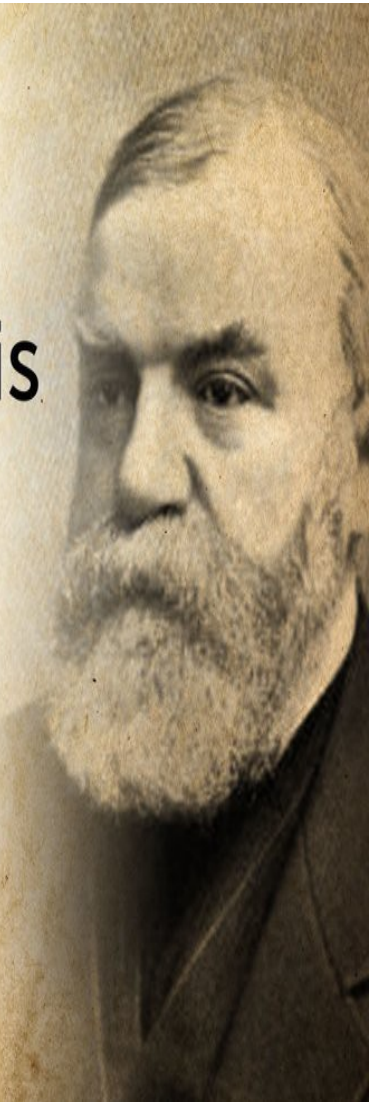


Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Prayerlessness a Sin	5
10 Reasons Christians Don't Pray	12
How to Pray Like Jesus	17
Keys to Effective Praying	20
12 Hindrance to Prayer	26
Spiritual Warfare: Battling the Strong Man	32
Praying the Will of God	39
If You Could Ask God for Anything	49
Guidelines to Fasting and Prayer	59
When God Says No	65
Persistence in Prayer	78
The Lord's Prayer	84
Authority of the Believer	95
When Solomon Finished Praying	103
How to Pray in the Spirit	106
Q&A on Speaking in Tongues	108
God is Able	113
How to Build Faith in Prayer	120
Positioning Yourself to Hear the Voice of God	124
My Personal Prayer Time	127

Introduction

Whatever Happened to the Praying Church?

Lacking the Power of Prayer

There is power in prayer. Prayer is one of the most untapped resources of the church and the body of Christ. Today's church gathers for coffee, donuts and fellowship rather than prayer. Whatever happened to the prayer and tarrying meetings of yesteryear? "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

Too Busy to Pray

This is the very reason why we are not seeing the power of God manifest in our midst today. R.A. Torrey said it ever so clearly, "We are too busy to pray, and so we are too busy to have power. We have a great deal of activity, but we accomplish little. Many services, but few conversions; much machinery, but few results."

I am just old enough to remember, as a young man, arriving at church to see the altars filled with people praying. I can remember the time when we had a great worship service, sermon and altar call followed by people lingering around the altar seeking the face of God. A sight rarely seen today. We have forgotten the promise of God, "You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13).

The Delivering Power of Prayer

The power of God fell on Pentecost because the 120 were gathered in prayer. "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer" (Acts 1:14). The lame man was healed as Peter and John were on their way to the temple to pray (Acts 3:1). Peter was arrested and "kept in prison, but prayer for him

was being made fervently by the church to God” and as a result he was set free and after his release he “went to the house of Mary, where many were gathered together and were praying” (Acts 12:5 and 12).

Lacking Intimacy with God

We are not only lacking the power of God in today’s church but also intimacy with God. The essence of the life of the believer should be in knowing God. “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). The writers of scripture actually knew God intimately. Paul said, “I know whom I have believed” (2 Timothy 1:12). “That I may know Him” (Philippians 3:10). This was the Apostle Paul’s longing and should be ours as well.

The following chapters were originally preached in the various churches I pastored and are currently posted, in part, on our website, <https://www.ministrymaker.com>. Hopefully, as you read and study them, they will stir within you, afresh and anew, a longing for God and His power. “As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God” (Psalm 42:1-2)

Prayerlessness a Sin

In 1 Samuel, Israel demanded a king who would rule over them as one of the judges of Israel. They wanted to be like the other nations. Samuel told them in doing so they had rejected God as their king. Nevertheless, they persisted and God gave them the king they desired. Samuel said, "Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you, but I will teach you the good and the right way" (1 Samuel 12:23).

How often do we want to be like everyone else? We want to be just like the world. Sadly, even the church attempts to mimic the world. The Bible strictly warns us against this. We are exhorted, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2).

"See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ" (Colossians 2:8).

This also applies to the religious world. Speaking of the religious leaders of His day, Jesus said, "Be not ye therefore like unto them" (Matthew 6:8).

As pastors, when people are rebellious toward God and/or the church, it can be frustrating and exhausting. However, we must remain steadfast in our love, instruction and prayer for them. "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (2 Timothy 2:24-25).

Samuel had such a love, commitment and faithfulness to the people of God. "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you, but I will teach you the good and the right way" (1 Samuel 12:23). We must continue to love and teach people "the good and the right way" regardless of their behavior and rebellion. We must also be committed to continuously taking them before the Lord in prayer.

This does not just apply only to leaders praying for their congregation, but also us praying for our leaders. "I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and

thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority” (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

What is your prayer life like? Do you throw up an occasional prayer as things arise, or do you have a time set apart daily for spending quality time with the Lord in prayer? In our text, Samuel is clearly saying that it is a sin for us not to pray.

9 Reasons Prayerlessness is Sin:

1. Prayerlessness Does Those Around Us a Disservice – 1 Samuel 12:23

Even in their rebellious state Samuel would have been doing them a disservice not to continue to pray for them. We, likewise, are doing those around us a disservice when we fail to pray for them. Today, like never before, people desperately need our prayers.

Paul urges that prayers should be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Are we praying for our leaders? We have no right to complain about our leaders if we have not been consistently praying for them. What about your pastor? He needs your prayers.

Pastors often fight major spiritual battles as your spiritual leader that few are aware of. They desperately need your prayers. Make a commitment today to doing spiritual warfare for your church, your pastor and our leaders as a nation.

2. Prayerlessness is Disobedience

We are commanded to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). “Men ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1); “But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly” (Matthew 6:6).

Failure to pray is direct disobedience to the command and will of God. If you do have a consistent prayer life, you should be encouraged that you are obeying God's Word, will and plan for your life.

3. Prayerlessness Reveals Our Unwillingness to Let God Work in Our Life

It was said of Jesus, "He withdrew from them (His disciples) about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to pray, saying, Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done. Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground" (Luke 22:41-44).

Jesus, in the flesh, did not want to go to the cross. He knew what it would be like. He would not only face the physical and emotional pain of the cross, but God's wrath and separation from the Father, with whom He had experienced fellowship with throughout eternity past. He wrestled with Father God in fervent prayer and fully surrendered to His will.

It's in prayer that we allow God to mess in our lives. It's in our personal prayer experience that we often wrestle with God, our will is broken, and we surrender to His will. Not to pray is a refusal to let the Holy Spirit work in our life. When we have a consistent prayer life, we are constantly giving God the opportunity to work in our life. It's only then that true surrender takes place.

4. Prayerlessness is Negligence of a Divine Privilege Purchased at a Great Price

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

"Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that

is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith” (Hebrews 10:19-22).

Are we neglecting this divine privilege purchased for us at Calvary? Sadly, far too many of God’s people are guilty of being negligent of this great privilege. Isaiah cried out saying, “And there is none that calleth upon Thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee” (Isaiah 64:7).

When Jesus went to the cross, suffered and died, the veil of the temple was ripped in two. This signified there would never again be anything keeping man out of God’s presence when we come to Him through Jesus. Not to spend regular time with God in prayer is to neglect this divine privilege purchased at such a great price.

When we consistently spend time with the Father in prayer, we are taking advantage of this great privilege of entering God’s presence and experiencing a touch and glimpse of His glory. “By Whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:2). Let’s lay hold of this precious privilege purchased for us on Calvary.

5. Prayerlessness Demonstrates Our Independence

Jesus said, “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

The Psalmist said, “Unless the Lord builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the Lord guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain” (Psalm 127:1).

Not spending regular time with God in prayer demonstrates we think we can handle things on our own. Spending regular time with Him in prayer shows we are completely dependent upon Him. Apart from Jesus we can do nothing (John 15:5).

6. Prayerlessness Reveals Our Unbelief

The Bible says, “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed” (Romans 10:14a)?

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6).

“This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have desired of Him” (1 John 5:14-15).

If we knew for certain that if we asked God for something we would get it, wouldn't we pray? Not to spend time in prayer reveals we don't really believe God will hear and answer our prayers. We all struggle with unbelief, but if we are spending time daily with God in prayer, it reveals at least a degree of faith or we wouldn't be praying.

If we didn't have an element of faith that God hears and answers prayer, we wouldn't take the time to pray at all. Let's go boldly before the throne of grace saying, “God, I'm here praying because I believe in You and Your Word. If I didn't believe, I wouldn't be here praying. Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief” (Mark 9:24).

7. Prayerlessness Opens the Door for Other Sins

When Jesus came to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray, He told His disciples, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation” (Luke 22:40). He then withdrew Himself to pray alone. After praying a while, He returned to find them asleep and said, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not enter into temptation” (Luke 22:46).

In The Lord's Prayer, Jesus commanded us to pray, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (Matthew 6:13). Jesus commanded us to pray that we

would not be tempted. Not to pray leaves us wide open to temptation, sin and failure.

We all experience times of temptation and battles with the flesh. Let's face it, our flesh is weak. This is why Jesus exhorted the disciples and us, "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41).

Spending regular time alone with God in prayer minimizes temptation and failure. I wonder if things would have been different if the disciples had been praying instead of sleeping (Luke 22:30-46 and Matthew 26:36-44).

8. Prayerlessness Hinders Revival

Just before the day of Pentecost, "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer" (Acts 1:14) and three thousand people were saved.

Just prior to a lame man being healed and another two thousand being saved, "Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth hour, the hour of prayer" (Acts 3:1).

After being threatened not to preach or teach in the name of Jesus, "they went to their own company" and "they lifted up their voice to God with one accord" (Acts 4:23-24). As a result, "the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31).

As a result of praying, "There came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance" (Acts 2:2-4).

Peter then preached, and those who had gathered were “pierced to the heart; and those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls to the church” (Acts 2:37 and 2:41).

Not praying hinders revival, but constant concerted praying helps to usher in revival.

9. Prayerlessness Proves God Isn't First in Our Lives

Jesus said, “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness” (Matthew 6:24, 6:33).

John exhorts us, “Little children, keep yourselves from idols” (1 John 5:21).

God demands to be number one in our life. Failure to spend regular time with Him in prayer reveals He isn't first in our life. However, if we spend regular time with God in prayer, it proves we are at least attempting to put Him first. Let's commit to spending time daily with God in prayer.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, forgive me for my lack of prayer. Give me the desire, commitment and discipline to seek You daily in prayer, putting You first in my life, in Your name amen.

10 Reasons Christians Don't Pray

Did you know that the average Christian spends less than 10 minutes each day in prayer? In Luke 18:1 Jesus said we “ought always to pray, and not to faint.” We are exhorted to “pray without ceasing” in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 and [prayerlessness is called sin](#) in 1 Samuel 12:23. The disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray in Luke 11:1, not necessarily how to pray.

Why Christians Don't Pray

1. **We don't believe (Hebrews 11:6, Romans 10:14).** The Bible says, “He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6). We must really believe “He is” or we will never come to Him in prayer. If we don't come to Him in prayer we inevitably don't really believe.

We don't believe God will hear or answer our prayers. We either don't believe He is able to answer our prayer, our request is too big for Him, He can't handle it, He's too far removed (transcendent), or He doesn't really care enough to intervene on our behalf.

Paul wrote, “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed” (Romans 10:14)? We are unable or unmotivated to call on Him because of our unbelief. Think about it, if we knew if we asked Him for something right now He would grant it, would we not go to Him in prayer? Of course, any of us would.

Let me encourage you, nothing is too hard or difficult for Him (Ephesians 3:20, Genesis 18:14, Job 42:2, Jeremiah 32:17 & 27, Luke 1:37, Matthew 19:25-26). God does care and desires to meet our every need (1 Peter 5:7, Philippians 4:19). We must correct our thinking and then we will be free to seek Him in prayer (Proverbs 23:7a).

2. **The weakness of our flesh (Mark 14:37-38).** “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Mark 14:38). Our flesh is opposed to anything spiritual and will fight us all the way. Paul said, “For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, for these are in contrary to one another, so that you may not do

the things that you please” (Galatians 5:17). If you want to see how weak your flesh is try praying for an entire hour (Mark 14:37).

3. **We lack spiritual discipline.** We may be saved, sanctified and Spirit-Filled, but without discipline we will never spend quality time with God in prayer. The Psalmist wrote, “Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass” (Psalms 37:4-5).

Notice the verses says, “Delight yourself in the Lord, commit your way to the Lord.” Many have the desire to pray but never get around to it. We may delight in the Lord and desire to spend time with Him but it takes commitment and discipline if we are to follow through on our desire and spend time with Him in prayer. No one ever spends regular quality time in prayer without commitment and discipline.

We must have a resolve that nothing will get in our way of spending time with God. It will help to set apart a specific time for daily prayer. Once we get use to it, it will become easier and easier. It is important that we don't give up if we happen to fall short and miss a day. If you miss one day just take up where you left off the next day and keep pressing on.

4. **We've left our first love.** Jesus said to the church of Ephesus, “I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent” (Revelation 2:4). We no longer have that enjoyment of God's presence we once had. We have left our first love and must return. “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him” (Psalms 34:8).

Like many couples, we start off loving spending time with each other and as time goes on we let the fire die out and spend less and less time with each other. At the beginning of the relationship nothing could keep us apart. It's the same with our relationship with God. We have forgotten that “in Your (His) presence is fullness of joy; at Your (His) right hand there are pleasures forever” (Psalms 16:11).

5. **We don't want God to interfere in our life.** Hudson Taylor said “Whenever we truly get alone with God, He'll deal with our lives.” When we get alone with God in prayer, we put ourself in a place for God to work in our life.

Like the rich young ruler He begins to put His finger on things in our life (Matthew 19:16-22). Not to spend time in prayer shows we are unwilling for God to mess around in our life. Let's expose ourself to Him in prayer allowing Him to do what He desires in us. We will be the better for it.

6. **There's sin in our life.** John Bunyon said, "Prayer will make a man cease from sin as sin will entice a man to cease from prayer." Think about it, when we have had failure in any area, we are less likely to spend quality time with God. It's usually on our part. We feel guilty and unworthy and unmotivated to approach Him. This is why we must keep ourself in right standing and immediately make things right with Him when we have failed (1 John 1:5-9).

Actually, when we have failed, the first thing we should do is boldly run into His presence. The Bible says, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

Notice, we are to approach the throne of grace with boldness in order to obtain mercy and find grace. To obtain mercy denotes we have messed up in some way and therefore we are in need of mercy. When we have failed, let's boldly run to Him instead of running away from Him.

7. **Laziness.** Prayer is often laborious. It was said of Epaphras that he was "always labouring fervently for you in prayers" (Colossians 4:12). Prayer takes effort and work if we are praying as we ought. Paul requested of the Romans, "I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in your prayers to God for me" (Romans 15:30). We must strive in prayer to God. Therefore, our lack of prayer is often the result of laziness.

We are exhorted, "not slothful (lazy or sluggish) in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11). "That ye be not slothful (lazy or sluggish), but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Hebrews 6:12). Prayer demands thought, concentration, effort, resolve and persistence. Let's discipline ourselves in seeking the face of God. Isaiah cried, "There is none that calleth upon Thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee" (Isaiah 64:7). Let's stir ourselves to lay hold of God with all we have within us.

8. **We don't prioritize prayer.** We don't have time to pray or more accurately, we don't make time to pray. Other things take priority over prayer. This is proof of

idolatry (1 John 5:21). We are to “seek first His kingdom and His righteousness” (Matthew 6:33).

Even those in full time ministry let things sneak in to rob us from spending quality time with God in prayer – sermon preparation, visitation, church administration, counseling, etc. These things are often spiritual in nature. Nothing should take priority over time with the Lord. Martin Luther said, “I have so much to do that I shall have to spend the first three hours in prayer.”

9. **We become discouraged.** Jesus said, “Men ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1). We can often become fainthearted when we don’t see the results to our prayers right away. We get discouraged and give up.

Jesus goes on to teach us a parable of a widow who goes to an unjust judge seeking help. The judge seems to ignore and refuse to listen to her. She is undaunted by his refusal and relentlessly continues going to him with her request until he says, “Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me” (Luke 18:4-5).

Jesus went on to say, “Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth” (Luke 18:6-8)?

Jesus is challenging us in this parable not to ever give up. Though the answer to our prayer does not come immediately, we are to continue seeking God until we see the results we are seeking. This persistence in prayer is the type of faith God is looking for in His people.

10. **We lack the spirit of prayer.** The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Prayer. Paul wrote, “You have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry out, Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15). “Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, “Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6).

When we are adopted into the family of God through the new birth, God’s Spirit begins to reside within us and cries out to the Father in prayer. If we do not have a

sense of the Holy Spirit crying out to God from within us we may not have received His Spirit through the new birth.

If we have been born again and we aren't stirred by the Spirit of prayer, perhaps we need a fresh charge of this Spirit of Prayer or we need to be filled anew with the Holy Ghost. Let's ask God to fill us afresh and anew with His Holy Spirit. When we are filled with the Holy Ghost, we will find the Spirit of God crying out from within us in prayer and praise.

Disciplining ourselves with time in God's Word and prayer will help to rekindle this in our life (Ephesians 5:18-19 and Colossians 3:16). I have noticed, the more time I spend in prayer, the more I sense the Holy Spirit crying out from within me to God.

Prayer: Father, forgive me for my lack of faith, for letting things take priority over spending time with You, for being negligent in my prayer life, and becoming faint hearted. Please fill me with Your Holy Spirit and help me to seek You in prayer as I should. In Jesus' name, Amen!

How to Pray Like Jesus

Every Christian should desire to be more like Jesus. One of the most effective ways to be more like Him is to emulate His prayer life. “He that says he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked” (1 John 2:6). “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children” (Ephesians 5:1).

Jesus' Pattern of Prayer

1. **He prayed early in the morning.** “And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (Mark 1:35). Jesus put the Father first, rising early in the morning to spend time with Him and so must we. We must give Him the first of our day before we do anything else. Jesus rose early in the morning to seek the face of God.

If we are to emulate Jesus we also must begin our day with prayer. Joshua began his day seeking God and as a result won the battle against Jericho (Joshua 3:1 and 5:13-15). We must seek the face of God first thing before the day's battle begins. Jesus knew this and that's why He rose early to pray before the day's battle began. We too must rise early to pray following Jesus' example.

2. **He prayed in a solitary place.** Jesus “departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (Mark 1:35). There are times to pray publicly, but we need regular times alone with God as well. Jesus said, “But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly” (Matthew 6:6).

Jesus knew to have quality time with the Father He had to be completely alone where there would be no interruptions or distractions. It's in the solitary place that our relationship with God is developed. I find in the early hours of the morning my time with God is less likely to be interrupted. If we are to pray like Jesus prayed, we must have a daily time of solitude where we are not distracted by phones, computers or anything else.

3. **He prayed fervently.** “Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to

save him from death, and was heard in that he feared” (Hebrews 5:7). He put His entire self (emotionally, spiritually, mentally and His flesh) into His praying. He prayed until He was exhausted and had to have an angel come to strengthen Him (Luke 22:43). It’s usually in times of great distress that we pray the most fervently.

Jesus was no different. When facing the greatest battle of His life it was said of Him, “And being in agony He was prayed the more fervently” (Luke 22:44). The early church emulated this facing threats for preaching the gospel, “They lifted their voices to God with one accord” (Acts 4:24). When facing trouble with Peter’s arrest, “Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God” (Acts 12:5). If we are going to imitate Jesus’ prayer life we must put everything we have into our praying.

4. Jesus prayed with dependency upon the Holy Spirit. “The Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26). Jesus always prayed with complete dependency upon God’s Spirit and we are instructed to do the same. We cannot pray adequately on our own. Jesus said, “Apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). We too must pray with complete dependency upon the Spirit of God. See [How to Pray in the Spirit](#)

5. He prayed in accordance with God’s will. Jesus, being God in the flesh, knew the mind and will of God perfectly and always prayed accordingly. If we are to pray like Jesus we must pray according to God’s will. In so doing we are assured of having our request heard. “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him” (1 John 5:14-15).

The only way we can be sure we are praying in God’s will is to pray the Word of God – His revealed will. We must diligently study the Word of God to know how to pray in accord with His will (2 Timothy 2:15). It’s a good practice to find scripture that pertains to your situation and begin praying the Word of God over it. We can never go wrong using the Word — in so doing, we can be assured we are praying as Jesus prayed.

6. He prayed in faith. Jesus said, “All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive” (Matthew 21:22). “Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those

things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mark 11:22-24).

Jesus always prayed in faith, knowing God heard and would grant His request. When we pray according to God’s will (as revealed through His Word) we can pray with faith knowing God desires to answer our prayers. We are to put God in remembrance of His Word (Isaiah 43:26) and we can come into agreement with the Word of God in prayer (Matthew 18:19), knowing He magnifies His Word above His name (Psalm 138:2).

7. He visualized God answering His prayer. Jesus said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing” (John 5:19). Before Jesus acted or prayed He visualized the Father doing it in the spiritual realm. As a result, it materialized in the natural realm. Likewise, we must see God doing the very thing we are asking of Him, which also stimulates our faith.

8. Jesus prayed with persistence. It was said of Jesus that He “prayed the third time, saying the same words” (Matthew 26:44). Jesus prayed the same thing multiple times. He was persistent in His praying. We are not to use vain repetition, however, there is a difference between repetition and vain repetition. We can vocalize meaningless words in our prayers and people often do (like the Pharisees). There is also meaningful repetition like Jesus prayed. He prayed persistently the same thing until He had the breakthrough He needed and desired.

We see [persistent praying](#) taught and exemplified throughout scripture. Elijah stretched himself out over the widow’s son three times until his life returned to him (1 Kings 17:19-21); Elijah prayed for rain and had his servant look for a sign of rain seven times (1 Kings 18:41-44); The Syrophenician woman kept crying out to Jesus (Mark 7:24-30); Jacob wrestled with God until He blessed him (Genesis 32); A friend asking for bread at midnight (Luke 11:5-10); And the widow and the unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8).

Let’s lay hold of God in persistent prayer and not let anything deter us until we’ve received what we are requesting of God (Isaiah 64:7). In so doing, we will be emulating Jesus’ prayer life.

