

# Prayer Devotionals and Illustrations

**Hot Water Bottle Prayer** - The LORD is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous. (Pr 15:29) -[Dr. Helen Roseveare](#), missionary to [Zaire](#), told the following story. "A mother at our mission station died after giving birth to a premature baby. We tried to improvise an incubator to keep the infant alive, but the only hot water bottle we had was beyond repair. So we asked the children to pray for the baby and for her sister. One of the girls responded. 'Dear God, please send a hot water bottle today. Tomorrow will be too late because by then the baby will be dead. And dear Lord, send a doll for the sister so she won't feel so lonely.' That afternoon a large package arrived from England. The children watched eagerly as we opened it. Much to their surprise, under some clothing was a hot water bottle! Immediately the girl who had prayed so earnestly started to dig deeper, exclaiming, 'If God sent that, I'm sure He also sent a doll!' And she was right! The heavenly Father knew in advance of that child's sincere requests, and 5 months earlier He had led a ladies' group to include both of those specific articles." Not all of our prayers are answered so dramatically, but we know that God always sends what is best. —H. G. Bosch

## Related Resources:

- [Watch Dr Roseveare tell this story!](#) - This will bring tears to your eyes!
- Watch the 1 hour gripping movie of Dr Roseveare in Zaire - [Mama Luka Comes Home](#)
- Dr Roseveare's address to Desiring God 2007 National Conference - [A Call for the Perseverance of the Saints](#)

God not only prompts the asking  
but He also provides the answers.

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## GREEK WORDS FOR PRAYER

**Ask** (154) ([aiteo](#)) means to ask for with urgency, even to the point of demanding. **Aiteo** more frequently suggests attitude of a suppliant (one who supplicates [supplicate is from Latin supplex = bowed] means to make a humble, earnest plea or entreaty), the petitioning of one who is lesser in position than he to whom the petition is made. To ask means to call on for an answer, which indicates that we believe there is someone (our Father) listening. It also implies that we expect Him to answer or otherwise why ask?

**Beg** (1189) ([deomai](#) from **deo** = to bind) means to ask for something with the sense of pleading, beseeching or begging. To request, to ask for with a sense of urgency and a presumed need. When used in the context of prayer **deomai** means to make petition, to plead, to ask in prayer, to implore (pray for earnestly) and emphasizes the existence of a need. **Deomai** is a strong way to ask for something - a leper imploring Jesus to heal him (Lk 5:12), a father's desperate plea to Jesus to cast a demon out of his son (Lk 9:38).

**Pray** (4336) ([proseuchomai](#) from **pros** = toward, facing, before [emphasizing the direct approach of the one who prays in seeking God's face] + **euchomai** = originally to speak out, utter aloud, express a wish, then to pray or to vow. Greek technical term for invoking a deity) in the NT is always used of prayer addressed to God (to Him as the object of faith and the One who will answer one's prayer) and means to speak consciously (with or without vocalization) to Him, with a definite aim. **Proseuchomai** encompasses all the aspects of prayer -- submission, confession, petition, supplication (may concern one's own need), intercession (concerned with the needs of others), praise, and thanksgiving. Vine says that **proseuchomai** carries with it a notion of **worship** (but see the Greek word for worship = [proskuneo](#)) which is not present in the other words for prayer (eg, [aiteo](#), [deomai](#), both of which involve spoken supplication)

**Pray** (2172) ([euchomai](#); **euche** = a vow in Acts 18:18, a prayer in Jas 5:15) literally meant to speak out or utter aloud and came to mean as used by to express a wish. The idea can be to desire something, with the implication of a pious wish. To vow (this sense is primarily found in the Septuagint uses but is found in Acts 26:29). To pray, but in the NT the derivative [proseuchomai](#) is the more common verb for pray. **Euchomai** and **proseuchomai** are more general terms for prayer, while [deomai](#) conveys the sense of seeking to have a need met.

**Prayer** (1162) ([deesis](#)) refers to urgent requests or supplications to meet a need and are exclusively addressed to God. **Deesis** prayers arise from one's sense of need (which reflects a humble heart) and in knowing what is lacking. This individual's plea is in turn made to God to supply for the need. **Deesis** in the New Testament always carries the idea of genuine entreaty and supplication before God. It implies a realization of need and a petition for its supply. In Classical Greek **deesis** (in contrast to the

Biblical uses) was not restricted to sacred uses, but was employed of requests preferred to men.

**Prayer** (4335)(**proseuche** from **pros** = toward or immediately before + **euchomai** = to pray or vow) is the more general word for prayer and is used only of prayer to God. The prefix **pros** would convey the sense of being immediately before Him and hence the ideas of adoration, devotion, and worship. The basic idea is to bring something, and in prayer this pertains to bringing up prayer requests. In early Greek culture an offering was brought with a prayer that it be accepted. Later the idea was changed slightly, so that the thing brought to God was a prayer. In later Greek, prayers appealed to God for His presence. **Proseuche** is used 37 times ([click](#)) in the NT. Note the concentration of prayer in the **early church!** (Acts) **What has happened to us as a church in America? How might this relate to how infrequently we see the power of the Lord at work in our midst? On the positive side what might happen if all the believers in America began to intercede for Spirit wrought, Word centered, Christ exalting, God glorifying revival???**

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## Praying in the Spirit

### What Does This Phrase Mean?

- See Comments on [Praying in the Spirit](#) - Jude 1:20 Commentary
  - [Six Enemies that Keep Us From Praying](#) - Adrian Rogers
  - See Topic: Praying in the Spirit
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**Rob Morgan** - Let me give you a closing example. Alice Taylor and her husband, missionaries, had sent their four children across the vastness of China to boarding school at Chefoo. When the Japanese invaded the region in the early 1940s, reunion became impossible. One day Alice, already fretting, entered her house just as the paperboy arrived with dramatic news: "Pearl Harbor Attacked!" She instantly knew conditions had dramatically worsened for the children, especially since Chefoo had been in the Japanese line of attack.

I remembered the horror stories of Nanking--where all of the young women of that town had been brutally raped. And I thought of our lovely Kathleen, beginning to blossom into womanhood.... Great gulping sobs wrenched my whole body. I lay there, gripped by the stories we had heard from refugees--violent deaths, starvation, the conscription of young boys--children--to fight. I thought of ten-year-old Jamie, so conscientious, so even-tempered. "What has happened to Jamie, Lord? Has someone put a gun in his hands? Ordered him to the front lines? To death?" Mary and John, so small and so helpless, had always been inseparable. "Merciful God," I cried, "are they even alive?"

As Alice knelt, sobbing and praying, a scene from her childhood came suddenly to mind. Her minister, "Pa" Ferguson, back in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, had shared Matthew 6:33 with her--"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." His rendering of the verse had been: *Alice, if you take care of the things that are dear to God, He will take care of the things dear to you.* Alice now felt God had given her those words just for this day. *A deep peace replaced my agony. This war had not changed God's promise. With that assurance I felt the aching weight of fear in my stomach lift.* Alice daily concentrated on taking care of things dear to God--visiting the sick, holding open-air meetings in the villages, delivering babies. Conditions at Chefoo worsened--the students were captured and herded into a Japanese concentration camp. The war meanwhile reached Alice's region; all around her bombs fell, rockets exploded. She, however, devoted herself to treating the wounded, distributing Scriptures to doctors, officers, troops, and students--and to taking care of things important to God. Years passed.

Then as I sat one September evening in our home during a faculty meeting, my mind wondered once more to the children. Again I pictured them as I had last seen them, waving goodbye. I heard their voices, faintly, calling excitedly. Then I heard their voices louder. Was I imagining this? No, their voices were real! And they came bursting through the doorway. "Mommy, Daddy, we're home--we're home!" And they flew into our arms. Our hugs, our shouts filled the room. We couldn't let go of one another. It had been five and a half long, grueling years. Yet there they were--thin, but alive and whole, laughing and crying. Oh, they had grown! But Kathleen still wore the same blue jumper she had worn when I last saw her.... For our family that advice from Pa Ferguson long ago will always hold special meaning. I pass it along to you, for it is truly so: "If you take care of the things that are dear to God, He will take care of the things dear to you."

When facing impossible odds, learn to pray... urgently, unfeignedly, unitedly. And learn to trust the One who tells us to come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. - (From Robert Morgan's sermon on **Exodus 14:21-22 - God's Specialty** - Red Sea Rules)

- Read **Robert Morgan's** sermon on Psalm 66 - **Praying on the Wrong Frequency**
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### **Mark 11:17 My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.**

The Lord wants us to pray for all nations, and for kings and for all in authority (1Ti 2:2). We can exercise knee-based influence over leaders whom we may never meet. Here's an example: Prince Edward VII of England was well known for his drinking and immorality. When his mother, Queen Victoria, died in 1901, Edward assumed the throne at age fifty-nine and reigned for nine years. In 1910, a prayer warrior named Joe Evans was vacationing in the New York mountains, away from newspapers and interruptions. One morning he felt a burden to intercede for Edward, and the burden became so intense he anguished in prayer for the king's conversion. The following day came the news, "Edward is dead." Years later, Joe shared dinner with Dr. J. Gregory Mantle of England. Dr. Mantle said, "Joe, did you know that Edward VII was saved on his deathbed?" He went on to explain: "The king was in France when he was taken ill. He was brought to England and there was hope that he might recover. However, there came a turn for the worse. At that time, His Majesty called one of his lords-in-waiting and ordered him to go to Paternoster Row and secure for him a copy of a tract that his mother, Queen Victoria, had given to him when he was a lad. It was entitled "The Sinner's Friend." After much searching, the lord-in-waiting found the tract, brought it to His Majesty, and upon reading it, King Edward VII made earnest repentance and received the Lord Jesus as his Savior." ([My All in All - Robert J Morgan](#))

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**AN UNEXPECTED COLD SWIM** - When we are desperate, in danger, down in the dumps, or depressed, we can cry out to the Lord and He will hear our cry. Do not, do not, do not underestimate the power of your prayers. Do not doubt God's care and plan for your life. Trust in Him no matter what you face.

Archibald Gracie relished his swim on April 14, 1912. The ship's pool was a "six-foot tank of salt water, heated to a refreshing temperature. In no swimming bath had I ever enjoyed such pleasure before." But his account went on to say, "How near it was to being my last plunge. Before dawn of another day, I would be swimming for my life in mid-ocean in a temperature of 28 degrees!"

After his swim that Sunday night aboard his ship, Colonel Archibald Gracie retired to his cabin and fell asleep, only to be awakened by "a sudden vibrating shock and a low rumbling noise." Dressing quickly, he ascended to the deck and learned the ship had collided with an iceberg.

Thousands of miles away, during the same moments in New York, the Colonel's wife was awakened from her sleep. She awakened after she was seized by sudden anxiety. She sank to her knees holding her prayer book, "which by chance opened to the prayer 'For Those at Sea.'" Mrs. Gracie prayed earnestly until about 5:00 A.M. when the heaviness and the burden lifted from her heart. She rested quietly until eight in the morning when her sister "came softly to the door, newspaper in hand, to gently break the tragic news that the Titanic had sunk."

What had happened meantime to her husband? He said, "I was in a whirlpool, swirling round and round, as I still tried to cling to the railing as the ship plunged to the depths below. Down, down, I went: it seemed a great distance... [Ascending back to the surface] I could see no Titanic. She had entirely disappeared beneath the surface of the ocean without a sign of any wave. A thin light-gray smoky vapor hung like a pall a few feet above the sea. There arose the most horrible sounds ever heard by mortal man, the agonizing cries of death from over a thousand throats."

Colonel Archibald Gracie was pulled into a lifeboat. He later shared his testimony, basing it on Psalm 130:1, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." Colonel Gracie wrote, "I know of no recorded instance of Providential deliverance more directly attributable to... prayer." (From Rod Mattoon)

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**Twenty-Six Men** - The following true story reported by a worker with the Overseas Missionary Fellowship:

While serving at a small field hospital in Africa, I traveled every two weeks by bicycle through the jungle to a nearby city for supplies. This requires camping overnight halfway. On one of these trips, I saw two men fighting in the city. One was seriously hurt so I treated him and witnessed to him about the Lord Jesus Christ. I then returned home without incident.

Upon arriving in the city several weeks later, I was approached by the man I had treated earlier. He told me he had known that I carried money and medicine. He said, "Some friends and I followed you into the jungle, knowing you would camp overnight. We waited for you to go to sleep and planned to kill you and take your money and drugs. Just as we were about to move into your campsite, we saw that you were surrounded by 26 armed guards."

I laughed at this and said, "I was certainly all alone out in the jungle campsite."

The young man pressed the point, "No sir, I was not the only one to see the guards. My five friends also saw them, and we all counted them. It was because of those guards that we were afraid and left you alone."

At this point of my church presentation in Michigan, one of the men in the church stood up and interrupted me. He asked, "Can

you tell me the exact date when this happened?"

I thought for awhile and recalled the date.

The man in the congregation then gave his side of the story. He stated, "On that night in Africa it was day here. I was preparing to play golf. As I put my bags in the car, I felt the Lord leading me to pray for you. In fact, the urging was so great that I called the men of this church together to pray for you. Will all of those men who met to pray please stand?"

The men who had met that day to pray together stood—there were 26 of them! -

- David Jeremiah in [Prayer: The Great Adventure](#) says this was a story included in an InterVarsity Christian Fellowship mailing. Jeremiah adds...

This dramatic story reminds us of the power of praying in God's will. But what if the missionary had no such story to report? What if the golfer never heard about what his prayers had accomplished? To be honest, that's the way it is with most of our prayers. We may feel an urging to pray for someone, but seldom do we hear of any "miraculous" answers in response. We may pray for something or someone for years and never see anything happen. Does that mean that nothing is happening, that we should give up and use our energy on something more productive? No. God is at work in response to our prayers, whether we see something happening or not. If we are truly praying, "Thy will be done," forces are at work beyond our comprehension—and often, beyond our vision. But they are working just the same.

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**A Mysterious Cloud** - David Jeremiah in [Prayer: The Great Adventure](#), writes that "We do not see into the world in which God lives, but He definitely sees into ours, as the following personal testimony by Spencer January attests:

It was 1945, and the U.S. Army's 35th Infantry Division, of which I was a twenty-four year-old member, was pushing through the woods and towns in the Rhineland region of West Germany. As I and my comrades were cautiously making our way through a thickly wooded area, word came that the company ahead of us had been badly shot up by the enemy and that Company I was to replace them.

When my company arrived on the scene, I was appalled by the grimness of the situation. Only a handful of wounded, bleeding soldiers hiding behind a large stone house at the edge of the woods had survived. The route to Ossenburg had been completely blockaded. "God," I prayed desperately, thinking of my wife and little son back home, "You've got to do something... please do something, God!"

Moments later, the order was given to advance. Just as the soldier ahead of me took a step, something to the left caught my eye. I stopped and stared in amazement. A cloud—a long, fluffy, white cloud—had appeared instantly out of nowhere, obscuring the Germans' line of fire. Taking advantage of this miraculous turn of events, I and my fellow soldiers bolted into the clearing and ran for our lives. Safe in the sheltering woods on the other side of the clearing, my pulse pounding in my ears, I hid behind a tree and exclaimed, "This has to be God! I'm going to see what happens now."