Keys to Effective Praying

What are the secrets to having an effective prayer life? James 5:17-18 says, “Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain and it rained not on the earth by the space three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.”

If Elijah could pray that effectively, so can we. An effective prayer life makes a major difference in our lives. It filled Elijah with so much excitement that when he saw just a hint of rain, he outran Ahab all the way to Jezeel, with Ahab in his royal chariot and Elijah on foot. Seeing God miraculously answer our prayers fills us with such anointing, enthusiasm and zeal that we can outrun the best of the enemy’s chariots.

Keys to Effective Praying

1. Our Prayers Must be Divinely Directed (1 Kings 18:36)

Elijah heard from God and prayed accordingly. “The word of the Lord came to Elijah” (1 Kings 18:1). And again, “Let it be known, I have done all these things at thy word” (1 Kings 18:36).

Our first prayer should be directional. “God how do you want me to pray?” I’m convinced that if we would wait on direction from God first, seeking Him and as we receive word from Him, pray accordingly, we would have much more effective prayers.

Prayer must depend on the Holy Spirit, be made in accordance with (Romans 8:26-27, 1 John 5:14-15) and the goal of seeing God’s will implemented in the affairs of men on earth (Matthew 6:10).

2. Pray in the Name of the Lord (James 5:14)

There is power in Jesus' name. So much so that God "Bestowed on Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the father" (Philippians 2:10-11). Praying in His name is not simply a blank check that we sign to get whatever we want. Praying in the name of the Lord Jesus means the following things:

- **We receive power of attorney.** If you are given power of attorney over someone's estate, you are to use the assets for their purposes only. That said, you can use it however you choose. However, there will be a day when you will have to give an account as to how you used the funds. Likewise, there will be an accounting of how we used His name.
- **Pray in God's will (1 John 5:14-15).** Praying in His name means we are praying for His purposes (will) to be implemented in the affairs of men (our affairs and life) on earth (Matthew 6:10).
- **Pray in His merit as opposed to our own (Romans 5:1-2, Hebrews 4:16).** When we come to Him, praying in His name, we come in His merit and not our own. We come in His righteousness, having been made worthy by His finished work on the cross for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- **Pray for that which will glorify God (John 14:13).** When praying in His name we should be praying for that which will bring Him glory. Judge what you are praying for and if it will bring God glory then you are praying rightly and if not don't pray for it.

3. **We Must Pray in Faith (James 5:15, James 1:6-8)**

Jesus said if we have faith we can move mountains (Mark 11:22-24). Below are a few things that will help strengthen your faith.

- Be divinely directed (1 John 5:14-15). Elijah was filled with faith because he knew he was in God's will and acting according to His word.
- Read the Word (Romans 10:17). Spending time reading the Bible builds and strengthens our faith.

- Meditate (Psalm 1:2-3 and Joshua 1:8). We need more than a casual reading of scripture. We must spend time not only reading the Word, but meditating on it. This means we take a passage, verse or phrase and toss it over and over in our mind, letting it sink deep within our spirit. This will build and strengthen our faith.
- Use your imagination (John 5:17 and 19). Visualize God doing what you're praying for and see it as completed. Jesus saw what the Father was doing in the spiritual realm before He did anything, and then acted accordingly. If we really believe something, our imagination will be stirred which will also stir our faith.
- Pray in the Spirit. Jude said, "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit" (Jude 20). Paul said, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Ephesians 6:18).

4. We Must Be Bold in Our Prayers (1 Kings 17:1, 18:44)

Elijah was bold in two ways:

- He was confident in his declaration, and in what he believed God was going to do. Then he declared it.
- He was bold in what he prayed for:
 - Elijah prayed that it wouldn't rain until he said it would (1 Kings 17:1).
 - He prayed expecting life to come back into the widow's son (1 Kings 17:19-22).
 - There had been a drought for three and a half years. Elijah dared believe God would make it rain again.

If we are afraid to exercise boldness in our prayer life, we will never experience great effects from our prayers.

Psalms 81:10 says, "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." George Mueller said this meant we should "open our mouth wide in big requests."

5. We Must Pray Specifically

There is a difference between communing and fellowshiping with God and asking God for things to be accomplished for His glory. Elijah needed to see something happen.

He didn't pray in general, "Lord do something to turn the people around." He sought the mind of God, asked how He wanted to pray, then prayed exactly the way He said. If we are to pray effectively, we must be specific in what we are praying for.

6. We Must Pray Fervently (James 5:16-18)

Fervent means to "work hard at, hot, boiling over, to put all you have into your praying." If you are ever in a really desperate place and need someone's help, you won't calmly say to them, "Would you mind helping me for a minute?" No, you'd raise your voice (scream) and say, "Help me now!"

The early church prayed fervently for Peter and God sent an angel and miraculously delivered him out of jail and from the hand of Herod (Acts 12:1-17). It was said of Jesus, "Who in the days of His flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplication with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared" (Hebrews 5:7).

God told Isaiah, "Put me in remembrance; let us argue our case together; state your cause that you may be proved right" (Isaiah 43:26). Let's remind God of His Word and put all we have into our praying.

7. We Must Be Persistent (1 Kings 17:19-21, 18:41-44)

Whatever you're praying for you must not loose heart and give up. True faith believes when we have prayed, we have already received what we have asked for (Mark 11:22-24) and goes on to continue to ask and remind God of our request until the answer to our request has materialized.

Scriptural examples of persistence in prayer:

- The widow's son (1 Kings 17:19-21).
- Elijah praying for rain (1 Kings 18:41-44).
- The Syro-Phoenician woman (Mark 7:24-30).
- Jacob (Genesis 32).
- A friend asking for bread at midnight (Luke 11:5-10).
- The widow and the unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8).

8. We Must Pray with Anticipation (1 Kings 18:41-45)

When Elijah began to pray for it to rain again, after being dry for three and a half years, he prayed with expectancy. He put his head between his legs and prayed. He then asked his servant if he saw anything. He said, "there is nothing". He did this seven times, until after the seventh time the servant said, I see a cloud about the size of a man's hand. When Elijah heard this, he knew the rain was on its way. Pray and keep praying in faith, looking for and expecting your answer, until it manifest itself.

9. The One Praying Must be Righteous (James 5:16)

The blind man who had been healed said, "We know that God does not hear sinners" (John 9:31). Sin blocks our prayers from being heard and answered (Isaiah 59:1-2; Psalms 66:18). It's extremely important to understand we have absolutely no righteousness of our own (Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:23).

The only righteousness we will ever have is imputed righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). That is why we need Jesus. He is the substitution for our sins. The moment we put our faith in Jesus as our only hope of salvation and the one who paid the penalty for our sins, we are declared righteous by God.

Jesus' righteousness is put to our account and we are righteous in God's sight. He sees us just as if we had never sinned. From that point on you can pray effectively as a righteous man or woman.

We also should daily ask God to search our heart for anything that may not be right with Him and make it right by confessing it as sin (1 John 1:9). This should be done at the beginning of our prayer time.

We should also ask God to show us anything that might be wrong between us and any other person. If there is anything, we should do our best to make things right with them as well. This assures there is nothing standing in the way of our praying effectively.

Matthew 5:23-24 – “Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

If anyone has done us wrong or offended us in anyway, we must forgive them. “Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him” (Mark 11:25). “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother” (Matthew 18:15).

Prayer: Lord, help us to pray in an effective way as Elijah did, so as to make an impact on this world and see lives changed for Your glory and not merely my personal interest. In Jesus name. Amen!

12 Hindrances to Prayer

To have an effective prayer life we must remove all hindrances to our prayers. If our bank account is overdrawn we try to find the accounting error and fix it. If our car won't start we take it to a mechanic to find the problem and repair the car. Likewise, if our prayer life isn't fruitful we must find the root cause and reverse it.

As we look at possible hindrances to prayer, we inevitably must deal with negatives. However, the reverse side to every negative is a positive. As we explore hindrances to prayer, let's deal with the negative, but not forget to focus on the alternate positive.

Hindrances to Prayer

1. **Having a wrong relationship with God.** The Bible says, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Romans 5:10). Prior to coming to Christ we were at enmity with God.

The first and primary hindrance we must clear up is our relationship with God. We do this by being "reconciled to Him (God) through the death of His Son." The moment we come to Jesus for forgiveness and reconciliation, we are no longer enemies but beloved children.

The opposite of having a wrong relationship with God is maintaining a close and intimate relationship with Him. This is the first step in having a good and fruitful prayer life. Much of our prayer time should be consumed in communing with God.

As we spend regular time in fellowship with the Lord, developing a right relationship with Him, we will begin to discover our prayer life being more and more effective.

2. **Having sin in our life.** Sin is a barrier to fellowship with God and a major hindrance in our prayer life. The Psalmist said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear me" (Psalms 66:18). To regard is to esteem, care for and hold dear to our heart. It is not necessarily something we did or fell into once but

something we cling to. It is something we are clinging to and won't let go of. It may or may not be something that is outwardly visible to others, but something of the heart.

Isaiah said, "Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear" (Isaiah 59:1-2). Sin must be dealt with and taken to the cross. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Looking on the positive side, "If we walk in the light (of His exposure) as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Don't hide or cling to sin of any kind but immediately bring it before God, confessing it, and let the blood of Jesus cleanse you of all sin.

We should continually be asking God to turn His search light on in our heart to expose any area where we may be falling short. This is consistent with maintaining a right relationship with God.

3. **Not believing God.** Do we really believe and expect God to intervene and answer our prayers. [Faith is the primary key to answered prayer.](#) Paul said, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed (Romans 10:14)?"

James wrote concerning prayer, We must "ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways" (James 1:5-8). Clearly unbelief is a major hindrance to prayer.

4. **Having idols in your life.** God demands to be first in our life (Matthew 6:33 and Exodus 20:3). We must not allow anything to take priority in our life above Him. If we do it is idolatry. The elders of Israel came to Ezekiel to inquire of God and God spoke to Ezekiel saying, "Son of man, these men have set up idols in their hearts and put wicked stumbling blocks before their faces. Should I let them inquire of me at all" (Ezekiel 14:3)?

God would not even listen to their prayers because they had “set up idols in their hearts.” In contrast, if we are putting God first in our life, our prayers will flow before the throne of grace unhindered.

5. **Neglecting to pray.** James said, “You have not, because you ask not” (James 4:2). Neglect is inevitably a great hindrance to prayer. Someone will say, “But God knows what I want without my asking. He will do what He wants anyway.” Of course He does, but God wants us to ask. Though God desires certain things for His children, He refuses to act until we ask.

Isaiah cried, “There is none that calls upon Thy name, that stirs up himself to take hold of Thee” (Isaiah 64:7). The writer of Hebrews wrote, “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16). Let’s spend time laying hold of God and telling Him what we need and desire (Psalms 37:4-5).

6. **Having wrong motives.** James wrote, “You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your lusts” (James 4:3). We so often pray with wrong motives. We go to God in prayer thinking, “I don’t care what God desires as long as I get what I want.”

Prayer is about implementing God’s will in the affairs of men (Matthew 6:10 and 1 John 5:14-15). It’s for His purposes and His glory (John 14:13-14). Let’s make sure our motives are right when we seek Him in prayer. If we do, we will find our prayers unfettered.

7. **Being indifferent to God’s Word.** When starting our first church, I went to visit a young man who had missed a few services. He began to complain that God wasn’t answering his prayers. I asked if he had been spending time in God’s Word. He said he hadn’t. I quoted Proverbs 28:9, “He who turns away his ear from listening to the law (Word), Even his prayer is an abomination.” Then I looked him in the eye and said, “Case settled!”

Spending time in the Word is the key to a powerful prayer life. Jesus said, “If you maintain a living communion with Me and My words are at home in you, I command you to ask, at once, something for yourself, whatever your heart desires, and it will become yours” (John 15:7 – Wuest Expanded Translation).

The Word is paramount to maintaining a living communion with the God, praying in accord with His will and maintaining an effective prayer life. See also James 1:22-25; Hebrews 2:1-3; 1 Peter 2:2; Psalms 1:2-3; Joshua 1:8.

8. **Having an unforgiving spirit.** Jesus said, “Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone” (Mark 11:25). If you harbor resentment and unforgiveness toward anyone or anything, including situations and even God, it will greatly hinder your prayer life. You may have been legitimately wronged, but we must forgive as God has forgiven us.

Paul wrote, “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:31-32). A forgiving spirit is essential to a good prayer life. See also Matthew 18:21-35; Colossians 3:13.

9. **Not making things right with others.** Jesus said, “Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:23-24).

Jesus was essentially saying, before you go to God in prayer, do your best to make things right with anyone who thinks you have wronged them in anyway. It doesn’t mean they are necessarily right, but just if they think you have wronged them. If so, do your best to make amends with them. It’s up to them if they will accept your apology or not. You must simply make a sincere attempt before God and the rest is up to them.

The opposite stands true. If someone has offended you, you must go to them and attempt to make things right. Jesus said, “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother” (Matthew 18:15). Notice he said, “If he hears you.” He may or may not listen to you. It is your responsibility to go to him nonetheless, with hopes they will reconcile with you.

You must take care to go to them in the right way. You must not go to them in pride and arrogance, but in humility. As we try to be in right relationships with all we know, we will see our prayer life flourish.

10. **Not keeping your marriage strong (1 Peter 3:1-7).** In addressing the relationship between a husband and wife, Peter ends by saying, “That your prayers will not be hindered” (1 Peter 3:7). The relationship of a married couple can be very powerful in the spiritual realm. It can also be a great hindrance if the relationship is not right. This is why the devil does all he can to come between a couple and make them at odds with one another.

This is also why it is imperative we do all we can to deepen our relationship with each other, fight for one another and quickly reconcile when ever there is strife or disagreement. This is true physically, emotionally, spiritually and even sexually (1 Corinthians 7:1-5). Let’s [fight for our marriage](#) so our “prayers will not be hindered” (1 Peter 3:7).

11. **Being a stingy giver.** The wise man wrote, “He who shuts his ear to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be answered” (Proverbs 21:13). There is something about generosity that touches the heart of God. No, we can’t buy the favor of God, but liberality in our giving and attitude reveals something about our heart.

When we give liberally, with a right attitude, it releases the power and generosity of God in every aspect of life. We reap what we have sown. Diligently study Malachi 3:8-12; Luke 6:36-38; 2 Corinthians 9:6-10; 2 Corinthians 9:11-15; Galatians 6:6-10; 1 John 3:16-22.

12. **Satanic resistance.** We are in a constant struggle with the powers of darkness (Ephesians 6:10-12). They will fight us every step of the way. Daniel had been fasting and praying for twenty-one days when an angel appeared to him saying, “Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia” (Daniel 10:12-13). There was a spiritual battle raging from the time he first began praying. The devil hates praying people.

This is why we must engage in spiritual warfare. Prayer is more than just asking and receiving, it is a spiritual battle. We must [bind the strong man](#) and all that stands against us (Mark 3:27, Matthew 16:19, 18:18-20); join in agreement with other believers (Matthew 18:18-20, Acts 4:23-24, 12:5; 12:12); [pray in the spirit](#) (1

Corinthians 14:2); [persist in prayer](#) (Genesis 32; Luke 18:1-8; Daniel 10:12-13); and yes, even fast as Daniel did if we are to gain ground in prayer.

Don't let the devil attack you, but aggressively fight in prayer until you are triumphant over every foe. "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force (Matthew 11:12).

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we humbly come before You asking You to remove all hindrances to us having a [productive prayer life](#). Please forgive us for the hindrances we have allowed to come into our life. We commit to prayer afresh and anew. Increase our faith so we can once again believe You for great things. In Jesus name we pray, Amen!

Spiritual Warfare: Binding the Strong Man

If we want to accomplish anything in either the natural or spiritual realms, we must engage in a spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:12). In Mark 3:27 Jesus said, “No one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder his house.”

When Adam and Eve sinned they turned over the title deed of the earth to Satan. Satan is called “god of the world” in 2 Corinthians 4:4, “prince of this world” in John 14:30 and “prince of the power of the air” in Ephesians 2:2. In 1 John 5:19, the Apostle John said, “We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the grip of the evil one.” We must “first bind the strong man” (Mark 3:27) if we are going to plunder his house – this world over which he rules.

This is particularly true in seeing people “rescued from the domain of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of His beloved Son” (Colossians 1:13). This is what was taking place in Mark 3:14-15 – “He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach, and to have authority to cast out the demons,” which Jesus Himself had been doing.

Below are a few insights that will help us in our spiritual warfare to defeat the strong man:

Adversary

First of all, we must realize that we have an adversary. Peter said, “Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). Paul agreed saying, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Ephesians 6:12).

We have an enemy – adversary that is opposing the things of God, the church and every born again believer. We are engaged in a spiritual battle – spiritual warfare! We have an enemy that is fighting hard against us, the souls of mankind, everyone

who is seeking to do the will of God, and especially men and women of God who are doing what they can to make an impact for the kingdom of God.

“The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force”
(Matthew 11:12)!

Abode

This enemy of ours has a place in which or over which he abides. Our enemy has a place (abode) over which he seeks to control, manipulate, master, and keep away from the kingdom of God and God’s control. There’s a battle taking place against the powers of darkness and the kingdom of God.

Satan’s abode is fourfold:

1. The world. Satan is “the ruler of the world” (John 14:30) or “god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4) until Jesus’ final victory culminates at His return and the “ruler of this world will be cast out” (John 12:31). People have often imagined the devil in Hell shoveling coal, but this is a fallacy.

In the book of Job we see Satan presenting himself before the Lord along with the angels. “And the Lord said to Satan, From where do you come? So Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it” (Job 1:7).

Satan’s abode has been the earth from the time he was kicked out of heaven to this present day (Isaiah 14:12-17, Ezekiel 28:12-19).

2. The unregenerate. In a sense, all unregenerate (lost mankind) are the abode, under the control of or habitation of the devil. The Apostle John said, “We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world (unregenerate man) is under the control of the evil one” (1 John 5:19).

Paul, speaking of our life before Christ, said, we “formerly walked according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of

disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2). This is why the strong man must first be bound before people can be set free to come to Christ (Mark 3:27, Colossians 1:13).

3. Strongholds. “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God” (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). The enemy of God and His kingdom attempts to set up strongholds against God’s people, His church, and anything advancing the knowledge of God in this world. These strongholds must be brought down with spiritual weapons of the Word, prayer and the authority of the believer.

4. Our minds. One of the main arenas the enemy seeks to set up strongholds is the mind. The context of the previous verse brings light to this. “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5). The emphasis here is on imaginations, knowledge and thoughts. Our enemy, the devil, seeks to attack (capture) the thoughts of God’s people and mankind in general.

The devil attacks the mind through deceit, unbelief, doubt, discouragement, trickery, and a host of other ways. In 2 Corinthians 2:11 Paul said, “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.” Devices or schemes is *nóēma* (a neuter noun, derived from *noiéō*, “to exert mental effort”) – the mind, especially its final output (systematic understanding). Note the “-ma” suffix which underlines the result of the thinking. For example, the personal verdict that comes out of using the mind. Our enemy seeks to set up strongholds (his abode) in or against our minds.

Arrest

“No man can enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house” (Mark 3:27). Jesus said He gave us “authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy” (Luke 10:19). “Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 18:18).

Jesus told Peter, “On this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and

whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:18-19).

We must begin to exercise our [authority in Christ](#) and arrest the demonic hosts of hell that are set forth against us, our loved ones and the Lord’s church.

Attack

We are to take the aggression, “The gates of hell shall not prevail against it – His Church” (Matthew 16:18). Gates are there to keep things out. The gates of hell are set up to keep us out. Instead of getting attacked and the church merely reacting – fighting back, we are the ones who are to be taking the initiative and aggression against the gates of hell.

“From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force” (Matthew 11:12). Instead of merely reacting to the attacks of the enemy, let’s begin to aggressively attack and wage war against the gates of Hell and the forces of darkness and take the kingdom by force!

Advancement

“The gates of Hell shall not prevail against it – the church” (Matthew 18:18) suggests the church is to be moving forward making advancement against domain of darkness” (Colossians 2:15; Ephesians 3:10). It’s time the church cease retreating and begin making advancement against “The gates of Hell.” Church let’s begin advancing against the gates of Hell. The “violent men take it by force” (Matthew 11:12). We are to be pressing forward and advancing and not withdrawing and shrinking back.

There are four places in scriptures where we are told to press on – advance forward:

1. Press on to know the Lord. “Let us press on to know the Lord. His going forth is as certain as the dawn; And He will come to us like the rain” (Hosea 6:3). Let’s make advancement in our knowledge and intimacy with the Lord (Jeremiah 29:13; Philippians 3:10).

2. Press on in our calling and purpose in Christ. “I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:12). We are to press on and make constant advancement in laying hold of our purpose and calling in Christ. This suggests that our calling and purpose may be progressive and unfolding as we move forward and make advancement in Him.

3. Press on toward the goal and prize set before us. “I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14). Against any and all odds, we must keep making advancement, moving forward and pressing on toward the goal and vision God has set before us (Proverbs 29:18 and Habakkuk 2:2-3). As we do we will lay hold of the prize that is set before us (Hebrews 12:2).

4. Press on toward maturity in Christ. “Let us press on unto maturity” (Hebrews 6:1). We are to be constantly growing and maturing in our relationship with Jesus. Peter said, “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2). The whole purpose of [The Fivefold Ministry](#) is to bring us to maturity in Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13). It doesn’t matter how long we have been serving the Lord, we are to be continually pressing forward toward maturity in Him.

Let’s press on to know the Lord, in our calling, in the vision He has set before us and maturity in Christ, in so doing we will be making advancement against the gates of hell.

Ambush

A thief doesn’t forewarn the owner of the home prior breaking into his house. He does it using the element of surprise, when he least expects it. A good example of this is Elisha.

The enemy had come against him and he prayed, "Strike this people with blindness, I pray. So He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. Then Elisha said to them, This is not the way, nor is this the city; follow me and I will bring you to the man whom you seek. And he brought them to Samaria. When they had come into Samaria, Elisha said, O Lord, open the eyes of these men, that they may see. So the Lord opened their eyes and they saw; and behold, they were in the midst of Samaria" (2 Kings 6:18-20).

God blinded the eyes of the enemy until they were captured. We must take the enemy by surprise if we expect to win the battle. There's a time and place for sharing our vision with our people and leaders, however, we often do so prematurely and we frequently share our plans with too many and with too broad of a group. If the devil knows all our plans before hand, he will not be taken by surprise. Let's use discretion in what we share and who we share it with. Some may not be ready for what God has shown us.

Anointing

We can't fight spiritual battles on our own. "The yoke will be destroyed because of the anointing" (Isaiah 10:27). Jesus said, "Apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). If we are to break the yoke of the strong man in people's lives we will need God's anointing and power to do so. It's the power of God that pulls down spiritual strongholds in people's lives and this world in which we live (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

This type of anointing does not come by accident. It takes time seated at the feet of Jesus (Luke 10:38-42). When Peter was threatened by the religious leaders we read, "Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them... (and) when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:8 and 13).