I watched closely as the last American soldier frantically raced toward my comrades in the woods. I will never forget what happened next. The instant the soldier scrambled to safety, the cloud vanished! Just like that. Poof! It was gone.

The Germans, thinking they still had us pinned down behind the stone house on the other side of the field, radioed its position to their artillery. Minutes later, the house was blown to bits.

Two weeks later, a letter arrived from my mother back in Dallas, Texas. "Son, what in the world was the matter on the morning of March 9?" she asked. "You remember Mrs. Tankersly from our church? Well, she called me that morning and said the Lord had awakened her at one o'clock in the night and said, 'Spencer is in serious trouble. Get up now and pray for him!' Mrs. Tankersly said she interceded for you until six o'clock the next morning. She told me that the last thing she prayed before getting off her knees was, 'Lord, whatever danger Spencer is in, just cover him with a cloud!'"

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**Pray Importunate Prayers** - The passive idea we often have about prayer has no place in the Word of God. Prayer is work, the hardest work you will ever do. It is grueling labor. It is agonizing. It is coming to God and coming to grips with the realities of your life. Too often in our prayers we merely mention our needs. There is no urgency at all. But that kind of praying doesn't tend to get a lot accomplished. When my children were young and wanted permission for something, they didn't just "mention" it. In the same way, when you want something from your Father in heaven, don't just "mention" it. Come to God in persistent, importunate prayer. - David Jeremiah in [Prayer: The Great Adventure](#)

[Oswald Chambers](#) wrote, "Men always ought to pray, and not lose heart. Jesus also taught the disciples the prayer of patience. If you are right with God and God delays the answer to your prayer, don't misjudge Him. Don't think of Him as an unkind friend, or an unnatural father, or an unjust judge, but keep at it. Your prayer will certainly be answered, for 'everyone who asks receives.' Pray and do not cave in. Your heavenly Father will explain it all one day. He cannot just yet because He is developing your character."

[George Mueller](#), the great prayer warrior, once said, "The great fault of the children of God is, they do not continue in prayer: they

do not go on praying; they do not persevere. If they desire anything for God's glory, they should pray until they get it. Oh how good, and kind, and gracious, and condescending is the One with Whom we have to do! He has given me, unworthy as I am, immeasurably above all I had asked or thought!"

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**Prayer and the Work of God** - I scoured the New Testament some time ago, looking for things God does in ministry that are not prompted by prayer. Do you know what I found? Nothing. I don't mean I had trouble finding an item or two; I mean I found nothing. Everything God does in the work of ministry, He does through prayer. Consider:

- Prayer is the way you defeat the devil (Luke 22:32; James 4:7).
- Prayer is the way you get the lost saved (Luke 18:13).
- Prayer is the way you acquire wisdom (James 1:5).
- Prayer is the way a backslider gets restored (James 5:16–20).
- Prayer is how the saints get strengthened (Jude 20, Matthew 26:41).
- Prayer is the way we get laborers out to the mission field (Matthew 9:38).
- Prayer is how we cure the sick (James 5:13–15).
- Prayer is how we accomplish the impossible (Mark 11:23–24).

What we do for the Lord is entirely dependent upon what we receive from the Lord, and what we receive from the Lord is entirely dependent upon what we are in the Lord, and what we are in the Lord is entirely dependent upon the time we spend alone with the Lord in prayer.

- David Jeremiah in [Prayer: The Great Adventure](#)

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**The Growth of Spiritual Near Sightedness** - (Matthew 9:37–38; 28:19–20; Luke 10:2; John 4:35) One quarter of the world's people have the condition known as [myopia](#), or nearsightedness. This number indicates a 66 percent increase since 1970. Experts say the condition has skyrocketed as children spend more time indoors, staring at computer screens. The prediction is that by 2020 the number will increase to one third. There is such a condition in the church also. We get so involved looking at the things around us that we fail to see the spiritual condition and the spiritual need in the greater world. **Pray for eyes that can see the fields white for harvest.**—Jim L. Wilson and Rodger Russell

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**Are You Really?** - A congregation was singing, as a closing hymn, the familiar song, "For You I Am Praying." The speaker turned to a man on the platform and asked quietly, "For whom are you praying?" The man was stunned. "Why, I guess I'm not praying for anybody. Why do you ask?" "Well, I just heard you say, 'For you I am praying,' and I thought you meant it," the preacher replied. "Oh, no," said the man. "I'm just singing." Pious talk! A religion of words! To paraphrase James 1:22, "We should be doers of the Word as well as talkers of the Word." We must walk what we talk. It is not enough to know the language; we must also live the life. "If we say —" then we ought also to do!—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Yes or No** - At a service in Washington, D.C., a woman approached the minister, asking him to pray with her for a deeper walk with the Lord. "Have you committed your life to Jesus Christ? Have you been born again by the Spirit?" She became tense, and in desperation blurted out, "I'm trying!" That was her problem. Many people try to squeeze themselves into such a relationship by earning God's favor, when the only issue is, have you opened the door of your life to Jesus Christ? The answer can only be yes or no. - Everett L. Fullam, *Living the Lord's Prayer* (Lincoln, Va., 1980), p. 35, adapted.

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**Getting Into The Habit** - Daniel . . . knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed, . . . as was his custom. (Daniel 6:10 - [see commentary on Daniel's "Obedient Disobedience"](#)) The family car is packed to the limit. The kids have their books, tapes, and games. The car-top carrier clearly signals to all observers that our family is taking a trip. But before we leave the driveway, we always stop and pray—asking God for safety and for family unity on our trip. It's a habit. Prayer habits are helpful tools to remind us of our dependence on God. Perhaps you have some habits of your own. Before you eat, you pray. Maybe before the kids leave for school, you pray. Before they go to bed, you pray. Developing prayer habits can be of tremendous help to those of us who want to develop a close relationship with the Lord but find that the busyness of the day squeezes out the time we had hoped to spend with Him. When we designate different activities of the day before or after which we always pray, we'll help to assure ourselves of regular communication with our Creator. That could become empty ritual, but it doesn't have to be—it can be a time of rich fellowship with our Lord. David, who wrote Psalm 55, said that he prayed in the morning, noon, and evening (Ps 55:17). Daniel prayed three times a day (Daniel 6:10). Like them, we would be wise to develop prayer habits. They're great ways to make prayer an integral, constant part of our daily lives. **PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE:** Do you have regular times of prayer each day? If not, when could you set aside time to focus your thoughts on God and talk to Him? To make the most of your time, take time to pray. [Dave Branon](#)

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**The Power of the Spirit** - (1Th 5:19) D. L. Moody was a preacher of stature, drawing great crowds of people and enjoying a measure of success. But one night after a service, two women asked to speak with Mr. Moody. They pointed out his need to receive the Holy Spirit. After much prayer and searching the Scriptures, Mr. Moody was gloriously filled with the Holy Spirit. "From that day on," he said, "my ministry was different it was His, not mine." Will you now receive Him, too, and believe the promise that God will not hold back His gracious gift to those who truly ask? (**Ed**: I believe Moody had the Spirit, so this must represent him dying to self and recognizing his need to continually be filled with the Spirit. There is no question that after this event, the results of Moody's ministry were not natural but supernatural!)

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**What Transpires When a Spirit of Unity is Present?** - "And day by day continuing **with one mind** (see Greek word - [homothumadon](#)) in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved." (Acts 2:46, 47, cp Eph 4:3) - The power of Christ in the world is demonstrated most perfectly **when believers are united in the church**. A pastor was speaking at a missionary conference in Quito Ecuador. He spent some time with a missionary couple who had worked with an Indian tribe for a number of years. The missionary wife reflected on a revival that broke out in the tribe, resulting in thousands of conversions to Christ and many evidences of God's power among them. "It was at that very time," she said, "that there was a spirit of unity among the missionary leaders that we had never experienced before." - Gene A. Getz, *Praying For One Another* (Wheaton, 1982), p. 56, adapted.

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**Do You Pray "Give Me" or "Make Me?"** - Some years ago, after a critical time in his own life when he discovered the importance of prayer, [Harry Emerson Fosdick](#) wrote a book entitled *The Meaning of Prayer*, Among other things, he reminded us that the prayer of the prodigal son changed from "give me" to "make me." First the young man prayed, "Give me the share of property that falls to me" (Luke 15:12). When he received what he asked for, he spent it all for selfish pleasure and landed in a pigsty. When he came to his senses, though, his prayer became "treat me as one of your hired servants" (Luke 15:19). He was willing to be made a slave if that was his father's will, but that was not necessary. Because of his father's love, he was welcomed back as a member of the family. So often we think of prayer as a means of trying to get what we want instead of a means of letting God direct our lives. Therefore, Dr. Fosdick reminded us that in Gethsemane, Jesus did not pray to change God's will. Instead, his prayer was "not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42). We often pray as if we were trying to change God's mind. Of course, we can express our desires to God. Jesus did. True prayer, however, does not try to change God's will. Rather, it seeks to discover God's will and to be led to the desire to obey it. Where have we arrived in prayer? At "give me" or "make me?" At "thy will be changed" or "thy will be done?" It is not always easy to make the transition from the one to the other, yet the effectiveness of our prayer life depends on our willingness to seek and accept God's will (cp 1John 5:14, 15). - Clarence Cranford, *Cups of Light*

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**From D L Moody's [Anecdotes and Illustrations](#) -**

#### **A Voice from the Tomb.**

The other day I read of a mother who died, leaving her child alone and very poor. She used to pray earnestly for her boy, and left an impression upon his mind that she cared more for his soul than she cared for anything else in the world. He grew up to be a successful man in business, and became very well off. One day not long ago, after his mother had been dead for twenty years, he thought he would remove her remains and put her into his own lot in the cemetery, and put up a little monument to her memory. As he came to remove them and to lay her away the thought came to him, that while his mother was alive she had prayed for him, and he wondered why her prayers were not answered. That very night that man was saved. After his mother had been buried so long a time, the act of removing her body to another resting place, brought up all the recollections of his childhood, and he became a Christian. O, you mothers!

#### **Prayer Answered.**

Only a few years ago in the City of Philadelphia there was a mother that had two sons. They were just going as fast as they could to ruin. They were breaking her heart, and she went into a little prayer-meeting and got up and presented them for prayer. They had been on a drunken spree or had just got started in that way, and she knew that their end would be a drunkard's grave, and she went among these Christians and said, "Won't you just cry to God for my two boys?" The next morning those two boys had made an appointment to meet each other on the corner of Market and Thirteenth streets--though not that they knew anything about our meeting--and while one of them was there at the corner, waiting for his brother to come, he followed the people who were flooding into the depot building, and the spirit of the Lord met him, and he was wounded and found his way to Christ. After his brother came he found the place too crowded to enter, so he too went curiously into another meeting and found Christ, and went home happy; and when he got home he told his mother what the Lord had done for him, and the second son came with the same tidings. I heard one of them get up afterwards to tell his experience in the young converts' meeting, and he had no sooner told the story than the other

got up and said: "I am that brother, and there is not a happier home in Philadelphia than we have got."

I remember being in the camp and a man came to me and said, "Mr. Moody, when the Mexican war began I wanted to enlist. My mother, seeing I was resolved, said if I became a Christian I might go. She pleaded and prayed that I might become a Christian, but I wouldn't. I said when the war was over I would become a Christian, but not till then. All her pleading was in vain, and at last, when I was going away, she took out a watch and said: 'My son, your father left this to me when he died. Take it, and I want you to remember that every day at 12 o'clock your mother will be praying for you.' Then she gave me her Bible, and marked out passages, and put a few different references in the fly-leaf. I took the watch and the Bible just because my mother gave them. I never intended to read the Bible. I went off to Mexico, and one day while on a long, weary march, I took out my watch, and it was 12 o'clock. I had been gone four months, but I remembered that my mother at that hour was praying for me. Something prompted me to ask the officer to relieve me for a little while, and I stepped behind a tree away out on those plains of Mexico, and cried to the God of my mother to save me." My friends, God saved him, and he went through the Mexican war, "and now," he said, "I have enlisted again to see if I can do any good for my Master's cause."

### **The Sinner's Prayer Heard.**

There was a man at one of our meetings in New York City who was moved by the Spirit of God. He said, "I am going home, and I am not going to sleep to-night till Christ takes away my sins, if I have to stay up all night and pray. I'll do it." He had a good distance to walk, and as he went along he thought, "Why can't I pray now as I go along, instead of waiting to go home?" But he did not know a prayer. His mother had taught him to pray, but it was so long since he had uttered a prayer that he had forgotten. However, the publican's prayer came to his mind. Everybody can say this prayer. That man in the gallery yonder, that young lady over there: "God be merciful to me a sinner." May God write it on your hearts to-night. If you forget the sermon, don't forget that prayer. It is a very short prayer, and it has brought joy--salvation--to many a soul. Well, this prayer came to the man, and he began, "God be merciful to me a--," but before he got to "sinner" God blessed him.

### **Black-balled by Man, Saved by Christ.**

At the Fulton street prayer-meeting a man came in, and this was his story. He said he had a mother who prayed for him; he was a wild, reckless prodigal. Some time after his mother's death he began to be troubled. He thought he ought to get into new company, and leave his old companions. So he said he would go and join a secret society; he thought he would join the Odd Fellows. They went and made inquiry about him, and they found he was a drunken sailor, so they black-balled him. They would not have him. He then went to the Freemasons; he had nobody to recommend him, so they inquired and found there was no good in his character, and they, too, black-balled him. They didn't want him. One day, some one handed him a little notice in the street about the prayer-meeting, and he went in. He heard that Christ had come to save sinners. He believed Him; he took Him at his word; and, in reporting the matter, he said he "came to Christ without a character, and Christ hadn't black-balled him." My friends, that is Christ's way.

### **The Praying Cripple.**

I once knew a little cripple who lay upon her death-bed. She had given herself to God, and was distressed only because she could not labor for Him actively among the lost. Her clergyman visited her, and hearing her complaint, told her that there from her sick-bed she could offer prayers for those whom she wished to see turning to God. He advised her to write the names down, and then to pray earnestly; and then he went away and thought of the subject no more. Soon a feeling of great religious interest sprang up in the village, and the churches were crowded nightly. The little cripple heard of the progress of the revival, and inquired anxiously for the names of the saved. A few weeks later she died, and among a roll of papers that was found under her little pillow, was one bearing the names of fifty-six persons, every one of whom had in the revival been converted. By each name was a little cross, by which the poor crippled saint had checked off the names of the converts as they had been reported to her.

### **A Child's Prayer Answered.**

I remember a child that lived with her parents in a small village. One day the news came that her father had joined the army (it was at the beginning of our war), and a few days after the landlord came to demand the rent. The mother told him she hadn't got it, and that her husband had gone into the army. He was a hard hearted wretch, and he stormed and said that they must leave the home; he wasn't going to have people who couldn't pay the rent. After he was gone, the mother threw herself into the arm-chair, and began to weep bitterly. Her little girl whom she had taught to pray in faith (but it is more difficult to practice than to preach), came up to her, and said, "What makes you cry, mamma? I will pray to God to give us a little house, and won't He?" What could the mother say? So the little child went into the next room and began to pray. The door was open, and the mother could hear every word. "O God, you have come and taken away father, and mamma has got no money, and the landlord will turn us out because we can't pay, and we will have to sit on the doorstep, and mamma will catch cold. Give us a little home." Then she waited, as if for an answer, and then added, "Won't you, please, God?" She came out of that room quite happy, expecting a house to be given them. The mother felt reproved. I can tell you, however, she has never paid any rent since, for God heard the prayer of that little one, and touched the

heart of the cruel landlord. God give us the faith of that little child, that we may likewise expect an answer, "nothing wavering."