There are times when the foothold of the enemy in a person's life or a certain situation may be so strong that it will take seeking the Lord in a time of [fasting and prayer](#) to see it broken.

Avalanche

Mountainous strongholds come tumbling down when God's people bind the strong man (Mark 3:27) and come against the gates of hell under the anointing of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 16:18-19). Praise the Lord!

"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God" (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

I decree strongholds are coming down now in the name of Jesus (Job 22:28) – Praise the Lord! If we will lay hold of the horns of the altar (Isaiah 64:7), like in the days of old, we will once again see the works of the enemy destroyed. Victory is on the horizon! Let's seek the face of the Lord and expect great things to be done for His glory!

Alleluia

When God's people are set free and strongholds begin tumbling down, alleluias will begin to roll. Three times in Luke 15 Jesus said there was rejoicing over the yoke of the enemy being broken. There was the lost sheep (Luke 15:6), the lost coin (Luke 15:9-10), and the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-31). Prodigals are coming home and revival is on its way – Glory be to God!

"Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered: let them also that hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them rejoice exceedingly." ~ Psalms 68:1-3

"Through God we shall do valiantly: for He it is that shall tread down our enemies." ~ Psalm 60:12

Praying the Will of God

Praying the will of God is a must. Many pray for things that may or may not be God's will. It's paramount we discover the will of God and pray accordingly. What's even more amazing is how much time we pray for things that may be in direct opposition to God's will. Learning how to pray God's will results in a more powerful and effective prayer life.

1 John 5:14-15 – “This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have desired of Him.”

3 Things We Are to Have Confidence In:

1. We Know God Loves Us

God loves you. Nothing can ever thwart His love for us. No matter what you are going through, and no matter what you've done, His love for you is unwavering. The Word of God is “yes and amen” concerning this (2 Corinthians 1:20). Consider the following encouraging verses:

- “What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things” (Romans 8:31-32)?
- “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:35, Romans 37-39).
- “Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7).

- “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God” (1 John 3:1).

2. God will Finish what He Started

Paul said, “I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6). Again, “In no way alarmed by your opponents, which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God” (Philippians 1:28).

God does all things well. He doesn’t start something and leave it unfinished. No matter how much you are struggling or how many battles you are encountering, know what God began in you He will finish. He promises to bring you through to a successful conclusion! “For whom he did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son” (Romans 8:29).

3. God Answers our Prayers

Paul said, “For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father” and “In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him” (Ephesians 2:18, Ephesians 3:12). The writer of Hebrews also stressed, “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).

Notice, we are to go before the throne of grace with boldness to obtain mercy. Mercy indicates we have done something wrong that we are in need of mercy for. When we mess up we are inclined to be shy, withdrawn and standoffish. Instead, we should, all the more so, come boldly before God in prayer. We can because His blood was shed for us. “Having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus” (Hebrews 10:19).

The Will of God

God's will should be paramount in the life of every Christian. We must surrender completely to God's will as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46). "Your will be done" may be the hardest words one could ever say. Once we have completely surrendered to the will of God, we must ask God to give us a passion for His will.

Paul had such a passion. When at Phillip's home in Caesarea, Agabus took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles" (Acts 21:11).

Those present begged Paul not to go to Jerusalem. Paul said, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done" (Acts 21:13-14).

The will of God is one of the primary keys to seeing our prayers answered. Jesus sets forth the will of God at the beginning of [the Lord's Prayer](#). "Your kingdom come. Your will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

Our goal must be the implementation of the will of God in the affairs of men. When praying the will of God, we have confidence and assurance that He hears us and "WE KNOW that WE HAVE THE PETITIONS that WE HAVE DESIRED OF HIM" (1 John 5:15).

A few important points to remember:

- If we pray in opposition to God's will He turns a deaf ear to our prayers. It does not mean He can't hear us, but He refuses to listen to any prayer that opposes what He wants.
- God eagerly listens to prayer that lines up with His will. He's actually sitting back anxiously waiting for us to ask Him for the right things. He's not only wanting us to ask, but is longing to answer our requests.

- Praying God's will gives us supernatural faith to see the results of our petition. "WE KNOW that WE HAVE THE PETITIONS that WE HAVE DESIRED OF HIM" (1 John 5:15). Read also James 4:2-3, James 1:5-8 and Mark 11:22-24.

Things We Should Pray Within the Will of God:

There are a few things scripture tells us we can pray that are clearly God's will. Familiarize yourself with the scriptures and points listed below and even memorize them – add them to your prayer list. These are clearly things we know to be the will of God. I am sure there are many other things you can find to pray that are consistent with the will of God but this gives us a place to begin.

When praying I often quote them to God in prayer. He exhorts us, "Put Me in remembrance, let us argue our case together; State your cause, that you may be proved right" (Isaiah 43:26). [Speaking the Word](#) out loud while praying reminds God of His promise, builds our faith and releases the power of God's Word into the spiritual realm. God's Word will not return to Him void or empty, but will accomplish the purpose for which it is sent out (Isaiah 55:10-11).

1. Salvation of the Lost

How can we know we have the petitions that we have asked of Him? Don't we have free will to reject Him if we want? Yes, of course we do, but we typically take the path of least resistance. God will so move in the lives of those we are praying for that it will ultimately be easier for them to surrender to Him than to resist Him.

- "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance" (Psalms 2:8).
- "God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4).
- "God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Bind the strong man in their lives (Mark 3:27), pray persistently for the Holy Spirit to draw them to Jesus (John 6:44) and stand in faith for their salvation. “For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:39).

2. Sanctification

“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification” (1 Thessalonians 4:3). Also read 1 Peter 1:15-16 and 2 Corinthians 6:17. It’s God’s will that we be set apart from sin, self, this world, and set apart unto Him and His service.

Below are a few things that can aid us in the sanctification process:

- God’s Word (John 17:17-18).
- Alertness (1 Corinthians 10:13, Matthew 26:41).
- Humility (1 Corinthians 10:12, Matthew 26:31-35).
- Prayer (Matthew 6:13, Matthew 26:41).

3. Healing

Spiritual, physical, emotional, and mental wholeness is promised to us in the Word and is provided for in the atonement. Study, meditate on and memorize the following verses:

- “I, the Lord, am your healer” (Exodus 15:26).
- “Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:4-5).

- “If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also quicken (give life to) your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you” (Romans 8:11).
- “And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Romans 8:23).
- “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven” (James 5:13-16).

4. Our Daily Needs

Jesus told us to pray for “our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11). We are to ask for our daily needs to be met. “Daily bread” signifies each day as needs arise. This is the life of faith. It’s not what we need for the week, month or year, but for each day. Paul said, “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19). Notice, He will supply all your need, not greed.

God does, however, desire to go above and beyond just our daily needs. Notice, it is in proportion to “His riches in glory” (Philippians 4:19). “God is able to (and will) make all grace abound toward you; that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” (2 Corinthians 9:8). “It is He who gives you power to get wealth” (Deuteronomy 8:18). “The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just” (Proverbs 13:22).

5. Unity in the Body

Jesus prayed, “That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me” (John 17:21). Dr. Francis Schaeffer said that if we are not experiencing unity we are giving the world the right to judge that the Father did not send the Son to be the Savior of the world. On the other hand, if we are unified, we testify through our unity that Jesus indeed is the Savior of the world. Schaeffer called it the great apologetic.

Below are a few things that will assist us in maintaining unity in the body of Christ:

- Be under the covering of the Fivefold Ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16).
- Flee religiosity and sectarianism (1 Corinthians 1:10-18).
- Focus on preaching the gospel (1 Corinthians 1:10-18).
- Focus on our common denominator, the person of Christ (1 John 1:1-3).
- Take a stand against divisiveness and doctrinal error (Romans 16:17).
- Love one another (John 13:34-35).
- Forgive one another (Matthew 18:21-22).
- Cover the sins of others (Proverbs 17:22, 1 Peter 1:22, 1 Peter 4:8).
- Togetherness. “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place” (Acts 2:1). Unity brings with it togetherness.

6. Direction and Wisdom

When we pray for wisdom and direction we must accept by faith that God is showing us the way we should go and walk in it (Proverbs 3:5-6, James 1:5-8). Faith must be appropriated. “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). Even after Paul was given a vision of what to do, he had to conclude in faith he was moving in the right direction. “Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them” (Acts 16:10).

7. Laborers into the Harvest

Jesus instructed the disciples to pray for laborers. He said, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Matthew 9:37-38). It’s significant that Jesus told them to pray for laborers and they were the ones He sent. As we pray for laborers we must also ask, “Lord, is it me you are desiring to send?” When the Lord asked, “Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?” Isaiah responded, “Here am I! Send me” (Isaiah 6:8). What will your response be?

8. The Holy Spirit

Jesus said, “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him” (Luke 11:13)? We can pray for the infilling of the Holy Spirit and be confident that God will grant us our request (Luke 11:9-13). He will not allow the devil to give us a counterfeit.

Serpent and scorpion in verses 11 and 12 were always figurative of the devil or demonic powers. In other words, God will not allow the devil to give us a counterfeit when we come to Him requesting the Holy Spirit. We can pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit with confidence and He will give us just what we request.

We can also pray for [His anointing](#) as we serve Him and know He will endue us with power from on high. The early church waited and sought God for such an enduement of power and received just what they requested (Acts 1:4-2:4, Acts 4:23-31). We should expect nothing less.

9. Boldness

We can pray for boldness in our faith and witness knowing we are praying in the will of God and expect we will receive the request we have asked of Him. The apostles had been arrested and threatened to not speak or teach in the name of Jesus (Acts 4:18). When they were released, they went to their own company and

“lifted their voices to God with one accord” (Acts 4:24). “And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the Word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31).

After we pray for boldness, we must speak the Word of God in faith. As we move in faith and begin to speak, we can expect the Holy Spirit to anoint us with boldness. I’ve experienced this time and time again, as I stepped behind the pulpit, trembling, to preach God’s Word. The Holy Spirit fell upon me enduing me with [power from on high](#) (1 Corinthians 2:1-5).

10. Our Enemies

Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:43-44). Not only should we pray for our enemies, we should also bless them. This is a powerful way to overcome bitterness and resentment in our lives. We overcome the evil others bring against us with good. Paul wrote, “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:20-21).

11. Our Leaders

Paul told Timothy, “I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority” (1 Timothy 2:1-2). We know it’s the will of God to pray for our leaders. Whether it’s our pastor, congress, or the president, God wants us to pray for them regularly. If you are not consistently praying for your leaders, you have no right to complain about them.

12. Spiritual Sight

The psalmist cried, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” (Psalms 119:18). This should be the cry of our heart every day when we read and study our Bible. The god of this world is constantly trying to blind our eyes

to the wondrous things in God's Word (2 Corinthians 4:4). Let's counteract him by asking the Holy Spirit to open our eyes to God's truth and wonders.

Besides prayer, there are a few things we must do to gain spiritual sight:

- **Be born again.** "The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14). We cannot grasp spiritual truths apart from a spiritual awakening, being born again (John 3:1-8).
- **Rid ourselves of religiosity.** There's nothing that blinds us from seeing spiritual truths like religiosity (2 Corinthians 3:14-18). We must strip the veil of religion from our hearts and spirits if we want to experience true spiritual sight. Religion is man made while true spirituality is God given.
- **Be willing to walk in the truth God gives us.** Jesus said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17). If we step out and obey the truth God reveals to us, He will continue to give us additional light. If we do not walk in His revealed light, no further revelation will be given. "For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away" (Matthew 25:29).

If You Could ask God for Anything

If you could ask God for whatever you wanted, what would you ask for? When asked such a question, the first thing that enters our minds reveals our priorities.

Matthew 6:33 – “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

Below are a few scriptural examples of when this type of request actually took place. As we look at these examples, it gives us not only an idea of where our motives and priorities are, but where they should be.

John 15:7 – “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask what you will, and it shall be done for you.”

Pray for Understanding and Wisdom (1 Kings 3:3-5 and 3:9-13)

Solomon had just become king. He walked in the statutes of his father David, went to Gibeon, and there offered a thousand burnt offerings. After offering sacrifices, God appeared to him in a dream and said, “Ask! What shall I give you” (1 Kings 3:5)? God will never say this to you until there has first been a sacrifice. Sacrifice preceded God saying this to Solomon.

Solomon’s response to the Lord was, “Give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil” (1 Kings 3:9). Solomon understood the greatness of the task that was before him. He did not ask for riches, glory or honor. This pleased the Lord because of his request, his priorities and motive.

God responded to him, “Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have you asked for riches, nor the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so

that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days” (1 Kings 3:11-13).

God encourages us to ask and seek for the same. “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and it shall be given him” (James 1:5). This wisdom has been provided us in the sacrifice of Christ. “But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption” (1 Corinthians 1:30).

Solomon admonishes us to seek after wisdom more than silver and gold. “For wisdom is more profitable than silver, and her wages are better than gold” (Proverbs 3:14). “Incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, And find the knowledge of God” (Proverbs 2:2-5). “How much better to get wisdom than gold, to get insight rather than silver” (Proverbs 16:16).

What are our motives? Jesus made it clear that if we seek the right thing everything else we need will be given to us (Matthew 6:33). Our priorities and motives are everything. “You lust and do not have. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures” (James 4:2-3).

I’m not saying we should torture ourselves over our motives. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you proper motives, reveal where your priorities may be amiss, then change them. Move forward seeking first His Kingdom and righteousness (Matthew 6:33)

Ask for a Double Portion of God's Anointing (2 Kings 2:9)

2 Kings 2:9-10 – “Elijah said to Elisha, Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you? Elisha said, Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me. So he said, You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so.”

Context is always imperative to a proper understanding and exegesis of scripture. There are a few things that preempted Elijah saying this to Elisha:

1. **He was a worker.** When Elijah found Elisha, he was “plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him” (1 Kings 19:19). He was a hard worker. Plowing with twelve pair of oxen could not have been an easy job. Jesus always chose workers. The disciples were busy working when Jesus called them (Mark 1:16-20). They put all they had into what they were doing.

Though Levi was dishonest, he was still a hard worker. Paul said he labored more abundantly than all the rest (1 Corinthians 15:8-10). Hebrews 6:11-12 says, “And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” Romans 12:11 – “Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.”

2. **He was a servant.** Before Elijah called Elisha to follow him as his disciple, Elisha was plowing. Jesus said, “It shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave — just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:26-28).

Elisha was a servant first before he received his double portion. It was said of Joshua that he was, “Moses' servant” (Joshua 1:1). Jesus said, “If you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own” (Luke 16:12)? Paul wrote concerning Jesus, “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant” (Philippians 2:6-7).

Disciples are always servants first. Elisha was plowing behind twelve pair of oxen when Elijah called him. Then “he arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant” (1 Kings 19:21).

3. **He gave up all.** “Elisha turned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them and boiled their flesh, using the oxen’s equipment, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant” (1 Kings 19:21).

Elisha gave up all he had to be Elijah’s disciple. He sacrificed all he had and burnt all bridges to his past. There was no turning back. He slaughtered the oxen, burnt the equipment and therefore there was nothing at all left to go back to. He was committed to the Lord’s service from that day forward. There was no turning back.

Jesus’ disciples did no less. James and John left their fishing business, including the hired servants, and followed Jesus (Mark 1:20). They stood to inherit a very lucrative business. Jesus was being followed by a large crowd of people. He gave them three requirements of discipleship, without which He said, they could not be His disciple.

1. **You must make Jesus first in your life.** He said, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:26). He was not literally telling them to hate anyone, but that He must be first in their lives – above and beyond all others.
2. **You must take up your cross.** “Whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:27). The cross was a sign of death. Jesus was saying we must die to ourself, all our personal ambitions, and put Him first.
3. **You must forsake all (possessions).** “Whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:33). When we become His disciple, all we have becomes His. We are merely stewards of those things He gives us. All we have belongs to Jesus.

Elisha sacrificed all he had when he began to follow Elijah (1 Kings 19:19-21). When we forsake all and follow Jesus, the return we receive is so much more than what we leave behind.

Jesus said, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel’s sake, but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life” (Mark 10:29-30).

4. **He followed with resolve.** Elijah told Elisha that he was going on a long, difficult journey to Bethel, Jericho and Jordon. Each time Elisha responds by saying, “As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!” (2 Kings 2:2, 4 and 6). He was determined not to leave his side no matter how difficult the journey.

Are we that committed? Do we have such a resolve to not leave our mentor’s side even when things are difficult? What about when our pastor is facing criticism and division, will we stay at his side? Elijah was committed, no matter how difficult the journey.

Elijah told him, “If you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so” (2 Kings 2:10). Shortly thereafter, Elijah was taken away in a whirlwind. His mantle fell on Elisha, and he received a double portion of Elijah’s anointing. Elisha performed twice the miracles as that of Elijah.

Build the House of God (Nehemiah 2:1-5)

Nehemiah appeared before King Artaxerxes with a sad countenance which was very dangerous. He could have been put to death for being before the King in such a manner. The king asked, “Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart” (Nehemiah 2:2).

So Nehemiah “became dreadfully afraid, and said to the king, May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers’

tombs, lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire? Then the king said to me, What do you request?" So Nehemiah requested, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it" (Nehemiah 2:3-5).

He could have been executed for appearing before the king in such a way. Yet, he was sad despite his fear, and made a bold request from the King. Are we saddened when we see the house of God in desolation? Is our request before God that His house be built/rebuilt no matter what the cost, even if it means sacrificing our comfort, time and labor?

Is it our desire, above all else, to see God's house prospering. Nehemiah had to leave the comfort of the King's palace, challenge God's people to work, organize and even go to battle to see the House of God rebuilt and restored.

Let's seek the face of God, get behind our pastor, and pay any price necessary to see God's house flourishing to the glory of God. Let it be said of us, as it was said of the early church, "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also" (Acts 17:6).

The Lives of God's People (Esther 4-7)

Ahasuerus, ruler of the Persian empire, held a party and ordered queen Vashti to appear before the guests, which she refused to do. As a result, Ahasuerus removed her as queen. He then began to search for a new wife. Eventually, Esther, an orphan raised by her cousin Mordecai, becomes the king's new wife.

Shortly afterwards, Mordecai discovers a plot to assassinate King Ahasuerus. The conspirators are hanged and Mordecai's service to the king is recorded. Mordecai, who sits at the palace gates, refuses to bow down to Haman, an official of the King. Having found out that Mordecai is Jewish, Haman plans to kill not just Mordecai, but all the Jews in the empire.

He obtains Ahasuerus' permission to execute this plan. Esther intercedes before the king, and he ultimately allows the Jews to defend themselves. They are

delivered, and Haman is hanged on the very gallows he prepared for Mordecai (Esther 7:10).

The power of intercession. Esther not only interceded before God for the lives of her people, but also before the King. There were also others in scripture who had such an intercessory spirit.

Moses on Mount Sinai was receiving the ten commandments while Israel was at the foot of the mountain worshiping a golden calf. Moses became furious, broke the tablets, and had 3,000 put to death. Afterwards, he interceded for Israel praying, “But now, if You will, forgive their sin—and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written” (Exodus 32:32). He had such a burden for God’s people that he asked God to either forgive them or take his own name out of the book of life.

Paul had such a passion as well. He was so burdened for his people that he said, “I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh” (Romans 9:2-3).

He said he would rather be separated from Christ than see his kinsmen lost without Christ. God give us such a burden for the souls of mankind. We are promised, “Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance” (Psalm 2:8a).

Let’s ask the Holy Ghost to place a spirit of intercession upon us. I am asking God that He would bring together people who will cry out to God on behalf of His people in these last days like never before, particularly those who have the call of God on their lives. We have a [mandate](#) sent forth from God for intercessors in our day.

“Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare Thy people, O Lord, and give not Thine heritage to reproach” (Joel 2:17).

God is looking for men and women of God who will commit themselves to laying hold of God on behalf of His people (Isaiah 64:7).

Hatred in our hearts (Matthew 14:1-12)

John the Baptist had been thrown in prison by Herod because of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. Because he had been saying, “It is not lawful for you to have her” (Matthew 14:3-4).

“When Herod’s birthday came, there was a celebration, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and Herod was pleased. So much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. Having been prompted by her mother, she said, Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.

Although he was grieved, the king commanded it to be given because of his oaths, and because of his dinner guests. He sent and had John beheaded in the prison. And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother” (Matthew 14:6-11).

How often have we asked the same? If not verbalized, but in our heart. There has been a message preached or counsel given that we didn’t like, and we despised (hated) the messenger in our heart. We see this manifest often in how we respond, act, what we say and do.

We complain and criticize what has been said, preached or taught. It’s not only directed toward our pastors and ministry leaders, but often toward our brothers and sisters in Christ.

“But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another” (Galatians 5:15).

“Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasts great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell” (James 3:5-6).

Notice it, “Defiles the whole body” (James 3:6). If we are not careful, what is in our heart will spew out of our mouth and death will ensue. What is in our heart, if not checked, will come out of our mouth sooner or later.

“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks” (Luke 6:45).

We must watch what is in our heart, guard it diligently, and deal with it before it comes out of our mouth and results in destruction. Once this begins in a church, it will spread like wildfire and eventually “defiles (destroys) the whole body” (James 3:6).

Let’s watch what’s in our heart and eradicate it before it even begins coming out of our mouth. Once it springs forth out of our mouth the damage will have been done, at least in part, and if not stopped death and destruction will ensue.

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23).

Asking Anything in Jesus’ Name

Jesus said, “Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it” (John 14:13-14). This appears to be, as it were, a blank check that has already been signed by Jesus Himself.

It seems Jesus is encouraging us to ask for anything we desire, just sign His name to it and He will grant it. It’s similar to that which God told Solomon, “Ask! What shall I give you” (1 Kings 3:5)? God gave him what He requested and beyond (Ephesians 3:20).

Four keys to praying in Jesus’ name:

1. **Power of attorney.** If you are given power of attorney over someone's finances, you are to use or distribute it for their purposes only. You can use it however you choose. However, there will be a day of accounting when you will give an account as to how you used what was theirs. There will be an accounting one day of how we used His name. When we pray using His name it must be used for His purposes.
2. **In His will (1 John 5:14-15).** Praying in Jesus' name means we are praying for His will and purposes to be implemented in the affairs of men (our affairs and life) on earth (Matthew 6:10).
3. **In His merit as opposed to our own (Romans 5:1-2 and Hebrews 4:16).** When we come to Him, praying in His name, we are coming in His merit and not our own. We come in His righteousness, having been made worthy by His finished work on the cross for us (2 Corinthians 5:21 and Colossians 1:12).
4. **For His glory (John 14:13).** When praying in His name we should be praying only for that which will bring Him glory. Judge what you are praying for and if it will bring God glory, then you are praying rightly. If it will not bring Him glory, then it is something you should not be praying for – “whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Prayer: Lord, I ask you to check my spirit, examine me and show me my motives. I desire to seek Your will and pray in such a way so as to bring glory to Your name and support Your purposes. In Jesus name. Amen!

Guidelines to Fasting and Prayer

Fasting is an example set for us by Jesus. As Christians, we can't go wrong following His example. The Bible says, "He that says he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (1 John 2:6). "Be ye therefore followers (imitators) of God, as dear children, and walk as Christ" (Ephesians 5:1-2). "After He (Jesus) had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry." (Matthew 4:2).

Fasting Defined

"Fasting is primarily the act of willingly abstaining from all food, drink, or both, for a period of time. An absolute fast is normally defined as abstinence from all food and liquid for a defined period, usually 24 hours or several days. Other fasts may be only partially restrictive, limiting particular foods or substances. The fast may also be intermittent in nature. Fasting practices may preclude sexual intercourse (1 Corinthians 7:5) and other activities as well as food."

Motive – Fast Before God, Not Man

Jesus said, "Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you" (Matthew 6:16-18). He was saying we shouldn't flaunt what we are doing when we fast. Flaunting our fast can be spiritually egotistical and prideful which would be seeking man's attention and approval instead of God's.

When we fast, we shouldn't tell everyone what we are doing, put on a sad face and appear as if we are making some great sacrifice. It should be something between us and God alone. That does not mean we can't let our spouse know what we are doing so they know why we are not eating. It also doesn't mean we can't let other people know why we are refusing to eat with them. The point is, it's not something we should flaunt, So you are "not noticed by men, but by your Father."

Have a Specific Purpose in Mind

David Livingston said, “Fastings and vigils without a special object in view are time run to waste. They are made to minister to a sort of self-gratification instead of being turned to good account.”

Fasting is not to be a religious ritual we go through. When we fast, we should have a specific purpose in mind, something we want to accomplish as a result of our fast. It can be for something simple as well as for something complex. So, why fast?

Below are some specific purposes of fasting:

1. Fasting Allows us to Humble Ourselves Before God

Jesus told a parable about two men who went to the temple to pray, a Pharisee and a tax collector. The Pharisee prayed to himself, “God, I thank you that I’m not like other men—extortioners; unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.”

The tax collector, who was considered a notorious sinner, prayed, “Standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me a sinner” (Luke 18:9-13). Jesus’ response to these two was, “I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Luke 18:14).

Fasting, if done the proper way as Jesus describes in Matthew 6:16-18, is a way of humbling ourselves before God saying, Lord, I need you, I am nothing without you, apart from you I can do nothing, I am in complete dependence upon you (John 15:5). Peter said, “Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time” (1 Peter 5:6).

2. Fasting is a Means of Mastering and Subduing our Flesh

Eating is something we must do for survival. If we can deny ourselves what is a necessity of life, then we will be able to master our flesh in other areas. Paul said, “I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified” (1 Corinthians 9:27). He said all those who are able to master the flesh would be granted an incorruptible crown as reward for their discipline. Fasting is a way of mastering our flesh. It is an exercise in self-denial.

Jesus said, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Luke 9:23). If we can deny ourself food and/or drink for a period of time we should be able to deny our flesh of sinful desires and in various disciplines of the Christian life.

When the disciples were asked by Jesus to stand with Him in prayer, they fell asleep and Jesus said, “Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:40-41). If we can take control over the flesh in the area of eating, we can control it in every other area of life.

3. Fasting can be Used in Seeking Help in Times of Trouble

The children of Israel were being defeated in battle and “All the people, went up and came to the house of God and wept. They sat there before the Lord and fasted that day until evening” (Judges 20:26). They desperately needed divine intervention and they sought the Lord in fasting and prayer. After they had fasted they inquired of the Lord saying, “Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease? And the Lord said, Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand” (Judges 20:28).

The Psalmist said, “Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me” (Psalms 50:15). Throughout scripture fasting was used to call on

God in times of trouble. Are you facing a time of trouble and difficulty? My advice is to seek the Lord through a time of fasting and prayer for His deliverance.

4. Fasting can be Used to Seek God for Direction

God told Jeremiah, “Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know” (Jeremiah 33:3). Daniel, while in captivity, saw that seventy years were appointed in the desolation of Jerusalem and he said, “I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes” (Daniel 9:3). As a result, God sent the angel Gabriel to explain to Daniel the seventy weeks which clarifies much prophecy for us today.

5. Fasting can be Used in Seeking God for a Much Needed Breakthrough

Daniel was once again seeking answers from God and had been fasting for twenty-one days. Gabriel appeared to him saying, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days” (Daniel 10:12-13). When a spiritual battle is waging, fasting and prayer can be used to break spiritual strongholds allowing revelation to be released and victory wrought. If the answer and breakthrough we are seeking seems to be withheld from us, an extended time of fasting may be required (Acts 13:1-3).

6. Fasting is an Expression of Mourning or Grieving

Throughout scripture people often fasted as an expression of emotional sorrow over a tragedy. We see this in the case of David grieving over the approaching death of his child (2 Samuel 12:16, 2 Samuel 12:21). Jesus expressed this in answer to the question of John the Baptist’s disciples, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast? And Jesus said to them, Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But

the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast” (Matthew 9:14-15).

We see in Jonah 3:5-7 that fasting was often used in mourning over sin and repentance thereof. Jesus said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3). This is a mourning over our spiritual bankruptcy. There are also times for us to mourn over particular sins that have befallen us.

There are times when fasting is required as mourning over defeat by the enemy to find out what is wrong and how to remedy it as seen in Israel’s defeat before Ai (Joshua 7:1-6). If facing a spiritual battle and defeat, fasting can be used in mourning over our defeat and in seeking out what is wrong so it can be dealt with and remedied. “Lord, why are we not victorious and prospering?”

7. Fasting can be Used to Draw Near to God

Jesus did this at the onset of His public ministry in Matthew 4:1-2. After this time of fasting and prayer Jesus “returned in the power of the Spirit” (Luke 4:14). This is a time when we set aside food and often drink for the specific purpose of drawing near to God.

Moses set aside such a time on Mount Sinai. “Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water” (Exodus 34:28). Fasting is a time to lay hold of God with all that is humanly possible (Isaiah 64:7). “Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you” (James 4:8).

8. Fasting – The Cure for Unbelief

A man brought his son to Jesus saying, “I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him” (Matthew 17:16). Jesus of course cured the child. “Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, Why could we not drive it out? And He said to them, Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, Move from here to there, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting” (Matthew 17:19-21).

Notice Jesus said they could not cast the demon out because of the littleness of their faith and “this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.” Clearly there are times when fasting stimulates greater faith that may be needed for more intense spiritual conflict.

9. Fasting Taps into Spiritual Power

This same instance of fasting being a cure for unbelief also indicates it enables us to tap into additional spiritual power (Matthew 17:14-21). The child in this passage was possessed by an evil spirit and the disciples were unable to cast it out. Jesus said, “This kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting” (Matthew 17:21).

I remember hearing Lester Sumrall telling the story of a person in prison in Manila, Philippines who was tormented by evil spirits. Many people tried to help this person to no avail. He went to assess the situation, but before attempting to do anything he first left and spent time in fasting and prayer. When he returned, he cast the demons out and the person was completely set free.

Many men of God like R. A. Torrey, Charles Finney and D. L. Moody testified to having been fitted with power after long seasons of fasting. Sadly, few today desire God’s power enough to pay the price of fasting. Jesus Himself was endued with power after He had fasted for an extended period. “Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit” (Luke 4:14).

When God Says No

There are an abundance of scripture promises about God answering prayer. A couple that most Christians are familiar with are, "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it" (John 14:14). Then, "All things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive" (Matthew 21:22). Also, "All things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and you will have them" (Mark 11:24). Why then at times do our prayers seem to go unanswered?

I was converted in the mid-seventies, in the midst of the Charismatic movement. There were a lot of good things in that movement, but there were also a lot of extremes. I remember hearing one man preach that God must always say "yes" in answer to our prayers. Then I heard others say that God sometimes says "yes," "not yet," "wait" and sometimes "no."

God does work on a timetable (Galatians 4:4; Acts 2:1). His timing is perfect and doesn't always match up with ours. God does also at times say no. Below are some specific times in scripture when God said no. There are times when it's a good thing He doesn't answer our prayers because we are often misguided and don't know what's best for us when God does.

God Said No to Israel Concerning Entering The Promise Land (Numbers 13-14; Hebrews 3:7-18)

God through Moses commanded Israel to send twelve spies into the promise to land. He said, "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan" (Numbers 13:2). They were to "See what the land is like: whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, few or many; whether the land they dwell in is good or bad; whether the cities they inhabit are like camps or strongholds; whether the land is rich or poor; and whether there are forests there or not" (Numbers 13:18-20).

"They brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. Then they told him, and said: We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large" (Numbers 13:26-28). They stumbled at "Nevertheless."

Caleb said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it. But the men who had gone up with him said, We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we. And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, the land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the giants...and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight" (Numbers 13:30-33).

When God speaks we must move forward in faith and not shrink back in fear. It's interesting that in most churches we make decisions based on a majority vote, yet the majority here were wrong. If they had listened to Caleb, they could have encouraged the people and went into the promise land. Instead they listened to the negative report of the majority, spent forty years in the wilderness and died there (Numbers 14:20-24).

Caleb followed the Lord fully, had a different spirit and therefore would be able to enter the promise, but not for another forty years (Numbers 14:24). How often are we hindered by the negative report (response) of the majority? We listen to the majority instead the ONE who is following the Lord fully. Church beware! God said no to Israel concerning entering the promise land because they failed to move in faith (Hebrews 4:2), but let fear control them instead.

God Said No to Moses' Entering the Promise Land Because of His Sin (Numbers 20:1-12)

The people were complaining because there was no water. "Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and they fell on their faces. And the glory of the Lord appeared to them. Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation" (Numbers 20:6-8).

Instead of speaking to the rock, "Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly" (Numbers 20:11). God told Moses to speak to the Rock but he hit it. God was angry with Moses because of this and

said, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them" (Numbers 20:12).

Why was God so angry over this? What was the big deal anyway? This happened once before in Exodus 17:5–6, but that time God told Moses to strike the rock. Moses was just doing things the way he was told the time before. Why would this keep Moses from entering the promise land? Let's look at a few things we can learn from this.

1. **God means what He says.** When God says something we must do as He says and the way He says it.
2. **God expects obedience.** Saul did a similar thing when going to battle with the Amalekites. Saul was told to utterly destroy everything and everyone. Instead, he kept the best of the flocks. When Samuel arrived he rebuked him saying, "Why did you not obey the voice of the Lord" (1 Samuel 15:19)? He went on to say, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness (insubordination) as iniquity and idolatry" (1 Samuel 15:22-23). How often do we cover up our disobedience with supposed spirituality?
3. **We mustn't depend on what worked in the past.** Just because it was right to strike the rock the first time doesn't mean it's the right way to do it the next time. God is always doing something new or in new ways (Isaiah 43:18-19). He doesn't always do things the same way.
4. **The Rock in the wilderness was Christ.** Paul said, "For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:4).
5. **Christ was to be struck only once for the sins of the people.** The first time this happened Moses was to strike the rock to get water to come out of it. This time he was to speak to it and not hit it and notice he hit it twice. Christ is not to be crucified over and over. That's why we don't get saved over and over. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14).

6. **Anger is seldom beneficial and usually has consequences.** “For the wrath of man works not the righteousness of God” (James 1:20). We are to “Be angry, and sin not” (Ephesians 4:26). The Bible says, “A fool always loses his temper, But a wise man holds it back” (Proverbs 29:11).
7. **There is a price tag to sin.** “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap” (Galatians 6:6).
8. **Speech is powerful for those who are in Christ.** Let’s take note of a few things concerning our speech.
 - Our speech is the means of our justification or condemnation. “Every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned” (Matthew 12:36-37).
 - We must confess Christ once we have believed in Him (Romans 10:8-10; Matthew 10:32-33).
 - We must simply speak for our spiritual language to be manifest (John 7:37-39; Acts 2:4).
 - What we say can bring fulfillment to life (Proverbs 18:20).
 - Life and death are in the power of our tongue (Proverbs 18:21).

God Said No to Balaam (Numbers 22-25)

Balak, King of Moab, saw all that Israel did to the Amorites and “Sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor at Pethor, saying: Look, a people has come from Egypt. See, they cover the face of the earth, and are settling next to me! Therefore please come at once, curse this people for me, for they are too mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land, for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed. So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the diviner’s fee” (Numbers 22:5-7).

Balaam sought the Lord about what He would have him do and God said, "You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed" (Numbers 22:12). He told the messengers to return to Balak and Balak sent messengers again who were more honorable and more money (silver and gold, etc.) This time God allowed Balaam to go with them, but the Lord was not pleased that Balaam persisted.

On his way, Balaam was riding his donkey and the Angel of the Lord stood in his way with his sword drawn. God allowed his donkey to see the Angel of the Lord there, therefore the donkey turned aside into a field. Balaam became angry and struck the donkey.

Then they came to a narrow place between two walls and seeing the Angel again with the sword, the donkey pressed into the wall and crushed Balaam's foot and he struck the donkey again. They went a little further where there was an even narrower place, the donkey saw the angel again, the donkey laid down under Balaam and his anger was aroused and struck the donkey the third time. At this point, God opened the donkey's mouth and it spoke saying,

"What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times? And Balaam said to the donkey, Because you have abused me. I wish there were a sword in my hand, for now I would kill you! So the donkey said to Balaam, Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden, ever since I became yours, to this day? Was I ever disposed to do this to you? And he said, No. Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the way with His drawn sword in His hand; and he bowed his head and fell flat on his face. And the Angel of the Lord said to him, Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to stand against you, because your way is perverse before Me. The donkey saw Me and turned aside from Me these three times. If she had not turned aside from Me, surely I would also have killed you by now, and let her live. And Balaam said to the Angel of the Lord, I have sinned, for I did not know You stood in the way against me. Now therefore, if it displeases You, I will turn back. Then the Angel of the Lord said to Balaam, Go with the men, but only the word that I speak to you, that you shall speak. So Balaam went with the princes of Balak" (Numbers 22:28-35).

Balak took Balaam to a place where he could see Israel so he would curse them, but God put a blessing in Balaam's mouth instead. Balak kept taking him to other places where he could see Israel, insisting he curse them. Each time he did this,

Balaam would go to the Lord asking if he should curse Israel and every time God would again cause him to pronounce a blessing on Israel. Balak became increasingly angry telling him, Do you not realize that I can promote you to honor. Balaam responded, "Behold, I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it. Did I not tell you, saying, All that the Lord speaks, that I must do?" (Numbers 22:20, 26).

Ultimately, though God would not let him curse Israel, he told Balak how Israel could be cursed and Balak got the women of Moab to entice the men of Israel to commit harlotry with them and get them to worship and sacrifice to their gods and those who participated were killed. "Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Harass the Midianites, and attack them; for they harassed you with their schemes by which they seduced you" (Numbers 25:16).

Beware: There are times the Lord will let us have our way if we persist, to our dismay. Once God has clearly told us no, we must not persist against His will. If we persist God will often give us what we want but we will be walking contrary to Him and He will set His face against us. Balaam persisted because of his greed. His desire was not for money alone but for the power, honor and prestige that would be bestowed upon him.

We must guard ourselves against wrong motives like this. If we desire to proceed, even in doing the right thing, because of a desire for money, power, honor and prestige our motives are contrary to God. That is what Peter was dealing with when he said, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" (1 Peter 5:2).

If we will do the right thing, speaking and doing all that God has appointed us to, with only the desire to serve God and His people, God will take care of us. Let God's people also beware. When God's man is serving with the proper motive and working diligently to give us His Word, it is His people's responsibility to make sure they are well taken care of.

"The worker is worthy of his support" (Matthew 10:10). And again, "The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing, and The laborer is worthy of his wages" (1 Timothy 5:17-18). Read also Romans 15:26-28; 1 Corinthians 9:7-11 and Galatians 6:6.

God Said No to David's Request For His Child's Life (2 Samuel 12:1-23)

David had sinned with Bathsheba and she became pregnant. David tried to cover up their sin by bringing Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, back from the battlefield, hoping he'd sleep with his wife and it would look as if it was his child. Uriah was a noble man and refused to go to his wife while his men were still on the battlefield.

Ultimately, David gave orders for him to be placed on the front lines in the battle, where he knew he'd likely be killed and he was. Nathan, the prophet, rebuked David for his sin and said God would forgive David but the child would not survive. Bathsheba gave birth to the child and it became ill. David mourned and prayed for the child, hoping God would have mercy on him and the child but the child ultimately died.

There is a price tag on sin. The Bible says, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap" (Galatians 6:7). We seldom get by with sin, even in this age of grace. This is true spiritually as well as with natural laws. If you jumped off the top of the Empire State building, you could ask God to forgive you on your way down and He know doubt would, but you'd still splat when you hit the ground – GRAVITY!

God still disciplines His children, whom He loves. The Bible says, "Do not regard lightly (Despise not) the discipline of the Lord, Nor faint when you are reproved by Him; For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives" (Hebrews 12:5-6). Notice David's response (2 Samuel 12:20-23):

- He accepted the discipline at God's hand (Hebrews 12:5-11). He allowed God's correction to have its perfect work in him.
- He didn't complain or blame God (Philippians 2:14). Most would complain, blame God or whine about how unfair God or life is (2 Samuel 12:20; Hebrews 10:25).

- “He came into the house of the Lord” (2 Samuel 12:20; Hebrews 10:25). Church is the best place we can go when facing or after experiencing a crisis in life.
- “He came into the house of the Lord and worshiped” (2 Samuel 12:20). David had messed up pretty bad. Most of us would feel pretty hypocritical about worshiping in the House of God after doing what David had done and all he’d gone through. We’d also, no doubt, wonder who might be watching us standing and worshiping, knowing what we had done. David knew God was worthy of his worship and was committed to His praises (Hebrews 13:15).
- He didn’t mope but got up and went on with life. “He came to his own house, and when he requested, they set food before him and he ate” (2 Samuel 12:20 NASB). Paul said, “Forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on” (Philippians 3:13-14).

God Said No to Elijah Because He Had Something Better For Him (1 Kings 19:1-4)

Over the previous three and a half years or so Elijah had been through a lot. He prophesied against and rebuked Ahab the king, fled, there was a three and a half year drought, he was provided for first by ravens and then by a widow, he returned to the land and had a contest with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel and was victorious, he prayed and it rained again.

After all this took place, Ahab’s wife, Jezabel made claim saying, “So may the gods do to me and even more, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time” (1 Kings 19:2). Elijah “was afraid and arose and ran for his life and went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers” (1 Kings 19:3-4).

He had all he could take. He just wanted to go be with the Lord and be done with it all. He wanted to die, he couldn’t take it any longer. But God had something else in mind. After all He’d been through, God was determined Elijah was not going out in defeat. God’s plan for him was a glorious one. He would leave with more than an

adequate replacement and in a blaze of glory. It was soon after this experience under the Juniper tree that God spoke to Elijah in a still and quite voice, gave him some promises and much needed encouragement and sent him on his way.

Next we see him calling his replacement, Elisha (1 Kings 19:19-21). We see Elisha following him to Bethel, then Jericho and finally the Jordan (2 Kings 2:1-12). He refused to leave Elijah's side even though the journey was difficult. At the end of their journey,

"Elijah said to Elisha, Ask what I shall do for you before I am taken from you. And Elisha said, Please, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me. He said, You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you...As they were going along and talking, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven" (2 Kings 2:9-11).

Instead of dying, God took him straight to heaven, without tasting death and in a blaze of glory!

God often says no to us because He has something better in mind for us. We want to be taken out of our situations and troubles but God desires to take us through them victoriously. The scriptures tell us, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (Romans 8:37).

We may be longing for something specific, crying out to God, claiming He promised to give us the desire of our heart (Psalms 37:4-5) and when He doesn't grant it we get discouraged. It may just be that God has something much better in store for us, something that will far surpass what we were requesting. Don't give up, hang in there, keep trusting and looking for the good things He has in store for you. If God says no, it could be He has something much better in mind for you.

God Said No to the Syrophenician Women Because He Wanted to Test Her Faith (Mark 7:24-30)

A Syrophenician woman, whose daughter was tormented by an evil spirit, "came and fell at His (Jesus') feet" and "kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her

daughter” (Mark 7:25-26). This woman was both desperate and persistent. Jesus seemed to actually discourage her. He said, “Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs” (Mark 7:27).

In essence He said, you’re a dog leave me alone. If that doesn’t discourage you nothing will. But she persisted and “Said to Him, Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table feed on the children’s crumbs” (Mark 7:28).

Because of her persistence Jesus said, “Because of this answer go; the demon has gone out of your daughter” (Mark 7:29). Her faith passed the test overwhelmingly. He wanted to see if she really believed, if she’d persist, if she’d continue to trust Him regardless and see what was in her heart.

God Said No to James and John Because of Divine Appointment (Mark 10:35-45)

James and John came to Jesus saying, “Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask. And He said to them, “What do you want Me to do for you? They said to Him, Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory” (Mark 10:35-37). This was a bold request. Jesus responded, “To sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared” (Mark 10:40).

How often do those in the church try to assert themselves into positions they are not called to and frequently have no gifting in? They want to be worship leaders or members on the worship team, elders or deacons, on the church board and even some try and push themselves into a ministry or pastoral position when they are not called to it.

The scriptures tell us, “No man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God” (Hebrews 5:4). We try to take an honor to ourselves when God has not called us. Paul said, “As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office” (Romans 12:4). We must take care that we fit the position God has appointed us to and not where He has not.

It's interesting that Jesus asked them, "Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with" (Mark 10:38)? He was referring to the baptism and cup of His suffering. We don't realize there is a price to certain callings. The higher the calling, the higher the price that must be paid.

Beware lest you assert yourself into a position that is more than you can handle. Paul had a high calling on his life and God said of him, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16). If we are indeed called, God will give us the grace for the calling we have received of Him. If we try and fit in a position we are not called to, it will likely be a cup we are unable to bare and will cause problems for the work of God as well.

God Said No to Jesus Because of the Importance of His Mission (Luke 22:41-47)

Just prior to His arrest Jesus prayed, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done....And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly – fervently" (Luke 22:42-43). He knew what He was about to face at the cross. He would face not only the physical pain of the cross but also separation from the Father. He was saying, If there is any other way, take this from me.