### **The Orphan's Prayer.**

A little child whose father and mother had died, was taken into another family. The first night she asked if she could pray, as she used to do. They said "Oh yes." So she knelt down, and prayed as her mother taught her; and when that was ended she added a little prayer of her own: "Oh God, make these people as kind to me as father and mother were." Then she paused and looked up, as if expecting the answer, and added: "Of course He will." How sweetly simple was that little one's faith; she expected God to "do," and, of course, she got her request.

### **GOLD.**

- All should work and ask God's guidance.
- The world knows little of the works wrought by prayer.
- Let us pray, and as we pray, let us make room for Jesus in our hearts.
- Unless the Spirit of God is with us, we cannot expect that our prayers will be answered.
- David was the last one we would have chosen to fight the giant, but he was chosen of God.
- Every one of our children will be brought into the ark, if we pray and work earnestly for them.
- The impression that a praying mother leaves upon her children is life-long. Perhaps when you are dead and gone your prayer will be answered

### **A London Doctor Saved after Fifty Years of Prayer.**

When I was in London there was a leading doctor in that city, upwards of seventy years of age, wrote me a note to come and see him privately about his soul. He was living at a country seat a little way out of London, and he came into town only two or three times a week. He was wealthy and was nearly retired. I received the note right in the midst of the London work, and told him I could not see him. I received a note a day or two after from a member of his family, urging me to come. The letter said his wife had been praying for him for fifty years, and all the children had become Christians by her prayers. She had prayed for him all those years, but no impression had been made upon him. Upon his desk they had found the letter from me, and they came up to London to see what it meant, and I said I would see him. When we met I asked him if he wanted to become a Christian, and he seemed every way willing, but when it came to confession to his family, he halted. "I tell you," said he, "I cannot do that; my life has been such that I would not like to confess before my family." "Now there is the point; if you are not willing to confess Christ, He will not confess you; you cannot be His disciple." We talked for some time, and he accepted. I found while I had been in one room his daughter and some friends, anxious for the salvation of that aged father, were in the other room praying to God, and when he started out willing to go home and confess Christ, I opened the door of the other room, not knowing the daughter was there, and the first words she said were: "Is my father saved?" "Yes, I think he is," I answered, and ran down to the front door and called him back. "Your daughter is here," I said; "this is the time to commence your confession." The father, with tears trickling down his cheeks, embraced his child, "My dear daughter, I have accepted Christ," and a great flood of light broke upon him at that confession.

### **Moody's Love and Prayer for 700 "Quaking Souls."**

"I remember clearly lying in my berth early that Saturday morning (Nov. 26th, 1892, on the steamer Spree when she was one thousand miles out from Southampton on her way to New York), congratulating myself that I had gotten passage in so swift a ship, when my thoughts were stopped by a great crash that shook the vessel from stem to stern.

"My son, William Revell Moody, jumped from his berth and rushed on deck. He was back again in an instant, crying that the shaft was broken and the ship sinking. Then ensued a scene the like of which I hope never to witness again. There was no panic, but the passengers, who had scrambled on deck at the first warning, looked at each other in an appealing way that was, if anything, more terrible than demonstrative fear. The captain told us there was no danger, and some of the second cabin passengers returned to their berths only to tumble back pellmell a moment later. The rising water had driven them out. Some of them lost all their clothes and valuables.

"At this point the officers buckled on their revolvers, but there was no need to use them. The people, though terribly frightened, did not seem to realize what had happened. The women didn't scream, but stood around trembling and with blanched faces. Nobody said a word, but each waited for his neighbor to speak. We felt that we might be looking on our graves.

"The captain told us at noon that he thought he had the water under control and was in hopes of drifting in the way of some passing vessel. The ship's bow was now high in the air, while the stern seemed to settle more and more. There was no storm, but the sea, was very rough, and the ship rolled from side to side with fearful lurches. I think that if she had pitched at all the overstrained,



bulkheads would have burst and we should have gone to the bottom. The captain cheered us by telling us that he thought we should run in with a ship by 3 o'clock that Saturday afternoon, but the night drew on and no sail appeared to lighten our gloom.

"We knew the ship was sinking when we came on deck, but there was no panic. The big engines of the ship were all working at the pumps, but the water was steadily gaining in spite of them. With each roll of the ship it could be heard like the roar of the surf. All the day was passed in anxiously watching for a sail. We could not talk of religion, for the first word brought forth a hundred exclamations, 'Are we sinking?' Then in that first night one woman went insane. It seemed an age until the Sabbath morning came, When the vigil on the deck was resumed.

"I think that was the darkest night in all our lives. None of us thought to live to see the light of another day. Nobody slept. We were all huddled in the saloon of the first cabin--Americans and Germans, Jews, Protestants, Catholics and skeptics--although at that time I doubt if there were many skeptics among us. For forty-eight hours we were in this mortal fear.

"Sabbath morning dawned upon as wretched a ship's company as ever sailed the sea. There was at that time no talk of religious services. I think that if this had been suggested then there would have been a panic. To talk of religion to those poor people would have been to suggest the most terrible things to them. Everybody was waiting for his neighbor to say: 'Are we, then, doomed to die?'

"But as night approached I gathered those 700 quaking souls together and we held a prayer meeting. I think everybody prayed. There were no skeptics present. I have been under fire in the war, I have stood by deathbeds during the cholera epidemic in Chicago, but I never was so sorely tried. I could with difficulty command my voice as I read the ninety-first Psalm. I read without comment, and then I prayed that God would still the anger of the deep and bring us safely to our desired heaven. The people were weeping all around me. I also read from the 107th Psalm.

"We tried to sing. I gave out the first verse of 'Jesus, Lover of My Soul,' and General Howard started the tune. He sang the hymn through in a strong voice, but very few joined him. Instead, the melody was punctuated by broken sobs and exclamation of grief. That night I went to bed and slept, I felt that everything would be all right.

"Never was a more earnest meeting held than this. All prayed together, and I did not hear much talk of skepticism, I can tell you. At 2:30 o'clock in the morning a ship's light was sighted, and in a few hours we were comparatively safe, although our danger was not over. The strain on our minds was almost as great, and minds gave way under it. Two women became violently insane and it was necessary to confine them. A young man from Vienna threw himself overboard and was drowned.

"When we were finally safe in port we had a thanksgiving service, and then such singing as there was--such praises that went up.

"We prayed that the ship be brought to a haven, and relief came on the night after our prayer meeting. I am a firm believer in prayer. I always have been. I believe and I know that God saved the Spree in response to our prayers.

### **A Little Boy Converts his Mother.**

I remember when on the North Side I tried to reach a family time and again and failed. One night in the meeting, I noticed one of the little boys of that family. He hadn't come for any good, however; he was sticking pins in the backs of the other boys. I thought if I could get hold of him it would do good. I used always to go to the door and shake hands with the boys, and when I got to the door and saw this little boy coming out, I shook hands with him, and patted him on the head, and said I was glad to see him, and hoped he would come again. He hung his head and went away. The next night, however, he came back, and he behaved better than he did the previous night. He came two or three times after, and then asked us to pray for him that he might become a Christian. That was a happy night for me. He became a Christian and a good one. One night I saw him weeping. I wondered if his old temper had got hold of him again, and when he got up I wondered what he was going to say. "I wish you would pray for my mother," he said. When the meeting was over I went to him and asked, "Have you ever spoken to your mother or tried to pray with her?" "Well, you know, Mr. Moody," he replied, "I never had an opportunity; she don't believe, and won't hear me." "Now," I said, "I want you to talk to your mother to-night." For years I had been trying to reach her and couldn't do it.

So I urged him to talk to her that night, and I said "I will pray for you both." When he got to the sitting-room he found some people there, and he sat waiting for an opportunity, when his mother said it was time for him to go to bed. He went to the door undecided. He took a step, stopped, and turned around, and hesitated for a minute, then ran to his mother and threw his arms around her neck, and buried his face in her bosom. "What is the matter?" she asked--she thought he was sick. Between his sobs he told his mother how for five weeks he had wanted to be a Christian; how he had stopped swearing; how he was trying to be obedient to her, and how happy he would be if she would be a Christian, and then went off to bed. She sat for a few minutes, but couldn't stand it, and went up to his room. When she got to the door she heard him weeping and praying, "Oh, God, convert my dear mother." She came down again, but couldn't sleep that night. Next day she told the boy to go and ask Mr. Moody to come over and see her. He called at my place of business--I was in business then--and I went over as quick as I could. I found her sitting in a rocking chair weeping. "Mr. Moody," she said, "I want to become a Christian." "What has brought that change over you. I thought you didn't believe in it?" Then

she told me how her boy had come to her, and how she hadn't slept any all night, and how her sin rose up before her like a dark mountain. The next Sunday that boy came and led that mother into the Sabbath-school, and she became a Christian worker.

Oh, little children, if you find Christ tell it to your fathers and mothers. Throw your arms around their necks and lead them to Jesus.

### **The Dying Child.**

A lady had a little child that was dying. She thought it was resting sweetly in the arms of Jesus. She went into the room and the child asked her: "What are those clouds and mountains that I see so dark?" "Why, Eddy," said his mother, "there are no clouds or mountains, you must be mistaken." "Why, yes, I see great mountains and dark clouds, and I want you to take me in your arms and carry me over the mountains." "Ah," said the mother, "you must pray to Jesus, He will carry you safely," and, my friends, the sainted mother, the praying wife, may come to your bedside and wipe the damp sweat from your brow, but they cannot carry you over the Jordan when the hour comes. This mother said to her little boy, "I am afraid that it is unbelief that is coming upon you, my child, and you must pray that the Lord will be with you in your dying moments." And the two prayed, but the boy turned to her and said: "Don't you hear the angels, mother, over the mountains, and calling for me, and I cannot go?" "My dear boy, pray to Jesus, and He will come; He only can take you." And the boy closed his eyes and prayed, and when he opened them a heavenly smile overspread his face as he said, "Jesus has come to carry me over the mountains."

Dear sinner, Jesus is ready and willing to carry you over the mountains of sin, and over your mountains of unbelief. Give yourself to Him.

### **How Moody was Encouraged.**

I remember a few years ago I got discouraged, and could not see much fruit of my work; and one morning, as I was in my study, cast down, one of my Sabbath-school teachers came in and wanted to know what I was discouraged about, and I told him because I could see no result from my work; and speaking about Noah, he said: "By the way, did you ever study up the character of Noah?" I felt that I knew all about that, and told him that I was familiar with it, and he said, "Now, if you never studied that carefully, you ought to do it, for I cannot tell you what a blessing it has been to me." When he went out I took down my Bible and commenced to read about Noah, and the thought came stealing over me, "Here is a man that toiled and worked a hundred years and didn't get discouraged; if he did, the Holy Ghost didn't put it on record," and the clouds lifted, and I got up and said, if the Lord wants me to work without any fruit I will work on. I went down to the noon prayer-meeting, and when I saw the people coming to pray I said to myself, "Noah worked a hundred years and he never saw a prayer-meeting outside of his own family." Pretty soon a man got up right across the aisle where I was sitting, and said he had come from a little town where there had been a hundred uniting with the Church of God the year before. And I thought to myself, "What if Noah had heard that! He preached so many, many years, and didn't get a convert, yet he was not discouraged." Then a man got up right behind me, and he trembled as he said, "I am lost. I want you to pray for my soul." And I said, "What if Noah had heard that! He worked a hundred and twenty years, and never had a man come to him and say that; and yet he didn't get discouraged." And I made up my mind then, that, God helping me, I would never get discouraged. I would do the best I could, and leave the result with God, and it has been a wonderful help to me.

### **Mr. Moody's First Impulse in Converting Souls.**

I want to tell you how I got the first impulse to work solely for the conversion of men. For a long time after my conversion I didn't accomplish anything. I hadn't got into my right place; that was it. I hadn't thought enough of this personal work. I'd get up in prayer meeting, and I'd pray with the others, but just to go up to a man and take hold of his coat and get him down on his knees, I hadn't yet got round to that. It was in 1860 the change came. In the Sunday school I had a pale, delicate young man as one of the teachers. I knew his burning piety, and assigned him to the worst class in the school. They were all girls, and it was an awful class. They kept gadding around in the school-room, and were laughing and carrying on all the while. And this young man had better success than anyone else. One Sunday he was absent, and I tried myself to teach the class, but couldn't do anything with them; they seemed farther off than ever from any concern about their souls. Well, the day after his absence, early Monday morning, the young man came into the store where I worked, and, tottering and bloodless, threw himself down on some boxes. "What's the matter?" I asked, "I have been bleeding at the lungs, and they have given me up to die," he said. "But you are not afraid to die?" I questioned, "No," said he, "I am not afraid to die, but I have got to stand before God and give an account of my stewardship, and not one of my Sabbath-school scholars has been brought to Jesus. I have failed to bring one, and haven't any strength to do it now."

He was so weighed down that I got a carriage and took that dying man in it, and we called at the homes of everyone of his scholars, and to each one he said, as best his faint voice would let him, "I have come to just ask you to come to the Saviour," and then he prayed as I never heard before. And for ten days he labored in that way, sometimes walking to the nearest houses. And at the end of that ten days everyone of that large class had yielded to the Saviour. Full well I remember the night before he went away (for the doctors said he must hurry to the South), how we held a true love-feast. It was the very gate of heaven, that meeting. He prayed, and they prayed; he didn't ask them, he didn't think they could pray; and then we sung, "Blest be the tie that binds." It was a

beautiful night in June that he left on the Michigan Southern, and I was down to the train to help him off. And those girls everyone gathered there again, all unknown to each other; and the depot seemed a second gate to heaven, in the joyful, yet tearful, communion and farewells between these newly redeemed souls and him whose crown of rejoicing it will be that he led them to Jesus. At last the gong sounded, and, supported on the platform, the dying man shook hands with each one, and whispered, "I will meet you yonder."

### **How Moody's Faith Saved an Infidel.**

When I was in Edinburgh, at the inquiry meeting in Assembly Hall, one of the ushers came around and said, "Mr. Moody, I'd like to put that man out; he's one of the greatest infidels in Edinburgh." He had been the chairman of an infidel club for years, I went around to where he was and sat down by him. "How is it with you, my friend?" I asked, and then he laughed and said, "You say God answers prayer; I tell you He doesn't. I don't believe in a God. Try it on me." "Will you get down with me and pray?" I asked him; but he wouldn't. So I got down on my knees beside him and prayed. Next night he was there again. I prayed, and quite a number of others prayed for him. A few months after that, away up in the north of Scotland, at Wick, I was preaching in the open air, and while I stood there I saw the infidel standing on the outskirts of the crowd. I went up to him at the close of the meeting and said: "How is it with you, my friend?" He laughed and said, "I told you your praying is all false; God hasn't answered your prayers; go and talk to these deluded people." He had just the same spirit as before, but I relied on faith. Shortly after I got a letter from a barrister--a Christian. He was preaching one night in Edinburgh, when this infidel went up to him and said: "I want you to pray for me; I am troubled." The barrister asked, "What is the trouble?" and he replied: "I don't know what's the matter, but I don't have any peace, and I want you to pray for me." Next day he went around to that lawyer's office and he said that he had found Christ. This man now is doing good work, and I heard that out of thirty inquirers there, ten or twelve of his old associates and friends were among them. So, if you have God with you, and you go to work for Him, and you meet infidels and skeptics, just bear in mind that you can win through faith. When Christ saw the faith of those four men, He said to the man: "Thy sins are forgiven you." My friends, if you have faith all things are possible.

### **A Wife's Faith.**

In one of the towns in England there is a beautiful little chapel, and a very touching story is told in connection with it. It was built by an infidel. He had a praying wife, but he would not listen to her, would not allow her pastor even to take dinner with them; would not look at the Bible, would not allow religion even to be talked of. She made up her mind, seeing she could not influence him by her voice, that every day she would pray to God at twelve o'clock for his salvation. She said nothing to him; but every day at that hour she told the Lord about her husband. At the end of twelve months there was no change in him. But she did not give up. Six months more went past. Her faith began to waver, and she said, "Will I have to give him up at last? Perhaps when I am dead He will answer my prayers." When she had got to that point, it seemed just as if God had got her where he wanted her. The man came home to dinner one day. His wife was in the dining-room waiting for him, but he didn't come in. She waited some time, and finally looked for him, all through the house. At last she thought of going into the little room where she had prayed so often. There he was, praying at the same bed with agony, where she had prayed for so many months, asking forgiveness for his sins. And, this is a lesson to you wives who have infidel husbands. The Lord saw that woman's faith and answered her prayers.

### **Prayer that Makes a Brave Man Tremble**

I remember at one of the meetings at Nashville, during the war, a young man came to me, trembling from head to foot. "What is the trouble?" I asked. "There is a letter I got from my sister, and she tells me every night as the sun goes down she goes down on her knees and prays for me." This man was brave, had been in a number of battles; he could stand before the cannon's mouth, but yet this letter completely upset him. "I have been trembling ever since I received it." Six hundred miles away the faith of this girl went to work, and its influence was felt by the brother. He did not believe in prayer; he did not believe in Christianity; he did not believe in his mother's Bible. This mother was a praying woman, and when she died she left on earth a praying daughter. And when God saw her faith and heard that prayer, he answered her. How many sons and daughters could be saved if their mothers and fathers had but faith.

### **The Drunken Father and his Praying Child.**

I remember when out in Kansas, while holding a meeting, I saw a little boy who came up to the window crying. I went to him and said: "My little boy, what is your trouble?" "Why, Mr. Moody, my mother's dead, and my father drinks, and they don't love me, and the Lord won't have anything to do with me because I am a poor drunkard's boy." "You have got a wrong idea, my boy, Jesus will love you and save you and your father too," and I told him a story of a little boy in an Eastern city. The boy said his father would never allow the canting hypocrites of Christians to come into his house, and would never allow his child to go to Sunday-school. A kind-hearted man got his little boy and brought him to Christ. When Christ gets into a man's heart he cannot help but pray. This father had been drinking one day and coming home he heard that boy praying. He went to him and said: "I don't want you to pray any more. You've been along with some of those Christians. If I catch you praying again I'll flog you." But the boy was filled with God and he

couldn't help praying. The door of communication was opened between him and Christ, and his father caught him praying again. He went to him. "Didn't I tell you never to pray again? If I catch you at it once more you leave my house." He thought he would stop him. One day the old tempter came upon the boy, and he did something wrong and got flogged. When he got over his mad fit he forgot the threats of his father and went to pray. His father had been drinking more than usual, and coming in found the boy offering a prayer. He caught the boy with a push and said, "Didn't I tell you never to pray again? Leave this house. Get your things packed up and go." The little fellow hadn't many things to get together--a drunkard's boy never has, and went up to his mother's room. "Good-by, mother." "Where are you going?" "I don't know where I'll go, but father says I cannot stay here any longer; I've been praying again," he said. The mother knew it wouldn't do to try to keep the boy when her husband had ordered him away, so she drew him to her bosom and kissed him, and bid him good-by. He went to his brothers and sisters and kissed them good-by. When he came to the door his father was there and the little fellow reached out his hand--"Good-by, father; as long as I live I will pray for you," and left the house. He hadn't been gone many minutes when the father rushed after him. "My boy, if that is religion, if it can drive you away from father and mother and home; I want it." Yes, may be some little boy here to-night has got a drinking father and mother. Lift your voice to heaven, and the news will be carried up to heaven, "He prays."

### **The Two Fathers.**

Whenever I think about this subject, two fathers come before me. One lived on the Mississippi river. He was a man of great wealth. Yet he would have freely given it all could he have brought back his eldest boy from his early grave. One day that boy had been borne home unconscious. They did everything that man could do to restore him, but in vain. "He must die," said the doctor. "But, doctor," said the agonized father, "can you do nothing to bring him to consciousness, even for a moment?" "That may be," said the doctor; "but he can never live." Time passed, and after a terrible suspense, the father's wish was gratified. "My son," he whispered, "the doctor tells me you are dying." "Well," said the boy, "you never prayed for me, father; won't you pray for my lost soul now?" The father wept. It was true he had never prayed. He was a stranger to God. And in a little while that soul, unprayed for, passed into its dark eternity. Oh, father! if your boy was dying, and he called on you to pray, could you lift your burdened heart to heaven? Have you learned this sweetest lesson of heaven on earth, to know and hold communion with your God? And before this evil world has marked your dearest treasures for its prey, have you learned to lead your little ones to a children's Christ?

What a contrast is the other father? He, too, had a lovely boy, and one day he came home to find him at the gates of death. "A great change has come over our boy," said the weeping mother; "he has only been a little ill before, but it seems now as if he were dying fast." The father went into the room, and placed his hand on the forehead of the little boy. He could see the boy was dying. He could feel the cold damp of death. "My son, do you know you are dying?" "No, am I?" "Yes; you are dying." "And shall I die to-day?" "Yes, my boy, you cannot live till night." "Well, then, I shall be with Jesus to-night, won't I, father?" "Yes, my son, you will spend to-night with the Saviour." Mothers and fathers, the little ones may begin early; be in earnest with them now. You know not how soon you may be taken from them, or they may be taken from you. Therefore let this impression be made upon their minds--that you care for their souls--a million times more than for their worldly prospects.

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The following notes are from **Dwight L Moody's Bible** - see "Notes From My Bible"

- Nehemiah began his work in prayer. Neh 1:4, "I prayed before the God of heaven."
- Nehemiah continued his work in prayer. Neh 4:4, "Hear, O our God"
- Nehemiah did not cease at the end of his work. Neh 5:19, "Remember me, O my God, for good."

Psalms 25:11.

- David prayed, "Pardon mine iniquity."
- Pharaoh prayed, "Take away the frogs."
- The latter prayed to escape the punishment; the former, the cause of it.

Ps 86:6. In all thy prayers let thy heart be 'without the words, rather than thy words without the heart.

Christ overcomes the storm, Mark 4:39;

the devil, Mk 5:13;

disease, Mk 5:29;

death, Mk 5:42.

Devils prayed, and Jesus answered.

A wicked man prayed, and Jesus answered.

A believing woman prayed, and Jesus answered.

All asked for something, and all got it.

Three very bad cases—devils, disease, death—beyond the reach of man (for man had tried and failed), cured by Christ.

Mark 5:35 “Thy daughter is dead.” A great part of the business of preachers to-day is to contradict this statement. Thy daughter, thy son, is not dead. Instead of ceasing to pray, be more urgent and earnest than ever.

Luke 9:29. “As he prayed the fashion of his countenance was altered.” It was prayer that brought out the inner man.

Luke 11:1. Pray, as a rest after service; as a preparation for important steps; as a preparation for sorrow.  
Pray in faith—reverence—humility—fervor—simplicity.

Galatians 4:18 Many a man can dance till six o'clock in the morning, but few Christians pray or preach so long.

Ephesians 6:18. Prayer must always be the fore-horse of the team. Do whatever is wise, but not till thou hast prayed. Send for the physician if thou art sick, but first pray. Begin, continue, and end everything with prayer.

Php 4:6

Be careful for nothing.

Be prayerful for everything.

Be thankful for anything.

James 5:16. Fervency in prayer by the power of the Holy Spirit is a good preservative against thoughts rushing in. Flies never settle on a boiling pot.

1 John 5:14. Promise—prayer—performance—are three links in the chain of blessing. If the middle link is missing, we have no right to expect the third.

1 John 5:15. It is a serious thing to pray! We may be taken at our word.

“AGONIZE”

Used eight times in New Testament.

- In prayer. Col. 4:12. Translated “labor fervently.”
- As a workman. Col. 1:29. Translated “strive.”
- As a wrestler to gain the prize. 1 Cor. 9:25. Translated “strive.”
- As a soldier. 1 Tim. 6:12; 4:7. Translated “fight.”
- As a man who defends his friend from danger. John 18:36. Translated “fight.”
- For salvation. Luke 13:24. Translated “strive.”
- As the Lord Himself in Gethsemane. Luke 22:44. Translated “agony.”

FAINT NOT

- In prayer. Luke 18:1.
- In confidence. 2 Cor. 4:1.
- In hope. 2 Cor. 4:16.
- In work. Gal. 6:9.
- At tribulations. Eph. 3:13.
- In well-doing. 2 Thess. 3:13.
- Under chastening and rebuke. Heb. 12:5.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

1. Our Father—believers are children. John 1:12, 13; Gal. 3:26; 1 John 5:1.
2. Hallowed be Thy name—believers are worshipers. John 4:23; Phil. 3:3.
3. Thy kingdom come—believers are subjects. Luke 12:32; 22:29, 30.
4. Thy will be done—believers are servants. John 12:26; Rom. 6:16; 1 Peter 2:16.
5. Give us our needful food—believers are beggars. Matt. 7:7–11; John 14:13, 14.
6. Forgive our trespasses—believers are sinners. Rom. 7:21; 1 John 1:8, 9.
7. Deliver us from evil—believers are saints. Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:9.

I remember, when we were in London, they found one old woman who was eighty-five years old, and not a Christian. After the worker had prayed, she made a prayer herself:

“O Lord, I thank Thee for going out of Thy way to find me.”

He is all the time going out of His way to find the lost.

### **Unlocked By Prayer**

God's best gifts, like valuable jewels, are kept under lock and key, and those who want them must, with fervent faith, importunately ask for them; for God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. (Moody's Stories)

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1 Samuel 1:10, 13. (Hannah) ... prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore ... she spake in her heart.

For real business at the mercy-seat give me a home-made prayer, a prayer that comes out of the depths of my heart, not because I invented it, but because God the Holy Ghost put it there, and gave it such living force that I could not help letting it out. Though your words are broken, and your sentences disconnected, if your desires are earnest, if they are like coals of juniper, burning with a vehement flame, God will not mind how they find expression. If you have no words, perhaPsy you will pray better without them than with them. There are prayers that break the backs of words; they are too heavy for any human language to carry.

SPURGEON.

Ps 5:3. My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee.

On the first of May in the olden times, according to annual custom, many inhabitants of London went into the fields to bathe their faces with the early dew upon the grass, under the idea that it would render them beautiful. Some writers call the custom superstitious; it may have been so, but this we know, that to bathe one's face every morning in the dew of heaven by prayer and communion, is the sure way to obtain true beauty of life and character.

SPURGEON.

Neh. 4:9. We made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch.

Don't wait for some work to turn up but go and turn up some work. You may work without praying but you can't pray without working.

HUDSON TAYLOR.

2 Kings 6:17. Elisha prayed ... and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire.

The Christian on his knees sees more than the philosopher on tiptoe.

Ps 99:6. Moses and Aaron ... called upon the Lord and he answered them.

A sudden brief utterance of prayer is like the rope of a belfry—the bell is in one room, and the handle or the end of the rope which sets it ringing in another. Perhaps the bell will not be heard in the apartment where the rope is, but it is heard in its own apartment. Moses laid hold of the rope and pulled it hard on the shore of the Red Sea, and though no one heard or knew anything of it in the lower chamber, the bell rang loudly in the upper one till the whole place was moved, and the Lord said: “Wherefore criest thou unto me?” And “the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians.”

WILLIAMS.

Ps 109:4. I give myself unto prayer.

The godly man's prayers are his best biography, his most exact portrait.

Ps 119:34. Give me understanding.

Prayer is a proper means for the increase of knowledge. Prayer is the golden key that unlocks that treasure.

Ps 119:99. Thy testimonies are my meditation.

Meditation is prayer's handmaid, to wait on it both before and after the performance. It is as the plough before the sower to prepare the heart for the duty of prayer, and the harrow to cover the seed when 'tis sown. As the hopper feeds the mill with grist, so does meditation supply the heart with matter for prayer.

GURNALL.

Pr 15:8. The prayer of the upright is his delight.

The bank-note without a signature at the bottom, is nothing but a worthless piece of paper. The stroke of a pen confers on it all its value. The prayer of a poor child of Adam is a feeble thing in itself, but once endorsed by the hand of the Lord Jesus, it availeth much. There was an officer in the city of Rome who was appointed to have his doors always open, in order to receive any Roman citizen who applied to him for help. Just so the ear of the Lord Jesus is ever open to the cry of all who want mercy and grace. It is His office to help them. Their prayer is His delight. Reader, think of this. Is not this encouragement?

RYLE.

Daniel 6:10. Daniel ... kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed.

Constantine the Great was one day looking at some statues of noted persons, who were represented standing. "I shall have mine taken kneeling," said he; "for that is how I have risen to eminence." Thus it is with the Christian: if he would obtain any real eminence in the Christian life, he must be often kneeling in prayer to God.

Zechariah 13:9. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them.

Prayer is the rope in the belfry; we pull it and it rings the bell up in heaven.

CHRISTMAS EVANS.

Mt 6:6. When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and, when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.

Secret devotions resemble the rivers which run under the earth; they steal from the eyes of the world to seek the eyes of God; and it often happens that those of whom we speak least on earth, are best known in heaven.

CAUSSIN.

Mt 14:23. He went up into a mountain apart to pray.

We may well take the lesson which Christ's prayers teach us, for we all need it—that no life is so high, so holy, so full of habitual communion with God that it can afford to do without the hour of prayer, the secret place, the uttered word.... The life that was all one long prayer needed the mountain top, and the nightly converse with God. He who could say, "The Father hath not left me alone, for I do always the things that please Him," felt that He must also have the special communion of spoken prayer. What Christ needed we cannot afford to neglect.

MACLAREN.

Mt 15:25. Lord, help me.

There is a chain of but three links in this prayer of the poor woman of Canaan, but it reaches a long way. Some of the most beautiful prayers ever uttered are very short prayers. This is a very short prayer—any child can say it. There are three links in the chain, mark you. One link is on the throne of God; it is "Lord." The other link is down here; it is "me." And then there is a great link between that and this; it is "help." "Lord, help me." And the greater your need, the more that middle link in the chain will express.

MARCUS RAINSFORD.