God the Father said no to Jesus because of the importance of the mission He had. There was no other way. If mankind was to be forgiven, He would have to bare the full pain of the cross. It bothers me when people try and say there is any other way to get to heaven other than through Jesus (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). If there would have been any other way, Jesus' request would have been granted and He would have escaped the cross.

There will times we don't clearly understand God's plan in our lives. There will be situations and circumstances when God will say no because our mission is of grave importance. We may or may not see what's ahead down the road. We may be inquiring and requesting things of God and God knows if He were to grant our request we wouldn't be able to accomplish what He has for us to do.

He will say no because He has some great purpose for our life that perhaps has yet to be revealed to us. It's in these times that we must trust Him. "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). There's a reason for what we're going through. If God is not taking us out, it's because He's working on something far greater. The main thing is that we be in submission to His will in our lives.

God Said No to Paul Concerning the Thorn in His Flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7-9)

Paul said, "A thorn in the flesh was given to me... Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). The reasons for God saying no in a situation as this could be because He wants us to depend on His grace, keep us humble or from exalting ourselves or so we might become strong or stronger (2 Corinthians 12:7).

No one knows for sure what the thorn in Paul's flesh really was. We can speculate but I believe it was left open so it could apply to us in whatever we might be facing. There may be times when God says to us, "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Corinthians 12:9). Below are a few different scenarios as to what Paul's thorn might have been. Remember, these are all speculative. No one knows for sure.

- **Physical infirmity.** We know that when with the Galatians, Paul experienced some sort of physical ailment. He said, "You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus" (Galatians 4:13-14). Some have alluded to the fact that he had bouts of malaria or epilepsy, he had arthritis, or that he had a stammer.
- **Poor eyesight.** Some have suggested that he had poor eyesight which he could have been alluding to in Galatians 4:14, "If possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me."
- **His appearance.** It could have been something to do with his appearance. Tradition tells us Paul most probably was Bald, hunchback, poor eye sight and talked with a lisp or stuttered.

- **Ex-wife.** Yes, it is clear Paul was single throughout the entirety of his ministry. However, Paul was Jewish, a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin. For the Jews it was of extreme importance that they be married and propagate their race, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth” (Genesis 1:28). It is likely he had to be married to be a member of the Sanhedrin. If this was so, It’s likely that Paul’s wife left him when he got saved and he spent the rest of his life celibate.
- **Unconquered sin.** Paul was a Pharisee of Pharisees and as such prided himself on keeping the law to the most minute detail. If there was some sin that he wasn’t able to conquer, he would have to lean on God’s grace. Hence, “My grace is sufficient for you” (2 Corinthians 12:9). Compare with Romans 6:19.

Praying in Opposition to God’s Will

John wrote, “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him” (1 John 5:14-15).

If we know God grants our petitions (prayers) when we ask in accord with His will, we also must conclude that if we were to pray in opposition to His will He would say no. In fact, according to this passage, we must take it a step further.

When we pray in opposition to God’s will, He doesn’t just say no but He doesn’t even hear our prayer. That’s why it’s so vitally important we seek out God’s will before even praying. Then once we are sure of His will we can pray in faith.

Persistence in Prayer

The scriptures are filled with examples of people who persisted in prayer. It was once called “praying through.” Persistence in prayer is praying until you have the answer or request you are seeking from God. It is continuing to pray until you sense a release in your spirit that God is intervening on your behalf and granting your request, coming back to Him day after day until you have the petition you have desired of Him.

Luke 18:1 – “And He (Jesus) spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.”

Isaiah 64:7 – “And there is none that calls upon Thy name, that stirs up himself to take hold of Thee.”

This verse seems to indicate that those who lay hold of God in prayer are far and few between. God is searching for those from among His people who will do just that. This type of persistent praying doesn't come easy. It's the one who “stirs up himself to take hold of thee.” Will you be one of those who stirs up himself to lay hold of God in stubborn and persistent praying, refusing to let go of Him until you see the results you're seeking of Him?

Biblical examples of persistent praying:

Personal Needs (Hebrews 5:7)

Time and again we see those who laid hold of God for personal needs. Jacob was on his way back home to face his brother Esau whom he had deceived some twenty years prior. His fear and anxiety of seeing Esau again caused him to wrestle with God in prayer until God blessed him (Genesis 32:22-31).

There was the blind man who just wanted to be able see (Luke 18:35-43). He cried out to Jesus to have mercy on him, the crowds tried to silence him but he wouldn't be silenced but “Cried so much the more, Thou son of David, have mercy on me” (Luke 18:39). There was also the widow lady and the unjust judge who kept returning to him until he avenged her (Luke 18:1-8).

Many are timid about seeking God for their personal needs but It's okay to seek God for you for what you are in personal need of, Jesus did, "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared" (Hebrews 5:7). God cares about the most insignificant need you have. We're exhorted, "Casting all your care upon Him; for He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

Spiritual Sight (Luke 18:35-43)

The blind man cried out to Jesus for mercy that he might see. When "The crowds tried to silence him, he "Cried so much the more, Thou son of David, have mercy on me" (Luke 18:39). He would not quit crying out to Jesus until he knew his cries were heard by the Master and he was able to see.

We can pray for spiritual sight for ourselves. The Psalmist cried, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law" (Psalms 119:18). We can pray for others to receive spiritual sight, even those who are in direct opposition to the gospel. Ananias prayed for Paul and he received his sight, both his physical and spiritual sight (Acts 9:1-18). Also read 2 Kings 6:15-19.

Deliverance (Mark 7:24-30)

A Syrophenician women, whose daughter was tormented by an evil spirit, "came and fell at His feet" and "kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter" (Mark 7:25-26). This women was both desperate and persistent. Jesus seemed to actually discourage her. He said, "Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs" (Mark 7:27).

He was basically saying, "you're a dog leave me alone." If that doesn't discourage you nothing will. But she persisted and said, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table feed on the children's crumbs" (Mark 7:28). Because of her persistence Jesus said, "Because of this answer go; the demon has gone out of your daughter" (Mark 7:29). This was also true in the parable of the widow and unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8). Let's lay hold of Him until we, our loved ones and all who are in need of

deliverance are set free. Read also Luke 4:18-19, Matthew 6:13, Romans 11:26, and Acts 12:5-12.

Intercessory Prayer (Luke 11:5-10)

In this story, a friend comes at midnight requesting bread. The man responds, “Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything” (Luke 11:7). Jesus said, “I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs. So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened” (Luke 11:8-10).

The tense here is, ask and keep on asking, seek and keep on seeking and knock and keep on knocking. Remain persistent and don't quit until you get what you are in need of. Persistence can also be translated importunity. Importunity is when you beg someone to do something. The adjective importunate describes a plea that is so persistent or demanding that it becomes annoying.

Below are three applications to this passage on persistent, importunate, intercessory prayer:

- **Praying for the needs of others.** We need intercessory prayer warriors who will lay hold of God in persistent prayer until their needs are met. Paul said, “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others” (Philippians 2:3-4).
- **Bread for sinners and saints.** John R. Rice said in his book, “Prayer: Asking and Receiving”, that this was asking for spiritual bread for sinners. It also applies to requesting bread (spiritual sustenance or manna) for God's people as well. Jesus exhorted us to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11). This applies to our daily needs being met as well as spiritual food. The Israelites received a daily portion of manna out of heaven from God. They had to gather fresh manna daily because what they gathered the

previous day spoiled. Even so, we need fresh manna (His Word) every day. What we have one day doesn't suffice for or carry to the next.

- **Filling or baptism of the Holy Spirit.** The context deals with us asking for the Holy Spirit. Jesus went on to say, "Suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish, he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him" (Luke 11:11-13)? When seeking the infilling or baptism of the Spirit, we must keep asking, seeking and knocking until we have all that we have come to Him for. We must also understand that when asking our heavenly Father for one thing, He will not allow us to get a counterfeit in its place.

The Blessing of God (Genesis 32:22-31)

As we read this passage we notice, "Jacob was left alone" (Genesis 32:24). It's when we are alone that we become desperate and lay hold of God with all we have. We see Jacob "wrestled with him until daybreak. He said, 'I will not let you go unless you bless me', and he blessed him there" (Genesis 32:24, 26, 29). He was persistent, he refused to let go of him until he had blessed him.

It was not uncommon for God's people to request His blessing. Jabez asked this same thing (1 Chronicles 4:9-10). Because of extremes in the church when I was young in ministry, I thought I shouldn't ask for blessings. I've come to find out that without God's blessing I am no use to Him and I can't be a blessing to others (Genesis 12:1-2). Let's wrestle with (lay hold of) God until His blessing falls upon our lives and ministries.

The Purposes of God (1 Kings 17-18)

There had been a drought in Israel for three and a half years because of their idolatry. Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to a contest to decide who was the true God. After he won a great victory, the prophets of Baal were slain then he prayed for rain.

“Elijah went up to the top of Carmel and he crouched down on the earth and put his face between his knees. He said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. So he went up and looked and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go back seven times. It came about at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, a cloud as small as a man’s hand is coming up from the sea. And he said, Go up, say to Ahab, Prepare your chariot and go down, so that the heavy shower does not stop you. In a little while the sky grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy shower” (1 Kings 18:42-45).

After Israel repented, Elijah knew God would send rain. He was divinely directed in his prayers (1 John 5:14-15). He kept praying and sending his servant to look for any sign of rain. He did this seven times until his servant returned saying, “Behold, a cloud as small as a man’s hand is coming up from the sea” (1 Kings 18:44). That was all he needed, he knew God had answered his prayer. He was persistent until he saw the answer was on its way. When we know something is God’s will, we must pray persistently until His purposes are fulfilled.

Life to the Dead (1 Kings 17:17-24)

During the drought, Elijah was staying with and being provided for by a widow lady. After he had been there a while, her son became sick and died. She was distraught and brought the child to Elijah. Elijah took the child to the upper room where he was staying and began to pray. “He stretched himself upon the child three times, and called to the Lord and said, O Lord my God, I pray You, let this child’s life return to him. The Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the life of the child returned to him and he revived” (1 Kings 17:21-22).

He stretched himself upon the child and prayed not just once, but three times. I’m convinced he would have done this many more times if necessary. He was persistent! There are a few applications we can glean from this account.

- **Life to the lost.** Paul said, “You hath he quickened (brought to life), who were dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1). We must persistently ask God to breathe spiritual life into the dead.
- **Dead saints.** There are those who have accepted Christ and we know they are saved, but they haven’t grown and they seem spiritually dead. They are

in need of a fresh touch from God. I was at a conference once and the speaker defined revival as the “impartation of life to a would be corpse.” This is so true of many Christians. We must pray for a revival among God’s people where fresh life is breathed into them.

- **Dead churches.** It seems in each generation God breathes upon the church through revival. The revival of the previous generation dries up and the church again needs an outpouring of God’s Spirit, an impartation of life. Ezekiel had a vision of dry bones representing Israel.

He was commanded to prophecy to the dry bones until they eventually began to rattle, muscle and skin began to appear on them, breath entered them and they stood as a mighty army (Ezekiel 37).

What a picture of the church today! We must persistently pray and prophesy to the dead saints and churches of our generation until God breathes life into them and they stand as a mighty army full of life and ready to do battle for the kingdom.

Persistence in prayer is a demonstration of true faith. When we lay hold of God and refuse to let go until we see the results of our toil, we are expressing and exercising faith.

Jesus ended His parable about the widow and the unjust judge by saying, “Hear what the unjust judge says. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man comes, shall he find faith on the earth” (Luke 18:6-8)?

The big question Jesus asks is, “When the Son of man returns, shall he find faith on the earth?” At His return, will He find the kind of faith that persists in prayer, refusing to quit or give up?

The Lord's Prayer

What is typically known as the "Lord's prayer" could more accurately be referred to as the "disciple's prayer." The true Lord's prayer is more likely the one in John 17, Jesus' high priestly prayer. This prayer is how Jesus taught His disciples to pray. If we pray as Jesus taught us in Matthew 6:9-13, it will revolutionize our lives, the church and the world.

Prayer should be the very heartbeat of the Christian life. The early church began with prayer preceding the day of Pentecost. "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer" (Acts 1:14). Just prior to the lame man being healed, Peter and John were on their way to pray (Acts 3:1). When Peter was locked up in prison, "Prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God" (Acts 12:5).

The Lord's prayer is as follows:

"Pray, then, in this way: Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen" (Matthew 6:9-13).

Pattern of Prayer

Jesus begins His instructions on prayer by saying, "Pray, then, in this way" (Matthew 6:9). Jesus wasn't teaching us to pray this verbatim. It was not something we are to quote in prayer, as we often see done. This was a pattern for prayer, an outline for the way we pray to be filled in by us. Quoting this prayer as is would take seconds whereas using it as a pattern or outline could become quite lengthy.

I often use this in my prayer time. I include myself, my wife, children, grandchildren, extended family members, Ministrymaker Ministries and all the pastors and ministries associated with Ministrymaker. As I cover each category, I then begin to focus on specifics. Using this as a pattern, [my prayer time](#) can last anywhere from minutes to hours.

Paternal Praying

“Our Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 6:9). Our prayer is addressed to our Heavenly Father. Jesus said, “In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you” (John 16:23). We begin praying to the Father in Jesus’ name.

Using “our Father” is great for praying with a group, however, it might be good to make it more intimate by praying “My Father, who is in heaven.” We have become His children through the spirit of adoption (Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6). If we’ve been born again through faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit resides within us crying out, “Abba Father.” This is both terms of reverence and intimacy. Father is a term of respect whereas Abba is an Aramaic term meaning daddy – a term of intimacy.

Presence of Prayer

“Hallowed be Your Name” (Matthew 6:9). Hallowed means to regard as special (sacred), holy, set apart or to sanctify. We begin by setting apart and sanctifying God and His name. We are purposely setting Him apart in our prayer time, our hearts and life. As we are praying this for ourself, others (friends and loved ones), and the church, we are asking Him and His name to be set apart in our lives, hearts and inviting His presence in our midst as a church or group of followers.

I also view this as requesting Him and His name to be set apart, exalted and lifted up – Worship! Our prayer time should always begin in praise and worship. “Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth, come before Him with joyful singing. Enter His gates with thanksgiving And His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name” (Psalms 100:1, 2 and 4). Praise and worship is the single greatest way of entering or ushering in His presence. “Thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel”, your people (Psalms 22:3).

I’m reminded of the heavenly scene in Revelation,

“And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, LORD God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to Him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 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” (Revelation 4:8-11).

Priority of Prayer

“Your kingdom come” (Matthew 6:10a). The priority of prayer should be focused on His kingdom. This can go in several different directions. I usually pray for God to reveal the majesty and glory of His kingdom to myself, my wife, our children, extended family members, the pastors and His church like He did in the transfiguration (Mathew 17:1-8), Moses and the burning bush and when he entered into the midst of the cloud (Exodus 3, 24:18), Isaiah in Isaiah 6, and John in Revelation 1, Paul on the Damascus road (Acts 9), etc.

- **His soon return.** We are first of all praying for Jesus’ return to this earth and for us. “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13). Jesus said, “Surely I am coming quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20)! “Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen” (Revelation 1:7).

- **His reign on and within our heart.** “The kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21). Jesus said, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him” (Revelation 3:20). When we pray “Your kingdom come,” we are asking Jesus to enter into and to reign as Lord and king on the throne of our heart and the hearts of those for whom we are praying.

We can pray this with confidence and assurance, knowing this to be the will of the Father (1 John 5:14-15). Jesus said, “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). His reign and

kingdom manifest within our hearts, invokes His righteousness, peace and joy (Romans 14:17).

- **The glory of His Kingdom coming in revival.** I pray the glory of God's kingdom will be manifest in real revival in our lives personally, the church, our nation and the world. I'm reminded of Solomon and the dedication of the Temple,

"Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the house. The priests could not enter into the house of the LORD because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD'S house.

All the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and the glory of the LORD upon the house, bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave praise to the LORD, saying, Truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting" (2 Chronicles 7:1-3).

Now that's revival!

There are two things which preceded this, which may be keys to ushering in His glory and kingdom:

1. **When Solomon had finished praying (V. 1).** How often do we finish praying? I'm not talking about praying a certain amount of time. I'm referring to praying until we've exhausted ourself – there is nothing more to pray and there is a release in our spirit.

2. **Sacrifice.** "Solomon and all the congregation, were sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered" (2 Chronicles 5:6). We understand the real significance of this when we read how much they sacrificed afterwards.

After "The glory of the LORD filled the house" (V. 1), "King Solomon offered a sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep" (2 Chronicles 7:4). We may not offer animal sacrifices anymore, but there are some sacrifices that could be key factors in ushering in His glory as seen with Solomon.

Here are several sacrifices we can offer up to God:

- **Time.** Can you imagine how much time was involved in “sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered” (5:6)? And afterwards, “King Solomon offered a sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep” (7:4). There was inevitably a great amount of time involved. So there was the sacrifice of his time.
- **Labor and service.** There was, without a doubt, a lot of hard work involved in sacrificing all those sheep and oxen. We can offer up to God sacrificial service. Paul wrote, “Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord” (Romans 12:11).

Again the writer of Hebrews, “And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Hebrews 6:11-12).

Paul told the Philippians, “Even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith” (Philippians 2:17).

- **Finances.** It took a lot of money to buy all that live stock and offer that many sacrifices. We can give sacrificial offerings to God and those in need. Paul wrote, “Having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well- pleasing to God” (Philippians 4:18).
- **Praise and thanksgiving.** “By Him therefore, let us offer up the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name” (Hebrews 13:15). You may be going through a time of discouragement and difficulty and simply don’t feel like worshiping. It’s in these times we are afforded the opportunity to “offer up the sacrifice of praise to God.”
- **Souls.** There is the sacrifice of souls offered up to God when we lead people to the Lord. “That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost” (Romans 15:16).

- **Doing good and sharing.** “Doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased” (Hebrews 13:16). When we go out of our way to do good toward and share with those in need, it is a sacrifice with which God is well pleased.
- **Brokenness.** There are also times of brokenness. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise” (Psalms 51:17). “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted And saves those who are crushed in spirit” (Psalm 34:18).

Purpose of Prayer

“Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). The purpose of praying is not just to get everything we want from God. The purpose of praying is the implementation of God’s will in the affairs of men. It’s not establishing OUR will, but His. Prayer must be consumed with seeking out, desiring, longing and praying for His will to be accomplished.

We must seek and [pray for the will of God](#) to be done in our own personal life, our families, our ministries, our nation, and the world. We must seek God for His will before uttering a word in prayer. Once we are convinced of His will, then we are to lay hold of God in fervent prayer until His will is established. “There is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee” (Isaiah 64:7).

The best way to begin is to search the scriptures to find some specifics of God’s will and pray accordingly. Search the scriptures to find out how to pray in accord with His will. When we know we are praying in line with the will of God, we can have faith and confidence we will receive the petitions we desire of Him (1 John 5:14-15).

Here a few examples:

- The salvation of souls (1 Timothy 2:4 and 2 Peter 3:9).
- Revelation and acknowledgment of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4).

- Laborers into the harvest (Matthew 9:37-38).
- Physical, spiritual, mental and emotional healing (Exodus 15:26; Isaiah 53:4-5; Psalm 103:1-3; Romans 8:11, 23; James 5:13-16).
- Prosperity and success (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2-3; Psalm 35:27; Jeremiah 29:11; 3 John 2).
- Sanctification (1 Thessalonians 4:3 and John 17:17).
- Our needs to be met (Philippians 4:19; Matthew 6:11, 25-34; 2 Corinthians 9:8).
- Unity in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:10; John 17:21; Romans 16:17; Ephesians 4:11-13).
- Anointing and boldness (Acts 1:8; 4:31).
- Revelation of the Word (Psalms 119:18).
- Our leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-3).
- The right leaders put in place (Romans 13:1; Daniel 5:21).

Provision of Prayer

“Give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11). We can pray for our needs to be met no matter what they may be. This is promised throughout scripture. Paul said, “My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19). We are to pray and believe God for our personal needs, our business, our ministry, and all aspects of our life.

God is not only able to meet our needs, but He meets them “exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think” (Ephesians 3:20). Talking about finances Paul said, “God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you always

having all sufficiency in all things, might abound to every good work” (2 Corinthians 9:8).

It's interesting that the context of both Philippians 4:19 and 2 Corinthians 9:8 is giving. The Philippians had first given to meet Paul's needs (Philippians 4:17-18) and as a result he said, “My God shall supply all your needs.” The context of 2 Corinthians 9:8 dealt with sowing and reaping – giving (2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

If we expect God to meet our needs, we must be faithful givers. If we are not being faithful with our personal finances, we have no reason to complain when everything we need isn't there. When we are faithful, we can believe God for all the fullness of His abundance to be manifest to us (Luke 16:10-12; Proverbs 28:20).

Pardon of Prayer

“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Matthew 6:12).

The pardon here is twofold:

- **Personal forgiveness.** “Forgive us our debts.” If we don't ask for forgiveness, our prayer requests will be greatly hindered. The psalmist wrote, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Psalms 66:18). Isaiah said, “Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear, but your iniquities have separated between you and your God that He will not hear you” (Isaiah 59:1-2).

We must ask the Holy Spirit to reveal our sin to us. When sin is revealed to us, we should confess it. The Bible says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful to forgive and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). The word “confess” means to say the same thing. We must call sin what God calls it.

Years ago I read an article by John Wimber, founder of the Vineyard movement. In the article he said he was praying and asked God to forgive him for his mistakes. He heard God say to him, “No.” His immediate

response was one of shock. He knew God was merciful and forgiving. God went on to say, “I don’t forgive mistakes, I forgive sins.”

- **Forgiveness of others.** “As we also have forgiven our debtors.” We should forgive others on the basis of our own personal forgiveness. How can we withhold forgiveness from others when we have been forgiven such an insurmountable debt? Unforgiveness is the single greatest poison the enemy uses against God’s people. We must forgive as God has forgiven us or it will destroy us.
1. **Bitterness.** Bitterness will eat at our soul and spirit until it has destroyed us. The Bible says, “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:31-32). Bitterness and unforgiveness is like drinking a cup of poison hoping it kills the other guy.
 2. **Forgiveness.** Forgiveness is a choice. When we have been wronged, it’s normal to struggle with negative emotions toward the offender. It’s how we deal with it that makes all the difference. Each time bitterness begins to raise its ugly head, we must choose to forgive.

It helps to verbalize it. Jesus said we should forgive someone up to seven times seventy or 490 times (Matthew 18:21-22). In other words, we may have to forgive an offense up to 490 different levels before it is completely eradicated from our life.

Path of Prayer

“And do not lead us into temptation” (Matthew 6:13). This is not to say that God ever leads us into temptation. “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man” (James 1:13). God does not tempt anyone to sin. We are praying that God will not allow us to be tempted.