Mt 21:22. All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

Prayer is the bow, the promise is the arrow: faith is the hand which draws the bow, and sends the arrow with the heart's message to heaven. The bow without the arrow is of no use; and the arrow without the bow is of little worth; and both, without the strength of the hand, to no purpose. Neither the promise without prayer, nor prayer without the promise, nor both without faith, avail the Christian anything. What was said of the Israelites, "They could not enter in, because of unbelief," the same may be said of many of our prayers: they cannot enter heaven, because they are not put up in faith.

SALTER.

Mt 26:42. Thy will be done.

"Thy will be done" is the keynote to which every prayer must be tuned.

A. J. GORDON.

Mk 10:38. Ye know not what ye ask.

In every true prayer there are two hearts in exercise. The one is your heart, with its little, dark, human thoughts of what you need and God can do. The other is God's great heart, with its infinite, its divine purposes of blessing. What think you? to which of these two ought the larger place to be given in your approach to Him? Undoubtedly, to the heart of God: everything depends upon knowing and being occupied with that. But how little this is done. This is what waiting on God is meant to teach you. Just think of God's wonderful love and redemption, of the meaning these words must have to Him. Confess how little you understand what God is willing to do for you, and say each time as you pray: "And now what wait I for?" My heart cannot say. God's heart knows and waits to give. "My hope is in Thee." Wait on God to do for you more than you can ask or think.

ANDREW MURRAY.

Mk 12:38, 40. Beware of the scribes ... which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers.

One ought to talk only as loud as he lives.

Lk 6:12. He ... continued all night in prayer to God.

We never read that Joshua's hand was weary with wielding the sword, but Moses' hand was weary with holding the rod. The more spiritual the duty, the more apt we are to tire of it. We could stand and preach all day; but we could not pray all day. We could go forth to seek the sick all day, but we could not be in our closets all day one half so easily. To spend a night with God in prayer would be far more difficult than to spend a night with man in preaching. Oh! take care, take care, Church of Christ, that thou dost not cease thy prayers!

SPURGEON.

Acts 10:30, 31. Cornelius said ... I prayed in my house; and behold a man stood before me ... and said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard.

If you would have your prayers accepted, they must be arrows shot from the heart; none else reach the throne of God.

GUTHRIE.

Ro 12:12. Continuing instant in prayer.

Make prayer a holy habit—a cherished privilege. Seek to be ever maintaining inter-communion with Jesus; consecrating life's common duties with His favor and love. Day by day ere you take your flight into the world, night by night when you return from its soiling contacts, bathe your drooping plumes in this refreshing fountain. Let prayer sweeten prosperity and hallow adversity.

MACDUFF.

1 Cor 15:31. I die daily.

In some respects prayer resembles death. When man dies his soul returns to God, and when he prays he does the same thing; and it is this habitual return of the soul to its maker in acts of devotion that makes the final return in death so easy. The Christian thus dies on a small scale every day; and this enables him to die aright when the appointed time comes.

2 Cor 12:9. My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

God's way of answering His people's prayers is not by removing the pressure, but by increasing their strength to bear it. The pressure is often the fence between the narrow way of life and the broad road to ruin; and if our Heavenly Father were to remove it, it might be at the sacrifice of heaven. Oh! if God had removed that thorny fence in answer, often to earnest prayers, how many of us would now be castaways! How the song of many a saint now in glory would be hushed! How many a harp would be unstrung! How many a place in the mansions of the redeemed would be unfilled! If God answered all the prayers we put up to heaven, we should need no other scourge. Blessed it is that we have One Who is too loving to grant what we too often so rashly ask.

F. WHITFIELD.

Phil 4:6. Be careful for nothing: but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

As every sacrifice was to be seasoned with salt, so every undertaking and every affliction of the creature must be sanctified with prayer; nay, as it showeth the excellency of gold that it is laid upon silver itself, so it speaketh the excellency of prayer, that not only natural and civil, but even religious and spiritual, actions are overlaid with prayer. We pray not only before we eat or drink our bodily nourishment, but also before we feed on the bread of the word and the bread in the sacrament. Prayer is requisite to make every Prudence and every ordinance blessed to us; prayer is needful to make our particular callings successful. Prayer is the guard to secure the fort-royal of the heart; prayer is the porter to keep the door of the liPs prayer is the strong hilt which defendeth the hands; prayer perfumes every relation; prayer helPsus to profit by every condition; prayer is the chemist that turns all into gold; prayer is the master-workman: if that be out of the way, the whole trade stands still, or goeth backward. What the key is to the watch, that prayer is to religion: it winds it up, and sets it going.

SWINNOCK.

Phil 4:13. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

O, do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men! Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks! Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle. But you shall be a miracle. Every day you shall wonder at yourself, at the richness of life which has come in you by the grace of God.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Col 1:10. Being fruitful in every good work. Praying always with all prayer.—Eph. 6:18.

Labor is of noble birth; but prayer is the daughter of heaven. Labor has a place near the throne, but prayer touches the golden sceptre. Labor, Martha-like, is busy with much serving; but prayer sits with Mary at the feet of Jesus. Labor climbs the mountain-peak with Moses; but prayer soars upward, with Elijah, in a chariot of fire. Labor has the raven's wing, yet sometimes goes forth in vain; but prayer has the pinions of the dove, and never returns but with the olive-leaf of blessing!

W. H. GROSER.

Col 4:2. Continue in prayer.

Our prayers often resemble the mischievous tricks of town children, who knock at their neighbor's houses and then run away; we often knock at heaven's door and then run off into the spirit of the world; instead of waiting for entrance and answer, we act as if we were afraid of having our prayers answered.

WILLIAMS.

Prayerless work will soon slacken, and never bear fruit.



MACLAREN.

1 Thes 5:17. Pray without ceasing.

Life is a constant want, therefore it should be a constant prayer.

1 Thes 5:19. Quench not the Spirit.

In order that you may not quench the Spirit, you must make it a constant study to know what is the mind of the Spirit. You must discriminate with the utmost care between His suggestions and the suggestions of your own deceitful heart. You must be on your guard against impulsive movements, inconsiderate acts, rash words. You must abide in prayer. Search the Word. Confess Christ on all possible occasions. Seek the society of His people. Shrink from conformity to the world, its vain fashions, unmeaning etiquette. Be scrupulous in your reading. "Watch and pray." Have oil in your lamps "Quench not the Spirit."

BOWEN.

Heb 4:16 Let us ... come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

However early in the morning you seek the gate of access, you find it already open, and however deep the midnight moment when you find yourself in the sudden arms of death, the winged prayer can bring an instant Saviour; and this wherever you are. It needs not that you ascend some special Pisgah or Moriah. It needs not that you should enter some awful shrine, or pull off your shoes on some holy ground. Could a memento be reared on every spot from which an acceptable prayer has passed away, and on which a prompt answer has come down, we should find Jehovah Shammah, "the Lord hath been here," inscribed on many a cottage hearth, and many a dungeon floor. We should find it not only in Jerusalem's proud temple and David's cedar galleries, but in the fisherman's cottage by the brink of the Gennesaret, and in the upper chamber where Pentecost began. And whether it be the field where Isaac went down to meditate, or the rocky knoll where Israel wrestled, or the den where Daniel gazed on the hungry lions, and the lions gazed on him, or the hillside where the Man of Sorrows prayed all night, we should still discern the ladder's feet let down from heaven—the landing place of mercies, because the starting place of prayer.

J. HAMILTON.

James 1:6. Ask in faith, nothing wavering.

Take the bow of faith and the arrow of prayer.

MACDUFF.

God cares not for the length of our prayers, or the Numberser of our prayers, or the beauty of our prayers, or the place of our prayers. It is the faith in them that tells.

TALMAGE.

Never was faithful prayer lost at sea. No merchant trades with such certainty as the praying saint. Some prayers, indeed, have a longer voyage than others; but then they come with the richer lading at last.

GURNALL.

James 5:16. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

A man dreamed he was travelling, and came to a little church, and on the cupola of that church there was a devil fast asleep. He went along further, and came to a log cabin, and it was surrounded by devils all wide awake. He asked one of them what it meant; said the devil, "I will tell you. The fact is, that whole church is asleep and one devil can take care of all the people; but here are a man and woman who pray, and they have more power than the whole church."

1 Pe 4:7. Watch unto prayer.

Prayer is the chalice in which we fetch the water from the rock. It is the ladder on which we climb up to pick the grapes hanging over the wall of heaven. It is the fire that warms the frigid soul. It is the ship that carries away our wants, and comes back with a return cargo of Divine help. Archimedes said, if he could only find a fulcrum for his lever, he could move the world. Ah! we have found it! Prayer is the lever. The divine promise is the fulcrum. Pushing down on such a lever, we move not only earth, but also heaven.

TALMAGE.

Prayer is the conduit-pipe between my soul and heaven. It is the outlet upward for gratitude, and yearning desires for blessing; it is the inlet through which the supplies of grace pour downward into the heart.

CUYLER.

Genesis 24:48. I bowed down my head, and worshipped the Lord, and blessed the Lord God.

Worship is the overflowing of a full heart; prayer is the craving of an empty heart. (One Thousand and One Thoughts - D L Moody)

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**Power of Intercessory Prayer in the Spirit** - During one of [Dr. Wilbur Chapman's](#) campaigns in England, the attendance was consistently small. He received word that an American missionary was going to pray for him. Almost instantly the hall became

packed, and at his first invitation 50 men accepted Christ as Savior. One night the missionary was in the congregation. When Dr. Chapman was introduced to him, he asked him to pray for him. The two went to Chapman's room, dropped on their knees and for five minutes the missionary was quiet. "I could hear my heart thumping," Chapman said. "I felt hot tears running down my face. I knew I was with God." Then the missionary said, "O God!" and was silent for another five minutes. When he knew he was talking with God there came from the depth of his heart such petitions for men as I have never heard before. When Chapman rose from his knees, he knew what prayer is. He had learned from the missionary, Praying Hyde, who knew the power of supplication **in the Spirit** (Eph 6:18, Jude 1:20).

[Chapman](#) later wrote -

It was a season of prayer with [John \("Praying"\) Hyde](#) that made me realize what real prayer was. I owe to him more than I owe to any man for showing me what a prayer life is and what a real consecrated life is. Jesus Christ became a new ideal to me, and I had a glimpse of His prayer life, and I had a longing which has remained to this day to be a real praying man.

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**Praying for Your Enemy** - It is not easy to live this kind of life on a day-to-day basis, as demonstrated in this office setting: "She works in an office down the hall from mine. She ignores my 'Good mornings' and stares coldly at my smiles. 'I have spoken to her for the last time,' I declare to my friend. 'I will ignore her the same way she does me.' But my friend was wiser. 'You're foolish if you do that,' she said. 'The woman may have all sorts of problems. Why develop one of your own over it? Don't you think it would be better for you to pray about it rather than pout?' She was right and I started including the unfriendly woman in my prayers. I think she almost smiled today. But the big change has been in me I don't resent her any more, and I will keep on praying for her." This is the victory that destroys the old life and displays new life in Christ.

Drue Duke, Daily Guideposts (Carmel, N.Y., 1982), p. 123, adapted.

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**The Prayer Not Prayed Brought Faith** - D. L. Moody was once asked to help a boy who seemed to have difficulty in believing the gospel message. "Tell me, son, don't you believe the worker who has been trying to counsel you?" "Oh, yes," the lad replied, "he's sincere enough." "Well, don't you believe what I have preached?" "Certainly," replied the boy. "Then why don't you receive God's gift of life?" asked Mr. Moody. "My problem," insisted the lad, "is that I cannot believe God." "There is only one thing to do," said Moody. "You must tell God you don't believe Him. Follow me in this prayer: 'O God, I cannot believe You because You are a liar!'" The fellow looked up and said, "I cannot pray that." Instantly, the light dawned and faith was born in his heart. Will you believe the Giver of life and thank Him for giving His Son that you might have eternal life? It has been said that the most popular sin in the world is ingratitude. It usually means doing nothing absolutely nothing.

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**Wrong Praying** - Selfish desires are dangerous things. They lead to wrong actions ("ye kill, ye fight and war," James 4:2), and they even lead to wrong praying ("When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures," James 4:3NIV). When our praying is wrong, our whole Christian life is wrong. It has well been said that the purpose of prayer is not to get man's will done in heaven, but to get God's will done on earth....Selfish living and selfish praying always lead to war. If there is war on the inside, there will ultimately be war on the outside.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**I'm Praying for You** - And be sure that you are. When you talk to God about people, then you can talk to people about God. Our private praying for people helps us in our public meeting with people. Of course, we never say "I'm praying for you" in a boastful way, as though we are more spiritual than others. We say it in an encouraging way, to let others know that we care enough for them to meet them at the throne of grace.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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In his 1904 book, Quiet Talks on Prayer, Dr. Samuel D. Gordon wrote: "You can do more through your praying than through your personality."

Most of us try to do things through the force of our personalities. We persuade. We cajole. We brown-nose. We maneuver. We push. We sweet-talk. We urge. We hint. We arm-twist.

But we forget that we can do much more through prayer than through personality.

"You can do more than pray after you have prayed, said Dr. Gordon. "But you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed."

—From Rob Morgan's Sermon, "Useful Prayers,"

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**Paid to Pray** - The U.S. Senate pays \$116,000, and the U.S. House of Representatives pays \$123,000 annually to their respective

chaplains, whose chief official duty is to open legislative sessions with prayer. We think there are thousands of teachers, and students too, who would love to open class sessions with prayer without any pay for it at all. You figure it out. 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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**Dead Faith, Dead Prayers** - (James 2:14-17) People with dead faith substitute words for deeds. They know the correct vocabulary for prayer and testimony, and can even quote the right verses from the Bible; but their walk does not measure up to their talk. They think that their words are as good as works, and they are wrong.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**The Prayer Telescope** - The brilliant scientist Sir Isaac Newton said that he could take his telescope and look millions and millions of miles into space. Then he added, "But when I lay it aside, go into my room, shut the door, and get down on my knees in earnest prayer, I see more of Heaven and feel closer to the Lord than if I were assisted by all the telescopes on earth." - 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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[Stephen Olford](#) in a discussion of an effective "Quiet Time" (see onsite discussion of Quiet Time) wrote these words about prayer:

Another essential is a prayer list or prayer cycle—something to keep reminding you to emphasize a different request for each day. My wife and I use one that works this way:

Monday: **M** is for missionaries.

Tuesday: **T** is for thanksgiving for wonderful answers to prayer.

Wednesday: **W** is for workers.

Thursday: **T** is for tasks—our job at the church or the ministry God has given us.

Friday: **F** is for our families.

Saturday: **S** is for the saints—especially young Christians, that Christ might be formed in them.

Sunday: **S** is for sinners—in particular, the gospel services for which we are responsible.

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**The True Meaning of James 1:5** - An associate of mine, a gifted secretary, was going through great trials. She had had a stroke, her husband had gone blind, and then he had to be taken to the hospital where (we were sure) he would die. I saw her in church one Sunday and assured her that I was praying for her. "What are you asking God to do?" she asked, and her question startled me. "I'm asking God to help you and strengthen you," I replied. "I appreciate that," she said, "but pray about one more thing. Pray that I'll have the wisdom not to waste all of this!" She knew the meaning of James 1:5.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**"Reverse Prayers"** - A Christian couple was ministering to believers in Eastern Europe, behind the Iron Curtain. The couple had brought in Christian literature, blankets, and other necessary items. At the church gathering, the couple assured the believers that Christians in America were praying for believers in Eastern Europe. "We are happy for that," one believer replied, "but we feel that Christians in America need more prayer than we do, We here in Eastern Europe are suffering, but you in America are very comfortable; and it is always harder to be a good Christian when you are comfortable."—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Proper Prayer Posture** - It was customary for Jewish men to pray with their arms extended and their hands open to heaven. Our traditional posture of bowing the head, folding the hands, and closing the eyes is nowhere found or commanded in Scripture. Actually, there are many prayer postures found in the Bible: standing with outstretched hands (1 Kings 8:22); kneeling (Dan. 6:10); standing (Luke 18:11); sitting (2 Sam. 7:18); bowing the head (Gen. 24:26); lifting the eyes (John 17:1); falling on the ground (Gen. 17:3). **The important thing is not the posture of the body but the posture of the heart.**—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Pray for All Men** (1Ti 2:8) - If the basis for prayer is the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ on the cross, then prayer is a most important activity in a church. Not to pray is to slight the cross! To pray only for ourselves is to deny the worldwide outreach of the cross. To ignore lost souls is to ignore the cross. "All men" [people] is the key to this paragraph: We pray for "all" because Christ died for "all" and it is God's will that "all" be saved. We must give ourselves to God to be a part of His worldwide program to reach people before it is too late.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

The Silent Prayer - The rule in a monastery was not "Do not speak," but "Do not speak unless you can improve on the silence."  
Might not the same be said of prayer? - Anthony De Mello

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**Prayer in Church** - 1Ti 2:1 " First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men." "First of all" indicates that prayer is most important in the public worship of the church. It is sad to see how prayer has lost importance in many churches. "If I announce a banquet," a pastor said, "people will come out of the woodwork to attend. But if I announce a prayer meeting, I'm lucky if the ushers show up!" Not only have the special meetings for prayer lost stature in most local churches, but even prayer in the public services is greatly minimized. Many pastors spend more time on the announcements than they do in prayer!...some pastors spend hours preparing their sermons, but never prepare their public prayers. Consequently, their prayers are routine, humdrum, and repetitious. I am not suggesting that a pastor write out every word and read it, but that he think through what he will pray about. This will keep "the pastoral prayer" from becoming dull and a mere repetition of what was "prayed" the previous week. But the church members also need to be prepared to pray. Our hearts must be right with God and with each other. We must really want to pray, and not pray simply to please people (as did the Pharisees, Matt. 6:5), or to fulfill a religious duty.  
**When a local church ceases to depend on prayer, God ceases to bless its ministry.**—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Fervent Prayer** - Real prayer is difficult. When Jesus prayed in the Garden, He sweat great drops of blood. Paul had "great conflict" (agony) as he prayed for the Colossians (Col 2:1), and Epaphras also experienced "much distress." (Col 4:12) This does not mean that we must wrestle with God in order to get Him to answer. But it does mean that we must throw ourselves into our praying with zeal and concern. If there is no burden, there can be no blessing. To rephrase what John H. Jowett said about preaching: "Praying that costs nothing accomplishes nothing."...E.M. Bounds was a prayer-warrior of the last generation. He would often rise early in the morning and pray for many hours before he began the work of the day. His many books on prayer testify to the fact that Bounds, like Epaphras, knew how to agonize in prayer before God. (If you have never read [Power in Prayer](#) by [E. M. Bounds](#), by all means do so.)—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Prayer for Pastors** - You, as a church member, can assist your pastor in the preaching of the Word by praying for him. Never say to your pastor, "Well, the least I can do is to pray for you." The most you can do is to pray! Pray for your pastor as he prepares the Word, studies, and meditates. Pray that the Holy Spirit will give deeper insights into the truths of the Word. Pray too that your pastor will practice the Word that he preaches so that it will be real in his own life. As he preaches the message, pray that the Spirit will give him freedom of utterance, and that the Word will reach into hearts and minds in a powerful way. (It wouldn't hurt to pray for other church leaders too.)—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Specific Prayer** - our praying ought to be purposeful: "Praying also for us" (Col. 4:3). Too often our prayers are vague and general. "Lord, bless the missionaries!" How much better it would be if we would pray for specific needs. By doing so, we would know when God answered and we could praise Him for it. Perhaps it is our lack of faith that causes us to pray generally instead of specifically.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**An Attitude of Gratitude** - If all we do is ask, and never thank God for His gifts, we are selfish. Sincere gratitude to God is one of the best ways to put fervor into our praying.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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Not long ago I saw a neat little sign in a principal's office that stated, "In the event of nuclear attack, fire, or earthquake, the ban on prayer is temporarily lifted." 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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**Answered Prayer** - As the sounds of battle drew closer to Saigon on April 29, 1975, biology teacher Thoa Nguyen gathered his family. South Vietnam would soon fall to the Communists. "We will never surrender our beliefs," said Thoa, a devout Christian. "We must leave our country." But at the airport Thoa, his school-principal wife, Son, and their seven children were turned back. The following morning a band of Communist youths seized Thoa and pushed him into the street to be executed. "Please, dear God, help!" Son screamed as a pistol touched Thoa's head. Suddenly a woman ran forward. The Nguyens, she said, were popular for their good deeds as teachers. An execution without trial would harm the revolution. God answered Son's prayer as Thoa and his family were released. - Moody's Today in the Word

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**"Routine" Prayers** - There is no power in dull, listless praying. If there is no fire on the altar, the incense will not rise to God (Ps. 141:2). Real praying demands spiritual energy and alertness, and this can come only from the Holy Spirit of God. Routine prayers are unanswered prayers.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Persevering in Prayer** - (Col 4:2KJV) This is not to suggest that God is reluctant to answer prayer and that we must “wear Him out” by our praying. Quite the opposite is true: God enjoys answering our prayers. But He sometimes delays the answer to increase our faith and devotion and to accomplish His purposes at the right time. God’s delays are not always God’s denials. As we continue in prayer, our own hearts are prepared for the answer God will give. We find ourselves growing in grace even before His answer comes.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Babbling "Be With Us"** - I sometimes hear a mature Christian say very earnestly, "Dear Lord, please be with me as I go on this new job interview," or "Please be with me as I go on this trip." When you first hear it, this request sounds holy. Unfortunately, it doesn't make sense. I'm often tempted to ask the one who is praying, "Why do you ask God to do what he is already doing?" In Matthew 28:20 Jesus says, "Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." In Hebrews 13:5 God says, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." Jesus tells his disciples in John 14:18, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." One of Jesus' names, Emmanuel, means "God with us." We don't need to ask God to be with us if we are members of his family. Instead, we need to pray that we will be aware of his presence, that we will be confident because of it. Asking God to be with us when he is already there is one kind of "babbling." - Bill Hybels

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**Are You Spiritual?** - The word “spiritual” has suffered as much abuse as the word “fellowship.” Too many people think that a “spiritual Christian” is mystical, dreamy, impractical, and distant. When he prays, he shifts his voice into a sepulchral tone in tremolo and goes to great lengths to inform God of the things He already knows. Unfortunately, this kind of unctuous piety is a poor example of true spirituality.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Prayer in the Spirit** - In the Old Testament tabernacle, there was a small golden altar standing before the veil, and here the priest burned the incense (Ex. 30:1–10; Luke 1:1–11). The incense is a picture of prayer. It had to be mixed according to God’s plan and could not be counterfeited by man. The fire on the altar is a picture of the Holy Spirit, for it is He who takes our prayers and “ignites” them in the will of God. It is possible to pray fervently in the flesh and never get through to God. It is also possible to pray quietly in the Spirit and see God’s hand do great things.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Pray at Home** - When the Supreme Court handed down its ruling against required prayer in the public schools, the famous editorial cartoonist Herblock published a cartoon in the Washington Post showing an angry father waving a newspaper at his family and shouting, “What do they expect us to do—listen to the kids pray at home?” The answer is: Yes! Home is the place where the children ought to learn about the Lord and the Christian life. It is time that Christian parents stop “passing the buck” to Sunday School teachers and Christian day-school teachers, and start nurturing their children.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**You Have the Father's Ear** - I was addressing a group of Christian students on the subject of prayer, and was pointing out that our Father in heaven is always available when we call. To illustrate it, I told them that the receptionist at our church office has a list of names prepared by me, and these people could get to me at any time, no matter what I was doing. Even if I was in a staff meeting, or in a counseling session, if any of these people phoned, she was to call me immediately. At the top of this list was my family. Even if the matter seems to me inconsequential, I want my family to know that I am available. After the service, one of the students said to me, “Would you adopt me? I can never get through to my father, and I need his encouragement so much!”—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Pray Like Paul** - In the prison prayers of Paul (Eph. 1:15–23; 3:14–21; Phil. 1:9–11; Col. 1:9–12), we discover the blessings he wanted his converts to enjoy. In none of these prayers does Paul request material things. His emphasis is on spiritual perception and real Christian character. He does not ask God to give them what they do not have, but rather prays that God will reveal to them what they already have.....It would do us good to use these prison prayers as our own, and ask God to help us in our inner person. That is where the greatest needs are.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Multi-Colored Prayers** - (James 5:13-18) - Many kinds of prayer are named here: prayer for the sick, prayer for forgiveness, prayer for the nation, even prayer about the weather. There is no need that prayer cannot meet and no problem that prayer cannot solve.—[Warren Wiersbe - With the Word](#)

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**The Most Important Ministry of the Church** - (1Ti 2:1-2) What is the most vital ministry of the local church? According to Paul, it is prayer. Prayer moves the hand that governs the world. We must pray for government leaders, that the doors of ministry will be kept open and souls will be won to Christ. Because God’s people do not pray for people in authority, wars close mission fields, officials do

not grant needed visas, and the work of the Lord suffers.—[Warren Wiersbe - With the Word](#)

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**A Godly Home** - No wonder Samuel (“heard by God”) was a great man of prayer. Look at the mother God gave him!...A mother’s prayers and a father’s encouragement (Samuel 1Sa 1:21–23, 28) changed the destiny of an entire nation. Never underestimate the power of prayer or the value of one godly home....Samuel was born in answer to prayer, and he lived in dependence on prayer.—[Warren Wiersbe - With the Word](#)

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**Prayer and Obedience** - An evangelist had preached on the Christian home. After the meeting a father approached him. “I’ve been praying for a wayward son for years,” said the father, “and God has not answered my prayers.” The evangelist read Psalm 66:18—“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” “Be honest with yourself and the Lord,” he said. “Is there anything between you and another Christian that needs to be settled?” The father hesitated, then said, “Yes, I’m afraid there is. I’ve harbored resentment in my heart against another man in this church.” “Then go make it right,” counseled the evangelist, and he prayed with the man. Before the campaign was over, the father saw his wayward son come back to the Lord. These verses do not, of course, give us all the conditions for answered prayer, but they emphasize the importance of obedience. One great secret of answered prayer is obedience, and the secret of obedience is love.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Transformation Not Substitution** - In the Christian life, we get many of our blessings through transformation, not substitution. When Paul prayed three times for the removal of his pain (2Cor 12:8), he was asking God for a substitution: “Give me health instead of sickness, deliverance instead of pain and weakness.” Sometimes God does meet the need by **substitution**; but other times He meets the need by **transformation**. He does not remove the affliction, but He gives us His grace so that the affliction works for us and not against us....“It is a greater thing to pray for pain’s conversion than its removal,” wrote P.T. Forsyth, and this is true. Paul won the victory, not by substitution, but by transformation. He discovered the sufficiency of the grace of God. (2Cor 12:9, 10)—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**We Are Praying for You in America** - I have had the experience of visiting several mission fields and hearing believers there say, “We are praying for you.” I recall chatting with a fine Christian from eastern Europe, who said, “We are praying for you in the United States, because in some ways, you have a more difficult time being spiritual Christians than we do.” When I asked him to explain, he smiled and said, “You have relatively easy lives, and comfort is an enemy of the spiritual life. In eastern Europe, we know who our enemies are, and we know who our friends are. Where you live, it is easy to be fooled. Yes, we are praying for you!”—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**A Discerning Lad** - I recall reading about a wealthy Christian who daily, at family devotions, prayed for the needs of the missionaries that his church supported. One morning, after he had concluded family prayers, his little boy said, “Dad, if I had your checkbook, I could answer your prayers!” A discerning lad, indeed!—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Striving in Prayer** - The words “strive together” in Romans 15:30 suggest an athlete giving his best in the contest. Perhaps the words “wrestling together” better express the idea. This same term is used of the praying of Epaphras in Colossians 4:12. This verse does not mean that we must fight with God to get what we need. Rather, it means our praying must not be a casual experience that has no heart or earnestness. We should put as much fervor into our praying as a wrestler does into his wrestling!—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Religious Hypocrisy** - It is easy for us to condemn Ananias (Acts 5:3) and Sapphira (Acts 5:1) for their dishonesty, but we need to examine our own lives to see if our profession is backed up by our practice. **Do we really mean everything we pray about in public?** Do we sing the hymns and Gospel songs sincerely or routinely? “These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me” (Matt. 15:8, NIV). If God killed “religious deceivers” today, how many church members would be left?—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**A Spirit Filled Church** - In (Acts 4:32–37) the believers had prayed and God’s Spirit had filled them and given them new power. The church that depends on believing prayer will know the blessing of the Holy Spirit in its ministry. How can we tell when a local church is really filled with the Spirit? When you go back to the record of the first filling at Pentecost (Acts 2:44–47), you discover three outstanding characteristics of a Spirit-filled church....It is unified (Acts 2:44, 46)....A Spirit-filled church is magnified and will have “favor with all the people” (Acts 2:47).....A Spirit-filled church is multiplied, because the Lord will daily add new believers to the church (Acts 2:47).—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Praying for God's Mighty Power** - The name of Jesus Christ has not lost its power, but many of God's people have lost their power because they have stopped praying to the sovereign God. "Nothing lies beyond the reach of prayer except that which lies outside the will of God." I don't know who first said that, but the statement is absolutely true. Dr. R.A. Torrey, the noted evangelist and educator, said, "Pray for great things, expect great things, work for great things, but above all—pray." The early church prayed, and God answered in mighty power.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

The sign in front of the church in Acts might have read:  
"Our church is not air-conditioned but it is prayer-conditioned."