Jesus stressed this because of our inclination toward sin. James goes on to say, “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed”

(James 1:13). This is a personal awareness of our own weakness. If God does not help us, we are all susceptible to succumbing to temptation.

We may also add to this, “lead me in the paths of righteousness for His (Your) name’s sake” (Psalms 23:3). God don’t let me fall into temptation but in contrast lead me in the right direction, “paths of righteousness” for Your name’s sake. Lead me in the right way.

Power of Prayer

“But deliver us from evil” (Matthew 6:13). God has the power to deliver us. Jesus prayed, “I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep (guard, protect, deliver) them from the evil one” (John 17:15). Peter said, “Who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:5). The Psalmist said, “The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them” (Psalms 34:7).

As I pray for myself, wife, children, ministers, and ministries, I ask God to protect and deliver us from the evil one, evil things that might come against us, the deceptions of this world’s philosophies (Colossians 2:8), and any inclination toward toward evil or sin. I pray for God to deliver us from all that might be negative and release the fullness of His blessing into our lives, affairs and situations (1 Chronicles 4:9-10). I have faced many battles in life and I’d hate to think what it would have been like if I hadn’t prayed this regularly. Let’s pray daily and believe God to deliver us from all evil.

Praise of Prayer

“For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen” (Matthew 6:13). This prayer begins with ushering in God’s presence through praise and ends with the same. We should always end any time of prayer with thanksgiving. Paul said,

“In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6). Prayer focuses on the problem whereas

praise focuses on the answer and solution. Once we've prayed, we must thank Him in advance for the answer. This demonstrates faith in what God will do on our behalf.

Pledge of Prayer

"For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen" (Matthew 6:13). In this we are saying, "It's your kingdom to disburse at your choosing, you have the power to execute all that I've requested and I pledge to give you all the glory." This pledge is imperative! God will share His glory with no one. It's a must that when God comes through for us we give all the glory to Him.

The Authority of the Believer

God has given the church authority and victory in both the natural and spiritual realms where He is head over all things. The devil has been attacking many of us for too long. Romans 16:20 says, “And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.”

Notice, it says the God of peace. Sometimes the only way to make peace is by fighting. This is a prophetic word for many who are reading this. God is fighting on your behalf and is about to place Satan and all the demons coming against you under your feet!

“What is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

Far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (Ephesians 1:19-23).

“And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, in order that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:6-7).

“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” (1 John 4:17).

Below are a few areas where we must exercise authority:

1. **Life and prosperity (John 10:10, Deuteronomy 30:15 and 19, 3 John 2, Jeremiah 29:11)**. Jesus came that we might experience life and life more abundantly (John 10:10). This has to do with much more than just finances. It has to do with every area of our life – spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically and materially.

2. Health and wholeness (Isaiah 53:3-5, Psalms 103:1-5, Romans 8:11). “By His stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). The context deals with more than physical healing but emotional and mental as well. Someone who is reading this is battling emotional scars that God is completely healing right now. Someone else has been told you have a mental illness and God is healing you as you read this. Receive it now by faith. The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead is bringing life and healing to someone’s physical body this very moment (Romans 8:11).

3. Finances (2 Corinthians 9:6-8, Malachi 3:8-10, Philippians 4:18-19, Deuteronomy 8:11-20). “It is He who gives you the power to make wealth” (Deuteronomy 8:18). Listen for Him to speak to you. If something pops into your head, it may be God giving you just what you need in order to prosper financially. Seek counsel, pray and if everything seems to be a go, run with it.

He is able to make all financial grace abound toward you (2 Corinthians 9:8) and open the windows of heaven blessing you until there is no longer room to receive it (Malachi 3:10). He promises to supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:18-19). The context of each of these verses deals with giving. We cannot expect God to bless and meet our needs if we are not willing to be faithful in our giving.

4. Salvation of family and loved ones (Acts 2:38-39, Acts 16:31, Isaiah 59:21). The devil has robbed us of our loved ones long enough. Let’s start standing on the Word of God for our loved ones to be brought to Jesus. He able to reach even those who seem farthest from Him. “For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:39).

5. Growth of the church body (Isaiah 43:5-7, Acts 2:39, Ephesians 4:16, Acts 2:47). Pastors, leaders and congregants, it is God’s desire and will that your church grow both spiritually and numerically. If you will be faithful, pray, witness, follow up on the wayward, work hard and believe God, He will make your church body to grow exponentially. He has “ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit – multiply and that your fruit should remain” (John 15:16). Notice, you have to go in order to multiply. It will not happen with you sitting on the sidelines and doing nothing.

6. Peace and joy (John 14:27, John 16:33, Ephesians 2:14, Isaiah 26:3, Philippians 4:6-7, John 16:23-4, Isaiah 35:10, Isaiah 52:9, Isaiah 60:5, 1 John 1:4). Read, study and memorize these scriptures. God wants to give you peace and joy even when these things aren’t a reality in your life. There will be times

when you will have to “break forth into joy” (Isaiah 52:9) when there is nothing to be joyful about. It’s something you must choose to do. You must “choose life so you and your descendants may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19).

7. Restoration of all the enemy has stolen (Joel 2:17-27). The Bible says, “Do not despise a thief If he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving. Yet when he is found, he must restore seven-fold” (Proverbs 6:30-31).

The devil is the thief who has come to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10a). Whether what we have lost in life is from the original sin, through direct attacks of the devil and his emissaries, or through our own sin, faults and poor choices, Satan is still the thief and source of our losses.

Let’s demand all that has been taken from us be restored seven-fold.

Joel 2:20, 23 and 25 – “I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate.

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He has given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, My great army which I sent among you.”

How to Implement our Authority as Believers

Now that we’ve discussed the authority given to us through Christ, I want to share how we can implement that authority. Read Ephesians 1:19-23, Ephesians 2:6, Joshua 1:3, Ephesians 4:27, Matthew 4:8-10, and Colossians 2:15. In the first half of Ephesians, Paul is trying to help us realize who we are in Christ, before telling us what we are to do for God.

Hebrews 2:8 says, “Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all things in subjection under him, He left nothings that is not put under him.

But now we see not yet all things put under him.” It’s clear in this verse that God has placed all things in subjection to us, under our feet. “But now we see not yet all things put under him,” also reveals it hasn’t completely materialized yet. Therefore, there must be something we can do to bring this into the realm of reality.

Below are a few things to help us start moving in that direction:

1. **Tenacity and discipline (2 Timothy 4:6-8, Galatians 6:9, Luke 18:1).** This is not easy. It is something I have struggled with, especially in recent years. The real struggle is maintaining your authority. It takes discipline and stubbornness. It’s hard, when we face battles and things don’t go right, to continue standing firm and exercise and implement our authority in the situations of life. It is easy to become discouraged, fainthearted and give up instead of continuing to fight the good fight.

This is particularly difficult when we have faced continuous hardships and reversals in our life and ministry. It is easy to get tired and beat down. Even when we have been very tenacious in the past, we have a hard time stirring it back up again and maintaining it. You must reach deep within yourself, as David did, and encourage yourself in the Lord (1 Samuel 30:6 KJV).

This was a major turning point for David. If he had not done this he would have missed God and the greatness God had prepared him for. It was shortly thereafter, at the very beginning of 2 Samuel that David is crowned King. This materialized not only because of God’s calling and destiny, but also because of David’s tenacity. We will never know what would have happened if he had given up.

2. **Choose life (Deuteronomy 30:19).** Life and victory are ultimately a choice. Things will not always go our way. We will be attacked and at times viciously. We may, at times, feel beat down and defeated. We may even get discouraged and depressed. We may feel there is no way out and no hope (Proverbs 13:12).

It is in these times we must choose life. “I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19). This is the only way to pull out of the pit we are in and begin to head toward and experience victory.

Shout it out, at the top of your lungs, “I choose life!” We must choose life and keep choosing life until we have taken authority over our situation and victory has come.

3. **Visualize victory (John 5:17 and 19, Judges 6:11-12, Proverbs 29:18).** As with [effective praying](#), we must see the victory in the spiritual realm before it can become an outward reality. Jesus saw the Father working and therefore He worked (John 5:17 and 19). Gideon was hiding in the wine press for fear of the Midianites. When the angel called him he said, “The Lord is with thee thou mighty man of valor” (Judges 6:11-12).

I remember, when my oldest son was going through a rebellious stage, when he would leave the house, I would say, “See you later you mighty man of valor.” I’m sure he thought I was crazy, but I was trying to see him as the man God had called him to be even if everything in his life was contrary to it.

4. **Exercise faith (2 Corinthians 5:7, Hebrews 11:1, Hebrews 6:13-15, Romans 4:18-21).** If we are to implement the authority given us in Christ, we must be men and women of faith. It was said of Abraham, “Who against hope believed in hope” (Romans 4:18). “We walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Faith is expressed in four ways:

- **Vision (Proverbs 29:18, Hebrews 12:2).** We not only must see God doing something in the spiritual realm, but we must have a vision for what we want to see God do, accomplish or what He has promised us. We perish and experience defeat without vision. Jesus kept His eyes on the joy that was set before Him of what God had promised. Paul likewise kept his eye on the prize set before him (Philippians 3:14).
- **Claim His promises.** “Every place the sole of your foot shall tread, that have I given unto you” (Joshua 1:3). This speaks of putting your foot on and claiming the promises of God. In whatever area you are needing to assert your authority over, find out what God has said about it and claim His Word and promise for you. Stand on it and claim it saying, “This is mine,” on the authority of God’s Word and the promise of God, who cannot lie (Hebrew 6:18).
- **Resist the enemy.** “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7-8). “Whom resist steadfast in the faith” (1 Peter 5:8). We must resist the enemy,

negativism, our situation, and everything that opposes God's Word and promises.

- **Taking action (Mark 2:5, James 2:17-19).** We have to move in faith to adequately place things under our feet. "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:17). Jesus saw the faith of those carrying the paralytic man and was moved to intervene in their situation (Mark 2:5). The Word must be mixed with active faith if it is to profit us (Hebrews 4:2).

5. **Be aggressive (Joshua 1:3).** "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force" (Matthew 11:12). It is incumbent upon us to take [aggressive action](#) if we are going to implement the authority Christ has given us over the things of this life.

Aggression is "A forceful action as an unprovoked attack when intending to dominate or master" (Winston Dictionary). The problem is the devil is the one who has initiated the aggression against us and done the provoking. We need to begin to initiate the attack against the gates of hell and stop waiting on the devil to attack us before doing spiritual warfare (Matthew 16:18).

We must begin to take the offensive, instead of merely reacting defensively. Gates don't attack but are there to keep something out. "Place" in Joshua 1:3 translates from "topos" in the Greek Septuagint and is where we get the word topography. It is "used of a region, locality, room, of a place which a person or place occupies" (Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words). We must begin to take aggressive action and take back all that the enemy has stolen.

6. **Move forward (Philippians 3:12-14, Hebrews 6:1, Hosea 6:3, Isaiah 43:18-19).** Standing still and looking back cannot be an option. This only leads to more reversals and going backward. Even if we just stand still, sooner or later we will begin sliding backwards. We must, therefore, continue pressing on and aggressively moving forward in all areas of life.

7. **Watch what you say (Matthew 12:36-37, Proverbs 18:20-21, Mark 11:22-4, Deuteronomy 30: 11-16, Romans 10:8-10, James 3:5-6, Ephesians 4:29, Luke 6:45, Judges 6:11-12).** What we say does matter. This is an area I have personally struggled with. If we get discouraged and begin speaking negatively, criticizing and complaining, we will retard the implementation and exercise of our authority, our occupation of the land and the promises of God. Our words can build up the

kingdom, God's church and one another, or tear down and destroy (Ephesians 4:29). "Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof" (Proverbs 18:21).

Scriptures:

1. **Hebrews 2:8** – "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him."

2. **Luke 10:18-19** – "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt (injure) you."

3. **Ephesians 4:27** – "Neither give place to the devil."

4. **Joshua 1:3** – "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you."

5. **2 Corinthians 10:4** – "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds."

6. **Revelation 12:11** – "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

7. **1 John 4:4** – "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."

8. **1 John 5:4** – "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith."

9. **Romans 8:37** – "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."

10. **Deuteronomy 28:7-8, 12-13** – "The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. The Lord will command the blessing on you

in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

The Lord will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath.”

11. **2 Kings 6:16** – “Fear not, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”

12. **Isaiah 43:2** – “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you.”

13. **Isaiah 54:17** – “No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, And their righteousness (vindication – NIV) is from Me, Says the Lord.”

14. **Isaiah 59:9** – “When the enemy shall come in, like a flood the Spirit of the Lord shall raise up a standard against him.”

God has given us authority in Christ. Scripture clearly bears this out. It’s high time we begin exercising our God given authority.

When Solomon Had Finished Praying

At the dedication of the temple, Solomon prayed until he had finished praying. He neither prayed too briefly, nor too long. He prayed until he God had released him. The old timers used to call this praying through. It is laying hold of God and praying until we have touched heaven and we know we have laid hold of God.

2 Chronicles 7:1-3 – “Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the house. The priests could not enter into the house of the Lord because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord’s house. All the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and the glory of the Lord upon the house, bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave praise to the Lord, saying, Truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting.”

It was when Solomon had finished praying that fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering, the glory of the Lord filled the house, and the people bowed down with their faces to the ground and worshiped the Lord.

Do we ever really finish praying as Solomon did? We can pray for fifteen minutes, an hour, or even two hours, and possibly never finish praying. We must be determined that we are going to seek the face of God until we know we have reached God and it is enough – we have truly finished praying. The Holy Ghost has released us and our work is complete.

It’s not the amount of time that determines if we have prayed through, but the Spirit of God. Solomon prayed until the Spirit of God had released him, he knew he was finished.

Let’s not set a limit on our prayer time, but pray until the Holy Ghost releases us. In our [daily prayer time](#), if we will pray until we have finished, the results will manifest as they were at Solomon’s dedication of the temple.

When we truly pray until we have finished, there will be a reaction from heaven. When we have filled the heavenly alter with the incense of our prayers, things will begin to happen.

We see a reaction from heaven as a result of the heavenly altar being filled with the prayers of the saints in Revelation 8:3-6. Similar manifestations took place in the upper room on the day of Pentecost after they had prayed for ten straight days (Acts 1:14, 2:1-4). What were the results of Solomon praying through?

Fire Came Down from Heaven

If we will pray until we have finished, we will find the fire of the Holy Ghost consuming us and our churches once again. When this happened on Pentecost 3,000 people were saved (Acts 2:41).

If we pray until we have finished, we won't need a lot of hype, special entertainment, donuts and coffee, advertisements, or long and eloquent sermons to fill our churches. The fire of the Holy Ghost will fill them beyond our wildest dreams.

When the fire of the Holy Spirit fell in Acts 2, Peter didn't even have a chance to finish his sermon. People came in from the street, "pierced to the heart, and said, Brethren, what shall we do" (Acts 2:37)?

The Glory of the Lord Filled the House

If we will pray until we have finished, we will find the glory of God filling the church again. Most of us have not lived long enough to have experienced this or even know what it's like.

Many great men and women of God, who have experienced His glory, are passing off the scene. Oh, that God would restore those days when men and women prayed until the glory of God filled God's house, so much so that they can not continue to minister because of the thickness of His glory!

All the People Fell to the Ground and Worshiped

This was sincere, heart-felt worship. They were responding to what they had seen, felt and experienced. This was true worship, in spirit and truth (John 4:23-24).

When we pray until we have finished, we will experience fire from heaven, the glory of the Lord, and our people will begin worshiping like never before. They won't have to be worked up into an emotional frenzy to worship, they will worship naturally in response to a touch from heaven.

Let's pray through until we have finished!

How to Pray in the Spirit

Praying in the Spirit has always been a topic of dispute and controversy. The scriptures say we should be “praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:18).

Prayer is the responsibility of every born-again believer. That said, we don’t always pray as we should. We need God’s help to know how to pray and what to pray for.

Romans 8:26 – “The Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.”

How to Pray in the Spirit

1. Pray with dependency upon the Holy Spirit. One of the first things we must ask in our prayer time is for the Holy Spirit’s help. Praying in the Spirit is praying with complete and absolute dependency upon the Spirit of God to guide us as to what to pray and how we should pray.

We are in need of His assistance if we want to pray as we should. Jesus said, “Apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). Jesus helps us through the agency of the Holy Spirit to pray as we should. We must be in complete dependence upon Him when we seek the face of God.

2. Being “borne along” in your prayers by the Holy Spirit. “But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost” (Jude 20). This verse is talking about those times when you pour your heart out to God and as you do words begin flowing from your lips effortlessly. This is when the Holy Spirit takes over and it is no longer you praying, but the Holy Spirit crying out to God through you (Romans 8:15).

This kind of prayer usually only takes place after we have already spent considerable time talking with God. It seldom happens when we first begin to pray.

Few people ever experience being “borne along” in their prayers by the Holy Spirit. It takes discipline and commitment in our time of prayer before the Spirit of God takes over and we fade into the background. Let’s commit ourselves to concerted, concentrated and fervent praying until it is no longer us, but the Holy Ghost praying through us.

3. Pray in tongues. “He that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries” (1 Corinthians 14:2). This is not the Holy Spirit praying, but our human spirit moved upon by the Spirit of God. Our human spirit begins speaking directly to God in a language we do not understand (1 Corinthians 14:15). This can be one of the most powerful forms of prayer and praise for two reasons:

1. We cannot have unbelief about what we are praying for, because we do not understand what we are praying.
2. We are speaking mysteries to God. When we are facing a situation where we are at a loss as to how to pray, we begin praying with our spirit (tongues), bypassing our understanding, and praying directly to God.

4. “Groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26). This is prayer that is not vocalized in understandable words, human or spiritual. Notice it says, “too deep for words” – even tongues. This takes place only when we are so intensely burdened in prayer that our spirit (or the Holy Spirit within us) begins to utter “groanings too deep for words.” Sadly, few rarely enter such depths of prayer.

Prayer: Precious Holy Spirit, we need of your help. Without your assistance we are merely uttering empty words. Please take control of our prayer life and help us pray as we should. In Jesus name, amen!

Q & A on Speaking or Praying in Tongues

Below are a few answers to questions we've received about speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues is real, and many great men and women throughout history have testified that God so filled or baptized them with the Holy Spirit they had to ask Him to hold back or "stay" His hand.

Q & A

Have you ever spoken in tongues?

Answer: Yes, I do daily.

Do you think it is something Christians should want to do?

Answer: Yes. As believers we should desire all that God has provided for us.

Do you think speaking in tongues is something God wants us to do?

Answer: Yes. 1 Corinthians 14:5 says, "I wish you all spoke in tongues" signifying it is God's desire.

Why do you think some Christians do not speak in tongues?

Answer:

- **Man-made traditions.** Being told that it is not for today, etc.

- **Pride.** We must humble ourselves and become like little children to speak in tongues. It is an insult to our intellect. For an intelligent person to begin saying things they do not understand is very humiliating and an insult to our ego.
- **Faith.** It takes faith to speak in tongues. We have to (by faith) say words we do not understand.
- **They think it is evil.** People for ages have blamed speaking in tongues on the devil. However, Jesus said, “If a son asked his father for bread he will not give him a stone, If he asks him for fish he will not give him a serpent will he? Or if he asks him for an egg he will not give him a scorpion will he? If you know how to give good gift to your children how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them who ask him” (Luke 11:11-13)? Scorpions and serpents always represent the devil or demons in the Bible. Jesus was saying, if you ask God for something, He will not let the devil give you a counterfeit.
- **Speaking in tongues was only for the apostolic age.** Religiosity has taught people that tongues passed away once the Bible was completed and the apostolic age was over. They use 1 Corinthians 13:8 and 10 ~ “If there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away... but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.”

These religious zealots pick out “if there are tongues, they will cease” and say, “when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.” They claim “the perfect” is the Bible and once the scriptures were completed there was no longer any need for tongues. However, they do not throw out “prophecy” or preaching as they apply it, nor do they throw out knowledge, we are still learning and growing in knowledge. The argument they use here against tongues is completely absurd and invalid.

Is speaking in tongues always an earthly language?

Answer:

Tongues are merely an unknown dialect to the one speaking. They at times may be in a known dialect as on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) or a spiritual language known only to God Himself (1 Corinthians 14:2). The point is they are speaking in a language that is unknown to the one speaking, which is what makes it so powerful. "He that speaks in an unknown tongue speaks not unto men, but unto God: for no man understands him; howbeit in the spirit he speaks mysteries" (1 Corinthians 14:2).

When one speaks in tongues, they are edifying themselves. When we are speaking in tongues, we are in essence exercising our spiritual man. As such, we are building up, strengthening, edifying and making our spirit man stronger. The more we exercise this gift in our personal time of prayer and praise, the stronger our spirit becomes. "He who speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself" (1 Corinthians 14:4). This is one reason we should practice this gift regularly.

What about tongues and interpretation of tongues?

Answer:

There is a difference in application in the use of tongues in prayer, praise and worship and a public display in the congregation. If a group is together in prayer time and some are praying in tongues that typically doesn't need to be interpreted because they are clearly speaking to God.

Interpretation is to take place when in a church service and a person speaks out loud, clear and distinctly in tongues. Interpretation is to be given so that the entire church is edified and built up and not just the one speaking. The interpretation is often similar to that of a prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:3-4). It may be often interpreted as praise to God as well (1 Corinthians 14:17).

In a time of group prayer and there are those praying in tongues, at times it may need to be interpreted if there is a clear and distinct utterance in tongues. You can usually tell the difference. It will usually come across as being distinctive and different from those praying or worshipping in tongues.

A few facts about speaking in tongues:

- **You receive all of the Holy Spirit the moment you trust Jesus as your Lord and Savior.** “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His”(Romans 8:9). The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct experience believers can have with the Holy Spirit that already dwells within them as a born again believer (Matthew 3:11, Act 1:5).
- **It is God’s desire for all believers to speak in tongues.** Paul said, “I would that you all spoke with tongues” (1 Corinthians 14:5). It is clearly God’s will to give this gift to His people.
- **Tongues are mainly directed toward communion with God.** “He that speaks in an unknown tongue speaks not unto men, but unto God: for no man understands him; howbeit in the spirit he speaks mysteries” (1 Corinthians 14:2). Tongues can be directed in a message to God’s people, but their primary function is speaking to God. God gives us our own unique language to talk to Him. How cool is that?
- **Tongues are for praise, thanksgiving and worship of God (1 Corinthians 14:14-16).** When you have given thanks to God for all the good things He has done, and for who He is, and you don’t have any more words to express your gratitude, you can continue your worship and praise of Him through your new spiritual language.
- **It’s a wondrous form of prayer (1 Corinthians 14:14-16).** When you have prayed about certain things and don’t know what else to say, or how to pray, you can then use your prayer language – tongues. You are speaking mysteries to God (1 Corinthians 14:2). You are speaking to God directly from your human spirit, bypassing your understanding.
- **Tongues edifies or builds up your spirit.** “He who speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself; but he that prophesies edifies the church”(1 Corinthians 14:4). You are exercising your spirit. The more you exercise your spirit through speaking in tongues, the stronger your human spirit becomes. This is not a substitute for reading the Word of God, but it definitely helps.
- **It is something you do (Acts 2:4).** On the Day of Pentecost “they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and (they) began to speak with other tongues, as

the Spirit gave them utterance.” The Holy Spirit didn’t speak through them, He merely gave them the utterance or prompted their speech, but they were the ones who spoke. Someone may ask, “what if it’s just me speaking?” It better be. You are the one speaking. It is your human spirit or spirit man speaking directly to God (1 Corinthians 14:2).