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**Relationship of the Word and Prayer** - The Word of God and prayer must always go together (John 15:7). In His Word, God speaks to us and tells us what He wants to do. In prayer, we speak to Him and make ourselves available to accomplish His will. True prayer is not telling God what to do, but asking God to do His will in us and through us (1 John 5:14–15). It means getting God's will done on earth, not man's will done in heaven.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Praying with a Sense of Urgency** - Acts 4:23-31 describes "a prayer that was born out of witness and service for the Lord. Peter and John had just come in "from the trenches," and the church met to pray in order to defeat the enemy. Too often today, believers gather for prayer as though attending a concert or a party. There is little sense of urgency and danger because most of us are comfortable in our Christian walk. If more of God's people were witnessing for Christ in daily life, there would be more urgency and blessing when the church meets for prayer.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**In Jesus' Name** - We can ask in His name as we pray (John 14:13–14; 15:16; 16:23–26). When we ask the Father for something "in the name of Jesus Christ," it is as though Jesus Himself were asking it. If we remember this, it will help to keep us from asking for things unworthy of His name.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Pray for a Lazarus** - Methodist preacher [Samuel Chadwick](#) used to pray for "a [Lazarus](#)" in every campaign, some "great sinner" whose conversion would shock the community. He got the idea from John 12:9–11. God answered his prayers in meeting after meeting as infamous wicked men trusted Christ and became witnesses through their changed lives. Let's go after the "hard cases" and see what God can do!—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Prayer in the Book of Acts** - Prayer plays a significant role in the story of the church as recorded in the Book of Acts. The believers prayed for guidance in making decisions (Acts 1:15–26) and for courage to witness for Christ (Acts 4:23–31). In fact, prayer was a normal part of their daily ministry (Acts 2:42–47; 3:1; 6:4). Stephen prayed as he was being stoned (Acts 7:55–60). Peter and John prayed for the Samaritans (Acts 8:14–17), and Saul of Tarsus prayed after his conversion (Acts 9:11). Peter prayed before he raised Dorcas from the dead (Acts 9:36–43). Cornelius prayed that God would show him how to be saved (Acts 10:1–4), and Peter was on the housetop praying when God told him how to be the answer to Cornelius' prayers (Acts 10:9). This is certainly a good lesson for the church today. Prayer is both the **thermometer** and the **thermostat** of the local church; for the "spiritual temperature" either goes up or down, depending on how God's people pray. John Bunyan, author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, said, "Prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge to Satan." In the Book of Acts, you see prayer accomplishing all of these things.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**The Throne is Always Accessible** - The friends of the king certainly speak to their sovereign and share their burdens and needs with him. In the days of monarchies, it was considered a very special honor to be invited to speak to the king or queen; yet the friends of Jesus Christ can speak to Him at any time. The throne of grace is always available (Heb 4:16)....John 15:15–16 summarize for us what it means to be a friend of the King of kings. It is a humbling experience, for He chose us and we did not choose Him. We must keep this in mind lest we become proud and presumptuous.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Worry or Pray** - Why pray when you can worry?" asks a plaque that I have seen in many homes. One of the best remedies for a troubled heart is prayer.

O what peace we often forfeit,  
O what needless pain we bear;  
All because we do not carry  
Everything to God in prayer.

Believing prayer is wonderful medicine to soothe a troubled heart. Meditate on Philippians 4:6–7—and then put it into practice!  
—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Pray Without Ceasing** - What does it mean “always to pray” or to “pray without ceasing”? (1 Thes. 5:17) It certainly doesn’t mean that we should constantly be repeating prayers, because Jesus warned against that kind of praying (Matt. 6:5–15). Rather, it means to make prayer as natural to us as our regular breathing. Unless we are sick or smothering, we rarely think about our breathing; we just do it. Likewise with prayer—it should be the natural habit of our lives, the “atmosphere” in which we constantly live. Prayer is much more than the words of our lips; it is the desires of our hearts, and our hearts are constantly “desiring” before Him, even if we never speak a word. So, to “pray without ceasing” means to have such holy desires in our hearts, in the will of God, that we are constantly in loving communion with the Father, petitioning Him for His blessing. Take your choice: do you want to pray—or faint? (Luke 18:1) —[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Pray or Faint!** (Luke 18:1) - Prayer is to the spiritual life what breathing is to the physical life, and if you stop breathing, you will faint....If we don’t pray, we will faint; it’s as simple as that! The word faint describes a believer who loses heart and gets so discouraged that he or she wants to quit. I can recall two occasions when I have fainted physically, and it is the most helpless feeling I have ever experienced. I felt myself “going,” but I couldn’t seem to do a thing about it!...But when we pray, we draw on the “pure air” of heaven, and this keeps us from fainting.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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I once heard the late Jacob Stam pray, “Lord, the only thing we know about sacrifice is how to spell the word.” I wonder if today some of us can even spell the word!—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Persistence in Prayer** (Luke 18:1-8) - If persistence finally paid off as a man beat on the door of a reluctant friend, how much more would persistence bring blessing as we pray to a loving Heavenly Father! After all, we are the children in the house with Him!...Why does our Father in heaven answer prayer? Not just to meet the needs of His children, but to meet them in such a way that it brings glory to His name. “Hallowed be Thy name.” When God’s people pray, God’s reputation is at stake. The way He takes care of His children is a witness to the world that He can be trusted. Phillips Brooks said that prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance; it is laying hold of His highest willingness. Persistence in prayer is not an attempt to change God’s mind (“Thy will be done”) but to get ourselves to the place where He can trust us with the answer....“**Keep on asking ... keep on seeking ... keep on knocking.**” (Mt 7:7) In other words, don’t come to God only in the midnight emergencies, but keep in constant communion with your Father. Jesus called this “abiding” (John 15:1ff), and Paul exhorted, “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thes. 5:17). As we pray, God will either answer or show us why He cannot answer. Then it is up to us to do whatever is necessary in our lives so that the Father can trust us with the answer.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Praying in the Will of God** - It is important for Christians to know the Word of God, for there we discover the will of God. We must never separate prayer and the Word (John 15:7). During my ministry, I have seen professing Christians disobey God and defend themselves by saying, “I prayed about it and God said it was all right!” This includes a girl who married an unsaved man (2 Cor. 6:14–18), a fellow living with a girl who was not his wife (1 Thes. 4:1–8), and a preacher who started his own church because all the other churches were wrong and only he had true “spiritual insight” (Phil. 2:1–16). Once we are secure in our relationship with God and His will, then we can bring our requests to Him (Luke 11:3–4). We can ask Him to provide our needs (not our greeds!) for today, to forgive us for what we have done yesterday, and to lead us in the future. All of our needs may be included in these three requests: material and physical provision, moral and spiritual perfection, and divine protection and direction. If we pray this way, we can be sure of praying in God’s will.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Good Rule of Thumb for Effective Prayer** - Prayer is not telling God what we want and then selfishly enjoying it. Prayer is asking God to use us to accomplish what He wants so that His name is glorified, His kingdom is extended and strengthened, and His will is done. I must test all of my personal requests by these overruling concerns if I expect God to hear and answer my prayers.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Prayer is Speaking to God Not Men** - Lyndon Johnson’s press secretary, [Bill Moyers](#), was saying grace at a staff lunch, and the President shouted, “Speak up, Bill! I can’t hear a thing!” Moyers quietly replied, “I wasn’t addressing you, Mr. President.” It is good to remind ourselves that when we pray, we talk to God.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Praying for the Harvest** (Luke 10:2, Matthew 9:37,38) - Harvesting is hard work, even when there are many people helping you, but these men were sent into a vast field with very few workers to help them reap a great harvest. Instead of praying for an easier



job, they were to pray for more laborers to join them, and we today need to pray that same prayer. (Please note that it is **laborers**, not **spectators**, who pray for more **laborers**! Too many Christians are praying for somebody else to do a job they are unwilling to do themselves.)...If you start to pray for laborers (Mt 9:38), beware: you may become an answer to your own prayer! You pray, and then you are sent out! —[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**A Traditional Jewish Prayer** - "The consolation of Israel" means the messianic hope. One of the traditional Jewish prayers is, "May I see the consolation of Israel!" (Luke 2:21) That prayer was answered for Simeon when he saw Jesus Christ in the temple. He was a man who was led by the Spirit of God, taught by the Word of God, and obedient to the will of God; and therefore he was privileged to see the salvation of God. How important it is for people to see God's salvation, Jesus Christ, before they see death.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Lessons on Prayer** - Prayer must be in the will of God (1 John 5:14–15), and the one praying must be abiding in the love of God (John 15:7–14). Prayer is not an emergency measure that we turn to when we have a problem. Real prayer is a part of our constant communion with God and worship of God. Nor should we interpret Mark 11:24 to mean, "If you pray hard enough and really believe, God is obligated to answer your prayers, no matter what you ask." That kind of faith is not faith in God; rather, it is nothing but faith in faith, or faith in feelings. True faith in God is based on His Word (John 15:7; Rom. 10:17), and His Word reveals His will to us. It has well been said that the purpose of prayer is not to get man's will done in heaven, but to get God's will done on earth. True prayer involves forgiveness as well as faith. I must be in fellowship with both my Father in heaven and my brethren on earth if God is to answer my prayers (see Matt. 5:21–26; 6:14–15; 18:15–35). The first word in "The Lord's Prayer" is **our**—"Our Father which art in heaven" and not "My Father which art in heaven." Though Christians may pray in private, no Christian ever prays alone; for all of God's people are part of a worldwide family that unites to seek God's blessing (Eph. 3:14–15). Prayer draws us together. We do not earn God's blessing by forgiving one another. Our forgiving spirit is one evidence that our hearts are right with God and that we want to obey His will, and this makes it possible for the Father to hear us and to answer prayer (Ps. 66:18). Faith works by love (Gal. 5:6). If I have faith in God, I will also have love for my brother.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Improve Your Prayer Life** - The key to greatness is not found in position or power, but in character. We get a throne by **paying** with our lives, not by **praying** with our lips. We must identify with Jesus Christ in His service and suffering, for even He could not reach the throne except by way of the cross. The best commentary on this is Philippians 2:1–18. To improve our praying we must improve our serving. If we are serving Him and others, then we will not be praying selfishly. If we honestly can say, "*Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth,*" then He will say to us, "*Speak, servant, for thy Lord heareth.*" If our prayers do not make us better servants, then there is something wrong with them. Do our prayers make us easier to live with? The two disciples prayed selfishly and threw the fellowship into an uproar! (Mt 20:20–24) Do our prayers make us more like Jesus Christ? Do our prayers cost us anything? Prayer in the will of God does not mean **escape**; it means **involvement**. If our prayers do not bring us nearer to the cross, they are out of God's will.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**"True Confessions"** - Confession is not praying a lovely prayer, or making pious excuses, or trying to impress God and other Christians. True confession is naming sin—calling it by name what God calls it: envy, hatred, lust, deceit, or whatever it may be. Confession simply means being honest with ourselves and with God, and if others are involved, being honest with them too. It is more than admitting sin. It means judging sin and facing it squarely.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**The Second Coming and Prayer** - An expectant attitude toward Christ's return involves a serious, balanced mind and an alert, awake prayer life. The test of our commitment to the doctrine of Christ's return is not our ability to draw charts or discern signs, but our thinking and praying. If our thinking and praying are right, our living should be right.—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Hindered Prayer** - If unconverted people can have happy homes without prayer (and they do), how much happier Christian homes would be with prayer! In fact, it is the prayer life of a couple that indicates how things are going in the home. If something is wrong, their prayers will be hindered. A husband and wife need to have their own private, individual prayer time each day. They also need to pray together and to have a time of "family devotion." How this is organized will change from home to home, and even from time to time as the children grow up and schedules change. The Word of God and prayer are basic to a happy, holy home (Acts 6:4). —[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Irreverent Prayer** - I sometimes feel that there is today an increase in carelessness, even flippancy, in the way we talk about God or talk to God. Nearly a century ago, Bishop B.F. Westcott said, "Every year makes me tremble at the daring with which people speak of spiritual things." The godly bishop should hear what is said today! A worldly actress calls God "the Man upstairs." A baseball player

calls Him “the great Yankee in the sky.” An Old Testament Jew so feared God that he would not even pronounce His holy name, yet we today speak of God with carelessness and irreverence. In our public praying, we sometimes get so familiar that other people wonder whether we are trying to express our requests or impress the listeners with our nearness to God!—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Earnest Prayers** (James 5:17NIV) - Many people do not pray in their prayers. They just lazily say religious words, and their hearts are not in their prayers. A church member was “praying around the world” in a prayer meeting, and one of the men present was growing tired of the speech. Finally the man cried out, “Ask Him something!” That is what prayer is all about: “Ask Him something!” Prayer power is the greatest power in the world today. “Tremendous power is made available through a good man’s earnest prayer” (James 5:16, Phillips). History shows how mankind has progressed from manpower to horsepower, and then to dynamite and TNT, and now to atomic power. But greater than atomic power is prayer power. Elijah prayed for his nation, and God answered prayer. We need to pray for our nation today, that God will bring conviction and revival, and that “showers of blessing” will come to the land. One of the first responsibilities of the local church is to pray for government leaders (1 Tim. 2:1–3).—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Why Pray if God Know our Needs?** - If we put God’s concerns first, then we can bring our own needs. God is concerned about our needs and knows them even before we mention them (Matt. 6:8). If this is the case, then why pray? Because prayer is the God-appointed way to have these needs met (see James 4:1–3). **Prayer prepares us for the proper use of the answer.** If we know our need, and if we voice it to God, trusting Him for His provision, then we will make better use of the answer than if God forced it on us without our asking. —[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Practical Prayers** - I recall meeting a doctor friend while I was visiting in the hospital. “How are things going?” I asked, and he replied, “Oh, I guess things are OK.” “I pray for you,” I told him, wanting to be an encouragement. “I appreciate that,” he replied. “But while you’re at it, pray for all the people who owe me money. It’d help if they would pay up!”—[Warren Wiersbe - Bible Exposition Commentary](#)

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**Are Our Prayers too Small?** - Clearly, the scope of Christian prayer is to be expansive and expanding. John Stott, long-time pastor of All Souls in London, has observed how far short of this the church often falls.

Some years ago I attended public worship in a certain church. The pastor was absent on holiday, and a lay elder led the pastoral prayer. He prayed that the pastor might enjoy a good vacation (which was fine), and that two lady members of the congregation might be healed (which was also fine; we should pray for the sick). But that was all. The intercession can hardly have lasted thirty seconds. I came away saddened, sensing that this church worshiped a little village god of their own devising. There was no recognition of the needs of the world, and no attempt to embrace the world in prayer ([John Stott, Guard the Truth](#)).

Such restricted sympathies must never be tolerated corporately or privately. Our prayers must embrace the globe as well as our nearest and dearest. I cannot help but recall [F B Meyer’s](#) account of awaking early one morning at a conference with [A. B. Simpson](#) (founder of the [Christian and Missionary Alliance](#)) and discovering Simpson weeping in prayer as he clutched a globe. May his tribe increase! —[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: 1-2 Timothy and Titus](#)

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**A Call for Prayers for Pastors** (Hebrews 13:18, 19) - The preacher’s specific request—“I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon” (v. 19)—reflects his simple faith in prayer. If they fail to pray, his return to them may be slowed or possibly never take place. But if they pray, he expects that their prayers will speed his restoration, just as Daniel’s prayers brought the return of the angel Gabriel to aid him (cf. Daniel 10:12–14). He believed in prayer! We are to pray for our leaders. It is recorded that D. L. Moody, founder of Moody Bible Institute, repeatedly appropriated the wisdom of this command. For example, during his great turn-of-the-century evangelistic endeavors he often wired R. A. Torrey at the school asking for prayer, and in response the faculty and students would pray late into the evening and sometimes all night—bringing great power to Moody’s faraway ministries. After Moody’s death, Torrey himself preached in many countries backed up by an immense chain of prayer. In Australia, 2,100 home prayer groups met for two weeks before he arrived. As a result, there was great power in his preaching and many lives were changed. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the peerless Victorian preacher of London, told his vast congregation as he concluded his sermon delivered May 27, 1855:

My people! shall I ever lose your prayers? Will ye ever cease your supplications?... Will ye then ever cease to pray? I fear ye have not uttered so many prayers this morning as ye should have done; I fear there has not been so much earnest devotion as might have been poured forth. For my own part, I have not felt the

wondrous power I sometimes experience.