- **It is received by faith and must be acted upon.** Everything we get from God is received by faith. Faith is expressed in actions (Mark 2:5, James 2:17, Hebrews 4:2). Ask God to baptize you in or with His Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. Accept by faith that if you ask Him for something He will give it to you (Luke 11:11-13).

After asking Him for this experience in the Holy Spirit, act in faith and begin speaking. At first, you may simply hear one or a few syllables in your head that you don’t understand. Just start speaking in faith! Like a child when they first begin talking, they say one or two things and keep saying them until they begin to speak fluently.

Some may speak out fluently right away and others may not. Everyone’s experience is different. That’s what makes it personal. We serve a personal God Who deals with us all on an individual basis. Also, each of us come to the Lord with different levels of faith. Our responsibility is simply to act or speak in faith and allow the Spirit of the Lord to work in and through us.

Let’s be careful not to put God or the Holy Spirit in our religious or traditional box. Our God is so much bigger than man made ideologies.

Let’s get back to “Thus saith the Lord!”

God is Able

Do you believe God can do anything? Is there something you're facing that makes you wonder if God is able to handle it? There are six accounts in the Bible where God declared that nothing is too difficult for Him.

1. When Confronting Abraham about Sarah's Laughter and Unbelief

Abraham was entertaining three persons who appeared to him (A Theophany – God appearing in human form) and gave him the promise of having a son. Abraham and Sarah were advanced in age and past child bearing age.

Undoubtedly she had already gone through menopause. It was impossible for them to have a child in the natural. Sarah heard the promise from her tent door and laughed. And the Lord said, "Is anything too difficult for the LORD" (Genesis 18:14)?

Is there something you feel God has promised you that seems impossible? It may be so outlandish that if you told someone they would laugh. God's question for you today is the same He asked Abraham, "Is anything too difficult for the LORD" (Genesis 18:14)?

2. In Relation to God's Purposes Being Fulfilled

At the end of his trouble, trials and testings, Job said, "I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You" (Job 42:2).

What are you presently going through? What trial or time of testing are you facing? Do you believe God can do anything, and that nothing can thwart His purposes from being fulfilled? It's one thing to believe in God's ability when all is well, but quite another when, like Job, you've lost everything and your world is falling apart.

3. When Comparing His Ability to His Creative Power

In contemplating the creation of the universe, Jeremiah wrote, “Ah Lord God! behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee” (Jeremiah 32:17).

If God was able to create the heavens and the earth with His spoken Word, could there possibly be anything that is too hard for Him?

“By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible” (Hebrews 11:3).

4. In View of God’s Impending Judgment

“Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me” (Jeremiah 32:27)?

We see God’s omnipotence displayed even in the light of His judgment. When looking upon God’s end time judgment there are three Alleluias listed in praise to our God for His mighty power manifest in His judgments:

1. “Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are His judgments.” – Revelation 19:1-2
2. “Again they said, Alleluia And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.” – Revelation 19:3-4
3. “And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him.” – Revelation 19:5-7

All flesh subject to Him. This also has to do with all flesh being in subjection to the Lord and under the power and control of God. “I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me” (Jeremiah 32:27)? He created us – all flesh or mankind and we are therefore subject to Him. Decree those for whom you’re praying, their lives and circumstances to be made subject to God and His will.

5. When Dealing with Mary’s Astonishment that She, as a virgin, would Give Birth to the Son of God

Mary was engaged to be married, and unlike most today, she had never slept with her fiancé. An angel appeared to her, telling her she was going to give birth to a son. In her astonishment she said, “How can this be, since I am a virgin” (Luke 1:34)?

The Angel’s response was, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also the holy child which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. For with God nothing shall be impossible” (Luke 1:35 and 37).

I love Mary’s response. It was one of faith. “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; BE IT UNTO ME ACCORDING TO THY WORD.” (Luke 1:38). Let’s respond to His promises in faith like this young women did.

David had a similar response to God’s promise to him, his household and descendants. “Therefore now, Lord, let the thing that Thou hast spoken concerning Thy servant and concerning his house be established for ever, and DO AS THOU HAST SAID. Let it even be established, that Thy name may be magnified for ever” (1 Chronicles 17:23-24a).

6. When Dealing with the Impossibility of Man to be Saved

Jesus had just finished ministering to the rich young ruler, who said he had kept all the commandments from his youth. Jesus told him he lacked one thing, “If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions” (Matthew 19:21-22).

Jesus went on to tell his disciples it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. The disciples responded, “Who then can be saved? But Jesus looked at them and said, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:25-26).

God is omnipotent and is able to do anything. No matter what you are going through or facing, our God is able! It may seem impossible in the natural, but let me assure you on the authority of God’s Word, He is able.

I’m personally going through something right now that seems impossible. There have been times that the situation seemed to be dealt with, but the same thing continues to raise it’s ugly head over and over again.

I’m reminded of something I read in Dake’s Annotated study Bible. “All men (Christians) believe God can do anything, but few believe that He will.” Will we dare to believe God is not only able to work in our situation but that He will?

6 Things God is Able to do:

1. God is Able to Save

“Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25). The word uttermost in the King James Version can also be translated, completely and forever. God is able to save us completely and forever. No matter how messed up you are, or how far you’ve fallen into sin, God is able to save you completely and forever if you will surrender to Him with all your heart.

God is not only able to save completely and forever, He is also able to save the most unlikely candidate among us. Think of the one who seems so far from God, the likelihood of them ever giving their life to Christ is simply beyond comprehension. Let me encourage you, those are the very ones God specializes in. He specializes in hard cases.

Peter, after preaching the gospel on the day of Pentecost, told those who had responded, “For the promise is to you and to your children, and **to all who are afar off**, as many as the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:39). If there’s someone you’re praying for, but they seem almost beyond saving, be encouraged, our God has an affinity for those “who are afar off.”

“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:25-26).

2. God is Able to Deliver

The three Hebrew children expressed confidence in God’s ability and said, “Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king” (Daniel 3:17). They not only expressed faith in God’s ability, but that He would deliver them – “He will deliver us”.

God is able to deliver us from sin and peril. “He shall save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins” (Romans 11:26-27 KJV).

Jesus said, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised” (Luke 4:18).

“The angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear Him, and delivers them” (Psalms 34:7).

3. God is Able to Heal

“The blind men came to Him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto Him, Yea, Lord” (Matthew 9:28). Jesus is still in the healing business. He is able to heal us from whatever ails us. Whether we are suffering physically, emotionally, from depression, mentally, mental illness or from some sin that has us in it’s grip. God is able to heal us.

The key is, will we let Him? Jesus said to a lame man, “Do you wish to get well” (John 5:6)? Do we really want to be made whole? That was Jesus’ condition of healing and deliverance. Frequently, people appear to hate their illness or sin, but do they really want to be well? Do they truly want to be healed and set free from their illness or sin?

For those whose lives have thrown them into intense bondage, there is something that is necessary on your part. You must give your life to Jesus without reservation. It’s usually the case of those who have sold out to sin that they must fully surrender to Christ with all their heart. It’s then that salvation, deliverance and complete wholeness comes into their life. On the authority of God’s Word, God is still in the business of saving, delivering and healing.

4. God is Able to Keep Us from Falling

“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24). Once He has delivered us, God is more than able to keep us from falling into the same sins and traps that have previously held us in their grip. If we will cling to and hold onto Him, He will sustain us and keep us from stumbling.

5. God is Able to Keep Us from Temptation

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

When we are facing temptation on every front, God is able to deliver us and will provide a way of escape. We must, however, walk through the escape route He provides.

6. God is Able to Provide

“God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” (2 Corinthians 9:8). The context of this verse is referring to financial provision. The key is, God is able to bless us financially so we can abound to every good work – and not just lavish it upon ourselves.

There are some who are reading these words that God has blessed abundantly. If you want to continue in His blessing, you must find an outlet for the blessings you have received. Find a reputable ministry and [sow into it](#). God has blessed you for that very purpose, in order that you might be a blessing (Genesis 12:2).

If you don't use some of your abundance to abound to every good work, God may take away that which you have. “For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath” (Matthew 25:29).

In closing, let me share a couple encouraging verses from God's Word:

“Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us” (Ephesians 3:20).

“The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him – completely His” (2 Chronicles 16:9).

How to Build Faith in Prayer

In Mark 11:22-24, Jesus said faith has the power to move mountains. In Matthew 21:22, He said, "All things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." Unbelief is a hindrance to prayer, while faith promotes powerful praying. Faith is essential to having an [effective prayer life](#). There is power in believing God.

"And the apostles said to the Lord, Increase our faith. So the Lord said, If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea, and it would obey you" (Luke 17:5-6).

Let's spend time cultivating and building our faith so we can believe Him for great things.

How to Build Your Faith

1. Forgiveness

Context is imperative to [rightly dividing the Word of truth](#). Just prior to asking Jesus "Increase our faith" He was talking about offenses and forgiveness. Forgiveness of any and all offenses is a prerequisite to faith and answered prayer. He said,

"Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, I repent, you shall forgive him" (Luke 17:3-4).

Just after speaking of having mountain moving faith in Mark 11:22-24, Jesus said, "And when you stand praying, forgive, if you have ought against any" (Mark 11:25).

Bitterness and unforgiveness is a major deterrent to faith, while maintaining a spirit of forgiveness will help to propel our faith exponentially.

2. Servant-hood

In the immediate context after asking Jesus “Increase our faith” He spoke concerning servant-hood.

“Which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, Come at once and sit down to eat? But will he not rather say to him, Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do” (Luke 17:7-10).

Our faith will only come to fruition when we have unreservedly surrendered to the service of Jesus, our Lord and Master. Once His will, purposes and our service to Him have become paramount in our thinking and desires – Our Passion, then and only then will our faith begin to soar.

“Delight yourself also in the Lord: and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust also in Him; and He will bring it to pass” (Psalm 37:4-5).

3. Pray in Accord with God’s Will

“And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He hears us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, WE KNOW that WE HAVE THE PETITIONS that WE HAVE DESIRED OF HIM” (1 John 5:14-15).

When we know we are praying in line with His will, we can have faith and confidence He will grant the petitions we desire of Him.

4. Study the Word

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17).

Spending time in the Word of God helps to build, grow and strengthen our faith. Many do not study the Word of God regularly. You may have a Bible laying on your coffee table or dresser and never take the time to dust it off, open and read it. Our faith will not grow unless we study His Word. Can you remember the last time you read and studied your Bible?

The context of Romans 10:17 has to do with “hearing” – listening to the Word being taught or preached (Romans 10:13-17). This is why church is so very important. If we want our faith to grow, we must hear the Word proclaimed. Then and only then will our faith grow.

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2).

5. Meditate on the Word

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success” (Joshua 1:8).

“But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper” (Psalms 1:2-3).

We need more than a casual reading of the scripture. We must spend time not only reading the Word but meditating on it. This means taking a passage, verse or phrase of scripture and tossing it over and over in our mind, letting it sink deep within our spirit. This will build and strengthen our faith in greater ways than we could ever imagine.

Memorizing God's Word is a great way to begin meditating on the Word. Meditation of scripture takes place during the memorization process. We are exhorted and encouraged throughout scripture to hide the Word of God in our hearts.

"The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide" (Psalm 37:31).

"Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee" (Psalm 119:11).

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16).

"I have written unto you, young men, because you are strong, and the Word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:14).

6. Use Your Imagination

"Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also does the Son likewise" (John 5:17 and 19).

See God doing what you're praying for. See it as a done deal. Jesus saw what the Father was doing in the spiritual realm before He did anything and then acted accordingly. If we really believe something our imagination will be stirred and our imagination will stir our faith.

7. Pray in the Spirit

Jude said, "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, " (Jude 20). [Praying with your spirit](#) is one of the most powerful forms of prayer a believer can implement.

Positioning Yourself to Hear the Voice of God

Throughout Biblical history God spoke to His people. He spoke to Adam and Eve shortly after He created them and after the fall (Genesis 1-3). God spoke to Abraham on numerous occasions (Genesis 12-22). He spoke to Noah concerning the flood and building an ark (Genesis 6-9). All the Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles claimed to hear from God. Is there any reason why we should not expect to hear from Him as well?

God is still speaking today. Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me” (John 10:27). Hearing from God is a must if we are going to pursue Him, His will and be all He has called us to be and do. God is always speaking. If we are going to hear from Him, we must simply learn to tune into His voice.

9 Ways to Position Yourself to Hear From God

1. **Develop a listening ear.** “Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, today if you will hear His voice” (Hebrews 3:7). Are you listening for His voice? We spend a lot of time talking to God in prayer, but we must also spend time listening. In your prayer time, set apart a segment of it to be still before Him and listen (Psalm 46:10).

Keep a pen and notepad with you and write down anything you hear from Him. You say, “But what if I don’t hear from Him correctly?” Practice makes perfect. You will probably not get everything right at first, but as you practice listening to His voice it will become clearer.

2. **Read God’s Word.** God has already spoken to us through His Word. If we are not going to listen to His written, revealed Word, why should we expect Him to speak further to us? If we stay in His Word, we’ll find He will begin to speak to us supernaturally through the Holy Spirit.

3. **Attend in church.** The believers of Antioch were in church when they heard from God concerning Paul’s first missionary journey (Acts 13:1-2). They positioned themselves in the proper setting to hear from the Lord. We must put first things first – be faithful in the little things (Luke 16:10). Start by being in church if you want to

hear from God. If we can't start there, God probably isn't going to speak to us in our quiet time.

4. **Worship.** When they heard from God, the Antioch believers were not only in church, but they were also actively involved in worshiping and ministering to the Lord. It was as they “ministered to the Lord and fasted” that the Holy Spirit spoke (Acts 13:2). There is something about worship that makes it a major catalyst for the Holy Spirit to speak to His people.

In 2 Kings 3 Elisha was requested to speak to the kings of Israel and Judah. He first requested a minstrel or musician. Before he could hear the Word of the Lord, there was a time of worship and praise (2 Kings 3:15). Worship is a powerful instrument in our preparation to hear from God. Never take lightly the function of worship in the house of God or your personal worship times.

5. **Fasting.** The believers at Antioch were not only in church worshiping, but they were also fasting. Fasting does not make God speak but rather prepares and positions us to hear His voice. God is always speaking to His people, but we must clear out the things of this life and the flesh so we are able to tune in and hear Him clearly.

6. **Servant-hood.** Joshua was first Moses' servant before God spoke to him (Joshua 1:1-2). Jesus said, “If you have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who will give you that which is your own” (Luke 16:12). Elisha served and followed Elijah faithfully before entering into his own ministry (1 Kings 19:19-21, 2 Kings 2).

7. **Giving.** Jesus said, “If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon (money), who will commit to your trust true riches” (Luke 16:11). Malachi challenged God's people about tithing, and when they failed to obey, God was silent 400 years until the coming of John the Baptist (Malachi 3:6-12). We cannot purchase God's favor, but giving definitely opens us up to being able to hear from God.

8. **Sacrifice.** Acts 13:2 – “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said...” The Antioch church was fasting, not of compulsion, but of free will. God was moved by their sacrifice and spoke to them. They sacrificed (seeking His will and heart), as a result, they heard the voice of the Lord.

9. **God's will.** Jesus said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17). If we are not willing to do what God tells us to do, why should He continue to speak to us? "To everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away" (Matthew 25:29).

If we do what He says, He will give us more. If we don't heed His Words, He will stop speaking until we are ready to follow through in obedience. If we obey step one, He will give us step two, step three and so on. If not, He will stop at step one. Let's do whatever He tells us, no matter how great the sacrifice. We must walk in the light He gives us if we expect God to shine additional light down the path of life for us.

God desires to speak to us today just as He did in Biblical times. Let's learn to tune into His voice by properly positioning ourselves to hear from Him.

My Personal Prayer Time

This is a description or outline of my personal prayer time each morning. Hopefully, this will give many a place to begin in their own personal journey with God in prayer. My personal time with God didn't begin here. It has been evolving for over forty years.

My time with the Lord in prayer is the most important thing I do. It should also become the most important thing in your life. Let our hearts constantly cry out to God, for we "have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15).

This is just an outline of my time with God each morning. As I go over many passages of scripture in my time with the Lord, I of course, elaborate on each aspect, as I speak them out to the Lord. Make your prayer time personal and your own. The Word of God is applicable to us all and every situation of life.

Psalm 141:1-2 – "Lord, I cry unto Thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto Thee. Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."

Psalm 34:10 – "They that seek the Lord shall not want/lack any good thing."

It should be noted that none of us will ever seek God on our own. "There is none who seeks after God" (Romans 3:11). We cannot nor will we ever seek the Lord out of our own volition. Prayer is a work of God's grace upon our life. "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

We must also understand that any faith we have does not come from us either. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing" (Romans 7:18). This also is a work of grace in our life, "according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Romans 12:3).

Anything and everything of any value or worth in us comes from Him and from Him alone. "It is God who is at work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure"

(Philippians 2:13). Even in our seeking God – it all comes from Him, yet He promises that when we seek Him, we “shall not want any good thing” (Psalm 34:10), “and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6). Wow, what unfathomable grace He bestows upon us (John 1:16)!

Let me make a few points by way of introduction that may help:

Begin by building your faith as to God’s power and ability:

SEE: [God is Able](#)

Genesis 18:14 – “Is any thing too hard for the Lord?”

Job 42:2 – “I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.”

Jeremiah 32:17 – “Ah Lord God! behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee.”

Jeremiah 32:27 – “Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me?”

Luke 1:35 and 37 – “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee... For with God nothing shall be impossible.”

Matthew 19:26 – “With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”

Entering the Presence of God

• **Praise and Worship**

Psalms 100:4 – “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise.”

Psalms 22:3 – “Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabits the praises of Israel” – Your people.

Acts 13:2 – “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said.”

How better to worship Him than with those in the heavenly scene:

Revelation 4:8-11 – “They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And give glory and honor and thanks to Him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 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.”

Revelation 5:9-14 – “They sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever.”

Revelation 7:9-12, 15-17 – “I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Revelation 19:1-7, 11-16 – “After these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are His judgments: For He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready.

I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon Him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself.

And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King Of Kings, And Lord Of Lords.”

It's interesting to note that they praise Him even for His judgments – Amen, Praise His matchless name!

• **The Blood of Christ**

Hebrews 10:19 – “Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus.”

• **Grace and Mercy**

Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Notice, He says to “obtain mercy.”

Mercy is not giving us what we deserve – judgment! We come to Him with boldness to obtain mercy. In other words, there must be some reason or something we have done whereby we are in need of mercy.

We are often stand offish when coming to God after that we have experienced failure. This verse says, we should come the more boldly into His presence when we have failed because we are in need of mercy.

Psalms 32:10 – “Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.”

Psalms 86:15 – “But Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.”

Lamentations 3:23-24 – “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness.”

John 1:16 – “Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.”

Ephesians 4:7 – “But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.”

• Right of Entry

Romans 5:2 – “By Whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

Ephesians 2:18 – “For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”

“Access” is right of entry through the merits of another. We have the right of entry into the very presence of God through the merit of Jesus on our behalf. It is by faith in His finished work on our behalf.

Let’s exercise our right of entry into His presence on a daily and constant basis. Our right of entry has nothing to do with us or any merit of our own. “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6). Our right of entry is based on the merit of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

Ask the Holy Spirit to Direct You

We do not have the ability, wisdom or knowledge to pray as we should. In fact, we would not even pray if the Holy Spirit didn’t place it in our heart to do so. “There is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God” (Romans 3:11).

Let’s seek the Spirit’s divine aid in our prayer time!

Ephesians 6:18 – “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

Jude 20 – “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.”

Romans 8:26-27 – “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”

Give Yourself Plenty of Time

As the Holy Spirit directs you and you elaborate on the scriptures you use in your conversation with God, it could possibly go on for an extended period of time. I believe that is at least one of the reasons Jesus had His prayer time early in the morning. It was said of Him, “In the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (Mark 1:35).

I do pray in the Spirit intermittently which takes up a little more time, but praying in the Spirit is very powerful. “He that [speaketh in an unknown tongue](#) speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries” (1 Corinthians 14:2).

Pray the Word

I’ve found that praying the Word of God is the best way to pray. God’s Word is so much more powerful than anything we could ever think to say to Him (Hebrews 4:12). I have memorized a considerable amount of scripture over the years, so as the Holy Spirit brings other Bible verses to my memory (John 14:26), I throw them into the mix as well.

Joel 2:11 – “The Lord shall utter his voice before His army: for His camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth His Word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?”

Hebrews 1:13-14 – “But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

Job 37:5 – “God thundereth marvellously with His voice; great things doeth He, which we cannot comprehend.”

• **God’s Word doesn’t return to Him empty or void.** “For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and returns not, but waters the earth, and makes it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall My Word be that goes forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isaiah 55:10-11).

• **Coming into agreement with God’s Word.** “If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 18:19). What better source of agreement is there than the Word of God!

• **Decreeing His Word.** “Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways” (Job 22:28). Let’s decree the Word of God into the spiritual realm and watch the Holy Spirit bring it into the realm of reality.

• **Framing our world.** “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible” (Hebrews 11:3). The world in which we live was formed by the Word of God. As we pray or decree the Word of God over the lives of those for whom we are praying, we are actually framing their lives and the world around them. We are molding or reforming our world when speaking and praying the Word over it.

• **God watches over and hastens His Word to perform it.** “Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten My Word to perform it” (Jeremiah 1:12).

- **God honors His Word above His name.** The Psalmist cried, “I will worship toward Thy holy temple, and praise Thy name for Thy lovingkindness and for Thy truth: for Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy name” (Psalm 138:2).
- **We are to remind God of His Word.** “Put Me in remembrance, let us argue our case together; State your cause, that you may be proved right” (Isaiah 43:26). This is in essence wrestling with God in prayer as Jacob did (Genesis 32). We can also view it this way. We are reminding God of His Word, that we may prove that He is right.
- **God’s Word is sent out through us in prayer to bring healing and deliverance.** “He sent His Word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions” (Psalms 107:20). His Word is sent out through our declaration, decree (Job 22:28) and prayers to bring healing and deliverance to those for whom we are praying.
- **God anoints His Word.** God always anoints His Word! As we pray the Word over people, places, situations and the church, the anointing of God goes forth and releases people from their bondage, burdens and the yoke of the enemy from off their lives. “It shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing” (Isaiah 10:27 KJV).
- **The Word of the Lord speaks life into that which is dead.** “Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the Word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord” (Ezekiel 37:4-6).

When we prophecy the Word of the Lord, under the anointing of the Holy Ghost into that which is dead, whether it be those who are spiritually dead or dead things, situations and circumstances, God will breathe life into that which is dead. “He – Jesus breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” ~ John 20:22 (Study Ezekiel 37 in its entirety.)

Scripture to Pray

Do not simply read these scriptures, but use them as a starting point in your conversation with God. Take each aspect, elaborate on it as you converse with the Lord. Put your entire heart and soul into it.

As you speak the Word out in prayer, the Holy Spirit will begin to give you more and more revelation into God's Word and as to how it may apply to you and those for whom you are praying. With revelation comes increased power and authority (Matthew 16:16-19). As a result, the power and authority you have in prayer will increase exponentially.

It is important to pray out loud. The Word must go forth audibly, spoken into the spiritual realm, releasing its power and authority and causing the powers of darkness to shutter. "They went to their own company, and lifted up their voice to God with one accord" (Acts 4:23-24).

I usually begin by naming off all those I am bringing before the Lord in prayer. This includes any and all prayer lists, our pastors, our ministries, Israel, my country and its leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-3), our family, children, extended family members and myself. Don't forget yourself!

A pastor I know, whom I have always held in high regard, once said he spent most of his prayer time praying for himself that God would encourage him. If he wasn't encouraged he could hardly be an encouragement to others. Great Word!

1. **God's Choosing and Positioning of Us**

John 6:44 – "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:37 – "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

James 1:18 – “Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.”

John 1:13 – “Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

John 15:16 – “You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you.”

Ephesians 1:3-23 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestined us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

In whom we have redemption (deliverance) through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; Wherein He has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He has purposed in Himself: That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him:

In Whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things after the counsel of His own will: That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom you also trusted, after that you heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.

Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your

understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all.”

Romans 9:15-29 – “For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.

Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

And that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He hath afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom He hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? As He saith also in Hosea, I will call them My people, which were not My people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, You are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

Isaiah also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: For He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the

earth. And as Isaiah said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.”

Ephesians 2:1-10 – “And you has He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ, (by grace you are saved;) And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come He might shew the surpassing riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.”

1 Peter 1:3-5 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Titus 3:5 – “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

2 Timothy 1:9 – “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”

1 Peter 2:9 – “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.”

Revelation 1:6 – “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

2. **Releasing Faith into the Lives of Those He’s Chosen**

The Measure of Faith: Romans 12:3 – “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”

God has given to every person enough faith to believe and to see great things take place for His glory. Let’s release into people’s lives that which God has already promised – FAITH.

The Faith of the Holy Spirit – Manifestation of Faith: 1 Corinthians 12:7 and 9 – “The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal... To another faith by the same Spirit.” One of the nine manifestations of the Spirit is faith. Ask the Holy Spirit to release supernatural faith into people’s lives.

The Faith of God: Mark 11:22 – “Jesus answering saith unto them, have faith in God – have the faith of God, have God’s faith.” The Lord would not have told them, even commanded them, to have God’s faith if it was not possible. Be audacious enough to expect the faith of God to be released in your life and the lives of those for whom we are praying.

The Faith of Jesus: Romans 3:22 – “The righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.” The righteousness of God is originated or imparted by the “FAITH OF JESUS” unto all who will but believe. It is the “FAITH OF JESUS” and not our faith but is imparted to us who believe.

Peter, after the healing of the lame man at the gate of the temple, accredited the man’s healing to faith in or the “FAITH OF JESUS” (Acts 3:16). When the people

began looking to them, as if the healing came from them, they were quick to point them to Jesus.

Release the “FAITH OF JESUS” into the lives of those for whom we are praying. “The righteousness of God” is imparted to us “by (the) faith of Jesus” as well as the power to transform people’s lives, situations and circumstances.

John 5:17 and 19 – “My Father works hitherto, and I work. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father doing.”

It is God’s will that we have all the aforementioned aspects of faith. Like Jesus, we must see the things we are praying and believing God for being translated from the spiritual realm into the earthly realm. “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

2 Corinthians 4:18 – “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

Hebrews 11:1 – “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

It was said of Abraham:

Romans 4:18-21 – “Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.”

Let’s release faith into the lives of those for whom we are praying!

3. Forgiveness and His Righteousness

It's always best to begin with asking for forgiveness and declaring His righteousness over yourself and those for whom you are praying. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

Isaiah 1:18 – "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Psalms 103:12 – "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."

1 John 1:9 – "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

1 John 1:7 – "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

Micah 7:19 – "He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

Romans 3:24-26 – "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus."

Isaiah 61:10 – "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of His righteousness."

2 Corinthians 5:21 – "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

4. Forgiveness of Others

If God has forgiven us such an insurmountable debt, what right do we have to withhold forgiveness to those who have offended and trespassed against us. Bitterness, resentment and unforgiveness will greatly hinder the grace and favor of God from our lives. We must release those for whom we are praying from all bitterness, resentment and unforgiveness and loose the love and forgiveness of God. Decree His Word of forgiveness over their lives.

Hebrews 12:15 – “Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.”

Colossians 3:13 – “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”

Ephesians 4:27, 29-32 – “Neither give place to the devil. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

Romans 5:5 – “And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

5. Reconciliation

Forgiveness brings reconciliation. Jesus came to pay the penalty for our sins that we might be reconciled to God. Pray the Word of reconciliation over your people and the world in which we live. God’s Word is powerful and this world and every earthen vessel must heed His Word.

Let’s bear to weight all the power and authority of His eternal kingdom into the affairs of this earthly realm and every earthen vessel. Decree His Word over those for whom you are praying.

Matthew 6:10 – “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth (in earthen vessels and situations), as it is in heaven.”

Matthew 11:12 – “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.”

Revelation 3:20 – “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.”

Luke 12:32 – “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

Luke 17:20-21 – “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here it is! or, lo there it is! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you – in your midst.”

Declaring Reconciliation with God Over Those for Whom You Pray

1 Peter 3:18 – “Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

1 John 1:1-3 – “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us; That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

Romans 5:9-11 – “Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 – “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

6.The Joy of Reconciliation

Each of the following verses are in the context of us being reconciled to God. Walking in and living in fellowship with God has an inherent joy that comes with it. Let’s release the joy of fellowship with God into the lives of those for whom we are praying.

Now may “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion – fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen” (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Romans 14:17 – “The kingdom of God is... righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

1 John 1:4 – “And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.”

Romans 5:11 – “And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

1 Peter 1:8 – “Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

Psalms 16:11 – “Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

Psalm 32:11 – “Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.”

Isaiah 35:10 – “The ransomed of the Lord will return, they will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.”

Isaiah 52:9 – “Break forth into joy, sing together – shout for joy together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem.”

Isaiah 60:5a NIV – “Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy.”

7. Federal Headship

Colossians 1:12-13 – “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet – qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power – domain of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.”

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 – “For the love of Christ constraineth – compels us; because we thus judge, that if One died for all, then were all dead: And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.”

In Adam, the federal head of the human race, we have all sinned and inherited his Adamic (sinful) nature. Even so, in Christ, we all inherit Jesus’ divine nature and righteousness (2 Peter 1:3-4). In your prayer time, decree (Job 22:28) the federal headship of Jesus, His righteousness and obedience, over those for whom you are praying.

Romans 5:12-21 – “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not

sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

8. Put on the Armor of God

It's amazing how few believers put on the armor of God everyday. We are in a real battle with a real enemy. It is incumbent on us to cover ourselves and those for whom we are praying with the needed protections for the day's warfare. Let's dress ourselves with His armor before beginning each day, while speaking and decreeing it over those for whom we are praying.

Ephesians 6:10-18a – "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt

about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.”

9. **The Prayer of Jabez**

1 Chronicles 4:9-10 – “Jabez was more honorable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that Thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that Thine hand might be with me, and that Thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.”

10. **The Lord’s Prayer**

Matthew 6:9-13 – “Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth (in earthen vessels and situations), as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”

11. **Our Benefits in Christ**

Psalms 103:1-5 – “Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”

12. **The Blessing of Israel**

There is a cursing that follows these two passages of scripture for disobedience. However, the curse itself does not apply to those who are in Christ. “For Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one who hangeth on a tree” (Galatians 3:13).

That doesn't mean there isn't some differentiation between those who obey and those who do not. Jesus did say that, "to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away" (Matthew 25:29). Therefore, more is given to those who are obedient, if for no other reason than a natural by-product of their obedience and the disobedient miss out on much of what they could have experienced.

There is also additional light given to those who respond in faith and obedience – "to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away" (Matthew 25:29). "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the doctrine, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself" (John 7:17). If we obey God and His Word, additional light is given. If we fail to obey, the light given only goes so far down the road before it is cut off.

However, let's be encouraged that God has given to everyone "the measure of faith," spiritual light and substance. Therefore, let's pray that according to even the little we may have that God will add to it an abundance – "to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance" (Matthew 25:29).

Remember, the curse itself does not apply to those who are in Christ. Jesus became a curse for us, He took our place and paid the penalty for us. Even when we fail, though there is inevitably a consequence to sin and a reaping of what we sow (Galatians 6:7), the curse itself was placed on Jesus as our substitutionary sacrifice (1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:2; Romans 3:25). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13).

The blessing of Israel is as follows:

Deuteronomy 28:1-14 – "The Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And All these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and He shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto Himself, as He hath sworn unto thee... All people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee. And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods – abound in prosperity. The Lord shall open unto thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many, and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath: And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.”

Deuteronomy 30:1-9; 30:11-15; 19 – “It shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing... which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, And shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey His voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee.

If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will He fetch thee: And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land... and thou shalt possess it; and He will do thee good, and multiply thee. And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all His commandments which I command thee this day. And the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous – prosper you abundantly in every work of thine hand..., for good: for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good.

For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

See, I have set before thee this day life and good (life and prosperity), and death and evil (death and adversity); I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”

13. **Divine Health and Healing**

Divine health and healing is provided for in the atonement. This has to do with physical, emotional, mental, relational, natural and spiritual healing. Plead the blood of Jesus and God’s promises of divine health over those for whom you are praying!

Exodus 15:26 – “I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians – the world: For I am the Lord ([Jehovah Rapha](#)) that healeth thee.”

Psalm 103:3b – “Who healeth all thy diseases.”

Isaiah 53:3-6 – “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

1 Peter 2:24-25 – “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

Divine Healing is a touch of future resurrection power!

Romans 8:23 – “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

Romans 8:11 – “But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

14. Restoration of All the Enemy has Stolen

The Bible says, “Do not despise a thief If he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving. Yet when he is found, he must restore seven-fold” (Proverbs 6:30-31).

The devil is the thief who has come to steal kill and destroy (John 10:10a). Whether what we have lost in life is from the original fall of Adam and Eve, through direct attacks of the devil and his emissaries against us, or through our own sin, faults and poor choices, Satan is still the thief and source of our losses.

Let's demand all that has been taken from us be restored seven-fold.

Joel 2:11, 17-27 – “The Lord shall utter His voice before His army: for His camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth His Word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it? Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare Thy people, O Lord, and give not Thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?”

Then will the Lord be jealous for His land, and pity His people. Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto His people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen: But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done monstrous things.

Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, My great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and My people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in the midst, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and My people shall never be ashamed.”

15. **The Favor of God**

Jesus was anointed to release the favor of God to His people. We are to do no less in our prayer time over those for whom we are praying. This is the year of God's favor!

Exodus 33:14 – “And He said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.”

John 3:27 – “A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.”

Isaiah 41:10 – “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.”

Isaiah 44:3 – “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring.”

Isaiah 66:2 – “For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being, declares the Lord. But to this one will I look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My Word.”

Luke 4:18-19 – “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.”

Numbers 6:24-26 – “The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.”

Deuteronomy 15:6 – “For the Lord thy God blesseth thee, as He promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.”

1 Chronicles 4:10 – “Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that Thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that Thine hand might be with me, and that Thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.”

Jeremiah 29:11-13 – “I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil (not of calamity), to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.”

Isaiah 14:24 and 27 – “The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? And His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?”

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV – “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Zephaniah 3:17 – “The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty – A victorious warrior; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will quiet you in His love, He will joy over thee with singing – with shouts of joy.”

Joel 2:20, 23 and 25 – “I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done monstrous things.

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He has given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, My great army which I sent among you.”

Romans 15:13 – “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

2 Chronicles 16:9 – “The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him – completely His.”

Decreeing open doors and opportunities

Revelation 3:8 – “Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it!”

Isaiah 43:19 – “Behold, I will do something new, Now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.”

16. The Goodness of God

Psalm 27:13-14 – “I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the Lord In the land of the living. Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!”

Exodus 33:19 – “And He said, I Myself will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.”

Deuteronomy 30:5 – “The Lord thy God... He will do thee good, and multiply thee.”

Deuteronomy 30:9 – “The Lord thy God will make thee plenteous – prosper you abundantly in every work of thine hand, for good: for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good.”

Psalm 34:7-10 – “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. O fear the Lord, ye His saints: for there is no want to them that fear Him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.”

Psalm 84:11 – “For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.”

It should be noted, that though we are called to live uprightly, any uprightness we have is of Him and Him alone (Isaiah 64:6 and Philippians 3:7-9).

Psalm 103:5 – “Who satisfieth thy mouth (years) with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”

Romans 11:22 – “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness.”

James 1:17 – “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

Hebrews 9:11 – “Christ being come an high priest of good things to come.”

17. **Financial Blessings**

Lord, we ask that You release all that has been stored up for us in Your heavenly storehouse, that which may be in holding for us in the world and the hands of the sinner. Let there be a release of wealth into the hands of Your children, for Your glory, now In Jesus Name (John 14:12-14).

I decree Your Word over us, In Jesus' Name (Job 22:28)!

Philippians 4:19 – “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

2 Corinthians 9:8 – “God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.”

Isaiah 60:5 – “Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come.”

Proverbs 10:22 – “The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.”

Proverbs 13:22 – “A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.”

Psalms 35:27 – “Let them shout for joy, and be glad, which favor My righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, Who hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant.”

Deuteronomy 8:18 – “It is He that giveth thee power to get wealth.”

Isaiah 48:17 – “Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.”

18. The Outpouring of the Holy Ghost

Let's earnestly seek the face of God for an outpouring and filling of His Spirit upon/in our lives personally, our loved ones, children, extended family, our churches, fellowships, leaders, our nation and the world in which we live. We know this to be the will of God, therefore, we can pray with faith and confidence that God will do exactly what we are petitioning Him for (1 John 5:14-15).

Again, the most effective way to pray is by praying the Word of God. This assures us that we are praying in accord with God's perfect will (Matthew 6:10). Let's be careful not to interpret the following scripture according to our particular denominational and doctrinal slant or bias, but allow the Word to speak for itself as we speak it out to God and decree it in prayer (Job 22:28).

After all, the Holy Spirit, the author or scripture, knows how to apply and interpret God's Word better than the best theologians among us. We are desiring God to have His way through our prayer time. The whole purpose of prayer is the implementation of the will of God in the affairs of men on earth. “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth (in earthen vessels and situations), as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

Scripture to pray for a visitation of the Holy Spirit:

John 3:34 – “For He whom God hath sent speaketh the Words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him.”

Let's beseech the Lord to release His Spirit without measure upon us, the church, those for whom we are praying and the world in which we live.

Romans 15:19 – “Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God.”

Joel 2:28-32 – “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit.

And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come.

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.”

Isaiah 12:3 – “Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”

Isaiah 44:3 – “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring.”

Isaiah 55:1 – “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”

Matthew 3:11-12 – “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but He that cometh after Me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Luke 24:49 – “Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”

John 4:14 – “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

John 7:37-39 – “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believes on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.”

John 20:22 – “And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 1:4-5 – “Being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”

Acts 1:8 – “But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me.”

Acts 2:1-4 – “When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

Acts 4:31 – “And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness.”

Ephesians 5:18-21 – “Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”

Notice the parallel verse in Colossians:

Colossians 3:16 – “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

In Ephesians says we are to “be filled with the Spirit” and in Colossians we are told to “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.” The context is nearly identical! A major key to being filled with the Holy Spirit is causing the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.

Isaiah 10:27 – “And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.”

Releasing all the power and manifestations of the Holy Ghost

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 – “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.”

Mark 16:15-20 – “And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken

unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following. Amen.”

Hebrews 2:4 – “God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will?”

19. Abiding in the Secret Place of the Most High

Psalm 91 – “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, Even the Most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder (cobra): the young lion and the dragon (serpent) shalt thou trample under feet.

Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation.”

20. Enlightenment as to God’s Glory and Power at Our Disposal

Ephesians 1:17-19 – “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe.”

21. Strengthening of the Inner Man and Enlightenment of God's Love and Power

Ephesians 3:14-21 – “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man;

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to His power that works in us, Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, world without end, forever and ever. Amen.”

22. Protection, Deliverance and Victory

Romans 8:31-39 – “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any

other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

2 Corinthians 2:14 – “Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place.”

1 John 4:4 – “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

1 John 5:4 – “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

Revelation 12:11 – “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.”

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 – “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.”

Luke 4:18-19 – “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the favorable year of the Lord.”

Luke 10:18-19 – “And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power – authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”

Romans 16:20 – “The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet.”

Exodus 14:13-14 – “Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you to day: for the Egyptians – your enemies whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.”

Deuteronomy 20:4 – “The Lord your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you – to give you victory.”

Psalms 40:1-3 – “I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.”

Psalms 60:12 – “Through God we shall do valiantly: for He it is that shall tread down our enemies.”

Psalms 68:1-3 – “Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered: let them also that hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them rejoice exceedingly.”

Micah 5:9 – “Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.”

Isaiah 10:27 – “It shall come to pass in that day – today, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.”

Isaiah 43:2 – “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you.”

Isaiah 54:17 – “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness – vindication is from me, saith the Lord.”

Isaiah 59:19 – “When the enemy comes in, like a flood The Spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against him.”

2 Kings 6:16 – “Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.”

Hebrews 1:13-14 – “But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

1 Peter 1:5 – “Who are kept – protected by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Psalms 34:7 – “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.”

It's significant to note “The angel of the Lord” is singular. This no doubt refers to the Lord Jesus Himself. He is the “captain of the host of the Lord” (Joshua 5:13-15). He is head and commander over all the angelic host of heaven (Hebrews 1:14).

23. Breaking the Spirit of Deception

The devil is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). He has been busy deceiving God's people from the very beginning (Genesis 3:1-6). There's a spirit of deception over our world today, the likes of which we have never seen. The deceiver is coming in these last days with unprecedented delusion.

The Bible says, “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit – breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Thessalonians 2:8-12).

We must take authority over the spirit of deception (Mark 3:27; Matthew 16:18-19 and 18:18-19) and pray steadfastly for the Holy Spirit's enlightenment and deliverance, breaking the spirit of deception, of which we are all susceptible.

Praying the Word, under the authority and anointing of the Holy Ghost, is the only way to break this end time deception.

Scripture to bind and break the spirit of deception:

1 Timothy 4:1-3 – “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.”

2 Corinthians 11:3-4 – “But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.”

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 – “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.”

2 Corinthians 4:4 and 6 – “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

Galatians 1:6-12 – “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men,

or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify – make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Galatians 2:21 – “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ died in vain.”

Galatians 3:1-3 – “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth – publicly portrayed as, crucified among you?

This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”

Galatians 5:4 – “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”

Romans 11:6 – “And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”

Ephesians 4:14 – “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight – trickery of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”

Colossians 2:8 – “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.”

1 John 2:18-28 – “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they

might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life. These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him. And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.”

1 John 4:1-6 – “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”

24. Restoring and Asserting Our Dominion: Placing Everything Under Our Feet

This has to do with placing every promise of God under our feet, the fullness of all God has for us, every enemy, every resistant spirit and all the forces of darkness.

Jesus gave His life (The Divine Exchange) that we might have the dominion that was forfeited through the fall (Genesis 3) restored to us in the here and now.

Hebrews 2:5-10 – “For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands:

Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”

Deuteronomy 11:24 – “Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours.”

Joshua 1:3 and 5 – “Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”

Psalms 91:13 – “Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder (cobra): the young lion and the dragon (serpent) shalt thou trample under feet.”

Matthew 16:18-19 – “Upon this rock (The confession of Christ – Revelation Knowledge) I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Luke 10:18-19 – “And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power – authority to tread on serpents and

scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”

Ephesians 1:19-23 – “And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.”

Ephesians 2:6 – “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

Ephesians 4:7-16 – “But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth – hell itself? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.”

And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect – mature man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight – trickery of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From Whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted – being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual – proper working in the measure of every – each individual part, makes for – causes the increase – growth of the body unto the edifying – building up of itself in love.”

1 John 4:17 – “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.”

Revelation 1:18 – “I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”

Romans 16:20 – “And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet.”

In Jesus' Name

John 14:12-14, 20 – “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in My name, I will do it. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.”

John 16:23-24 – “In that day ye shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”

Psalms 141:1 – “Lord, I cry unto Thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto Thee.”

Receive God's Word by Faith as a Completed Act

Numbers 23:19 – “God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?”

2 Corinthians 1:20 – “For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”

Hebrews 6:17-20 – “Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD TO LIE, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before

us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.”

1 John 5:14-15 – “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, WE KNOW that WE HAVE THE PETITIONS that WE HAVE DESIRED OF HIM.”

Mark 11:22-24 – “Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God (Literally, Have God’s faith – the faith of God). For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; HE SHALL HAVE WHATSOEVER HE SAITH. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”

Isaiah 14:24 and 27 – “The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? And His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?”

Jeremiah 1:12 – “Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten My Word to perform it.”

1 Chronicles 17:23-24a – “Therefore now, Lord, let the thing that Thou hast spoken concerning Thy servant and concerning his house be established for ever, and DO AS THOU HAST SAID. Let it even be established, that Thy name may be magnified for ever.”

Luke 1:38 – “Behold the handmaid/servant of the Lord; BE IT UNTO ME ACCORDING TO THY WORD.”

Summation

This is the summation of my prayer time for myself and all those on my prayer lists. The brief passage below sums up everything and is praise for all God has done, is doing and will yet do on our behalf.

1 Chronicles 29:11-13 – “Thine, O Lord is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all; and in Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name.”

Psalm 141:2 – “Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.”