If we desire power in our lives and in our churches, we must pray. Likewise, if we desire our or others' preaching to be more than exegesis and rhetoric, we must pray. How different the modern church would be if the majority of its people prayed for its pastors and lay leadership. There would be supernatural suspensions of business-as-usual worship. There would be times of inexplicable visitations from the Holy Spirit. More laypeople would come to grips with the deeper issues of life. The leadership vacuum would evaporate. There would be more conversions. Will we commit ourselves to pray for our pastors and their colleagues and their lay leaders—especially those who chair the boards and committees and teach children in Sunday school and lead other important ministries? I suggest three headings for your prayers: 1) devotional, 2) domestic, and 3) professional. This single commitment could ensure ongoing vitality for our churches. No doubt about it!

It is an indisputable fact—pastors as a group are one of the most abused and hurting segments of modern society. Admittedly, sometimes the misery is self-inflicted due to sloth and ineptness. But more often it comes from the factors previously considered. And this personal angst of the clergy is superseded by an even greater tragedy—the mournful fact that tens of thousands of churches are not sailing well. Many are listing dangerously, some are dead in the water, and the skeletal remains of some rest on the bottom. What is the answer? The writer has not given us all of it, but he has given two huge pillars of support.

- Obedience. We are to obey our leaders—“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you” (v. 17). Slavish, unthinking obedience? No! Rather, the will to obey, to be respectful, to be supportive—to be a cheerful team player.
- Prayer. This obedience is to be oiled by prayer—“Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way. I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon” (vv. 18, 19).

What power this will bring!—[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: Hebrews](#)

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**Kill the Spider!** - I heard about a church member who prayed long at each prayer meeting and always closed by saying, “And, Lord, take the cobwebs out of my life.” One of the men in the group had gotten weary of hearing this and one night called out, “And, Lord, while you're at it, kill the spider!”—[Warren Wiersbe - Old Testament Words for Today](#)

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**It's A Miracle** - When we pray in the will of God, we participate in a miracle, because prayer transcends both time and space. We don't have to worry about geography. David prayed in a cave (Ps 57:1-11; Ps 142:1-7), Paul and Silas prayed in prison (Acts 16:25), King Hezekiah prayed while on his sickbed (Isa. 38), Peter cried out to Jesus while sinking into the Sea of Galilee (Mt 14:29-33), and Jesus prayed while being nailed to a cross (Lk 23:34). When it comes to praying, Christians need no special equipment, schedule, or environment. If they did, Paul could not have written “pray without ceasing” (1Th 5:17) or “praying always” (Eph. 6:18), and Jesus would never have said that we “always ought to pray and not lose heart” (Luke 18:1). —[Warren Wiersbe - Old Testament Words for Today](#)

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**The Incense of Prayer** - (Psalm 141:2 cp Rev 5:8, 8:3) The **incense** at the altar was mixed together carefully; it was well prepared. Likewise, let's mix our prayers carefully. Our prayers should contain adoration and confession to the Lord, petition, thanksgiving, and submission to Him. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to ignite the altar of our souls. Do not pray from a cold heart. David goes on to say, “Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips. Do not incline my heart to any evil thing” (Ps 141:3-4). After we pray to the Lord, let's make sure that our lips and hearts do not sin. —[Warren Wiersbe: Prayer, Praises and Promises](#)

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**The "Weaning Process"** - (Ps 25:17) Our first inclination in times of difficulty is to pray, “**Bring me out!**” But we should be praying, “**Build me up.**” God enlarges us by enlarging our troubles. And when He sees that we are growing, He is able to give us larger places of service and ministry. It's sort of a **weaning process**. When a child is being weaned from his mother, he's fretful and unhappy. He thinks, *Mother doesn't love me anymore.* But why is she weaning him? Because she wants him to grow up and mature. He cannot go through life depending on his mother. —[Warren Wiersbe: Prayer, Praises and Promises](#)

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**The Most Penetrating Prayer in the Bible** - Psalm 139:23-24 - “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” That's one of the most penetrating prayers found in the Bible.

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**Praying for a Bibleless People** - Hyatt Moore of the Wycliffe Bible Translators writes: On November 14, 1983, two American students named David and Ray teamed up to pray for the 40,000 Tira people in Africa. The large group had no Bible in their native

tongue. Two-and-a-half years later, other Christians, Jerry and Jan, joined them in praying daily for the Tira. Then, in March 1990, Jane and Marjeanne wrote to the Bibleless Peoples Prayer Project of Wycliffe Bible Translators, asking for the name of a Bibleless people to pray for. They too began praying.... In August 1990, we heard that Avajani, a young Tira man, was beginning to translate the Bible. Great news! We wrote, telling him of those praying and how he was an answer to their prayers. "I'm grateful," Avajani wrote back. "I have never known that there are teams praying for the Tira people. It is wonderful news to me. The same year and month when David and Ray started praying, I got saved. When Jerry and Jan began praying, I was accepted for theological studies... and now I have finished. Jane and Marjeanne can praise the Lord with me, too! In March 1990, a miracle happened. I met a man (a Wycliffe translator) who was able to arrange for me to study biblical translation principles and linguistics. "God did another miracle. Many young Tira have become Christians." Today, seven years after David and Ray began praying in faith, the Bible is being translated for 40,000 new readers. Although we don't always see the effect of our prayers at the time, God hears and answers. - [Craig Larson - 750 Engaging Illustrations.](#)

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**No Prayer Limits** - Bill Gates, who is chief executive at Microsoft, is hooked up to the international computer network called Internet. Subscribers to the Internet can send through their computers electronic mail (called e-mail) to other users of the Internet. Bill Gates had an Internet address just like everyone. But then the *New Yorker* magazine published his Internet address. Anyone could send the computer genius a letter. In no time Bill Gates was swamped with five thousand messages. It was more than any human could handle. So Gates armed his computer with software that filters through his e-mail, allowing important messages through and sending other letters to electronic oblivion. People are limited. They can handle only so much communication and offer only so much help. God, on the other hand, never tires of s-mail (spirit mail). His ear is always open to our prayers. And he has unlimited capacity to help. - [Craig Larson - 750 Engaging Illustrations.](#)

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**Pennies from Heaven** - "The Disciple's Prayer," Haddon Robinson recalls: When our children were small, we played a game. I'd take some coins in my fist. They'd sit on my lap and work to get my fingers open. According to the international rules of finger opening, once the finger was open, it couldn't be closed again. They would work at it, until they got the pennies in my hand. They would jump down and run away, filled with glee and delight. Just kids. Just a game.

Sometimes when we come to God, we come for the pennies in his hand.

"Lord, I need a passing grade. Help me to study."

"Lord, I need a job."

"Lord, my mother is ill."

We reach for the pennies. When God grants the request, we push the hand away.

More important than the pennies in God's hand is the hand of God himself. That's what prayer is about. - [Craig Larson - 750 Engaging Illustrations.](#)

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**A Very Important Appointment** - Billy Graham writes: I heard about a young president of a company who instructed his secretary not to disturb him because he had an important appointment. The chairman of the board came in and said, "I want to see Mr. Jones." The secretary answered, "I'm terribly sorry, he cannot be disturbed; he has an important appointment." The chairman became very angry. He banged open the door and saw the president of his corporation on his knees in prayer. The chairman softly closed the door and asked the secretary, "Is this usual?" And she said, "Yes, he does that every morning." To which the chairman of the board responded, "No wonder I come to him for advice. To those who pray, God promises wisdom and help. - From "How I Pray"

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**Pray for Power** - David Huxley owns a world record in an unusual category: he pulls jetliners. On October 15, 1997, for example, he broke his own record at Mascot Airport in Sydney, Australia. He strapped around his upper torso a harness that was attached to a steel cable some fifteen yards long. The other end of the steel cable was attached to the front-wheel strut of a 747 jetliner that weighed 187 tons. With his tennis shoes firmly planted on the runway, Huxley leaned forward, pulled with all his might, and remarkably was able to get the jetliner rolling down the runway. In fact, he pulled the 747 one hundred yards in one minute and twenty-one seconds. A superhuman feat indeed. The church resembles that 747 jetliner. The strength of a few extraordinary humans can pull the institution of the church for very short distances. Or we can pray until God starts up powerful engines that enable his church to fly thousands of miles on the wings of the Holy Spirit. [Craig Larson - 750 Engaging Illustrations.](#)

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**Hearing God** - In his book *When You're All Out of Noodles*, Ken Jones writes about a lesson he learned one day at the office.

[When I walked into my office,] I noticed something I had never seen before. It was round, about the size of a

dessert plate, and plugged into the wall, giving out a constant noise. It wasn't a loud noise, just constant. What in the world is that thing? I thought as I stopped to stare.

I finally asked the receptionist about it. She said, "It's an ambient noise generator. If it's too quiet in here, we can distinguish the voices in the counseling offices, and we want to protect their privacy. So we bought the noise generator to cover the voices."

Her explanation made perfect sense to me, but didn't it have to be louder to mask the conversations, I asked. "No," she said. "The constancy of the sound tricks the ear so that what is being said can't be distinguished."

Interesting, I thought. Very interesting. One kind of noise to cover the sound of another. It made me think and pray.

No wonder, Lord. No wonder I strain to hear what you have to say to me.... The constancy of sound—little noises, soft, inward, ambient thoughts and fears and attitudes—tricks the ears of my inner man and masks your still, small voice.

God isn't silent. We just have trouble hearing him.-[Craig Larson - 750 Engaging Illustrations](#).

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**He Loves Doing "Paarat" for You** - In the *Christian Reader* Andy Woodland writes: Working as Bible translators in Asia, we had come to two verses spoken by Jesus to his disciples: "I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor..." ([John 14:16](#) RSV) and "In that day you will ask in my name; and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you" ([John 16:26](#) RSV). Our immediate thought was to use the common vernacular for "pray" or "beg," but our co-translator had a better idea. "Use the phrase do paarat," he suggested. "It's a recommendation an influential person brings on behalf of someone else." Not until a trip to the hospital in our adopted country did I fully understand its meaning. My wife, Ellie, and I had been asked to help a friend's daughter experiencing post-natal complications. Ellie found the girl, her mother, and mother-in-law waiting in the ward. I stayed outside with the fattier. Immediately, he turned to me and said, "You must tell Ellie to speak to the doctor and do paarat on my daughter's behalf. We are just poor people from a minority group. They won't respect us or treat us well. But if you do paarat, they will give us proper treatment." Ellie agreed, not knowing if it would make a difference. Thankfully, the doctors did listen and the girl recovered quickly. For us, it was a humbling illustration of how Jesus comes before the Father on our behalf.- [Craig Larson - 750 Engaging Illustrations](#).

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**Weakness and Prayer** - In *Leadership*, Ben Patterson, dean of the chapel at Hope College and a former pastor, writes: In the spring of 1980 I was suffering great pain from what was diagnosed as two herniated discs in my lower back. The prescription was total bed rest. But since my bed was too soft, the treatment ended up being total floor rest. I was frustrated and humiliated. I couldn't preach, I couldn't lead meetings, I couldn't call on new prospects for the church. I couldn't do anything but pray. Not that I immediately grasped that last fact. It took two weeks for me to get so bored that I finally asked my wife for the church directory so I could at least do something, even if it was only pray for the people of my congregation. Note: it wasn't piety but boredom and frustration that drove me to pray. But pray I did, every day for every person in my church, two or three hours a day. After a while, the time became sweet. Toward the end of my convalescence, anticipating my return to work, I prayed, "Lord, this has been good, this praying. It's too bad I don't have time to do this when I'm working." And God spoke to me, very clearly. He said, "Stupid (that's right, that was his very word. He said it in a kind tone of voice, though). You have the same twenty-four hours each day when you're weak as when you're strong. The only difference is that when you're strong you think you're in charge. When you're weak you know you aren't." Prayer is an admission of weakness and the single most important expression of true dependence on God. - [Craig Larson - 750 Engaging Illustrations](#).

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**Our Intercessor** - Day by day, hour by hour, year by year, millennium by millennium, Christ prays for us (Hebrews 7:25, Romans 8:34). How does he intercede for us? He, along with the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:26, 27) takes our feeble prayers, cleans them up, ennobles them, and presents them to the Father. [St Chrysostom](#), the great fourth-century preacher, provides a helpful analogy. A young boy whose father was away on a trip wanted to present his father with something that would please him. His mother sent him to the garden to gather a bouquet of flowers. The little boy gathered a sorry bouquet of weeds as well as flowers. But when his father returned home, he was presented with a beautifully arranged bouquet, for the mother had intervened, removing all the weeds. —[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: Hebrews](#)

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**Serenity Prayer** - The famous prayer of [Reinhold Niebuhr](#) certainly applies here: "O God, give us serenity to accept what cannot be changed, courage to change what should be changed, and wisdom to distinguish the one from the other." This prayer has been quoted so often that both the original wording and the authorship have faded into oblivion. Niebuhr wrote the prayer in 1934 and a friend introduced it to Alcoholics Anonymous who made it their official motto. See June Bingham, [Courage To Change](#) (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972). In the popular comic strip "Calvin and Hobbes," Calvin gives his own version: "I pray for the strength

to change what I can, the inability to accept what I can't, and the incapacity to tell the difference." —[Warren Wiersbe: Preaching and Teaching with Imagination](#)

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**A Hebrews 4:12 Prayer** - The wise Christian invites the penetrating, discerning work of God's Word in his life. As wise Christians of old prayed:

O thou elect blade and sharpest sword who art able powerfully to penetrate the hard shell of the human heart, transfix my heart with the shaft of Thy love.... Pierce, O Lord, pierce, I beseech thee, this most obdurate mind of mine with the holy and powerful [rapier](#) of Thy grace.

This is a prayer every man and woman can and ought to pray. —[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: Hebrews](#)

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**Hudson Taylor's Secret - Intercessory Prayer** — (Ephesians 6:18) - Some years ago the record of a wonderful work of grace in connection with one of the stations of the [China Inland Mission](#) attracted a good deal of attention. Both the number and spiritual character of the converts had been far greater than at other stations where the consecration of the missionaries had been just as great. This rich harvest of souls remained a mystery until [Hudson Taylor](#), on a visit to England, discovered the secret. At the close of one of his addresses a gentleman came forward to make his acquaintance. In the conversation which followed, Mr. Taylor was surprised at the accurate knowledge the man possessed concerning this [China Inland Mission](#) station. "But how is it," Mr. Taylor asked, "that you are so conversant with the conditions of that work?" "Oh!" he replied, "the missionary there and I are old college mates; for years we have regularly corresponded; he has sent me names of enquirers and converts, and these I have daily taken to God in prayer." At last the secret was found — a praying man, praying definitely, praying daily. —[E. M. Bounds, Purpose in Prayer](#)

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**Prayer Stimulates Interest in God** - When my family visited Park Street Church recently, I made it a point to look for a bronze plaque bearing the inscription, "Joseph S. Olzewski S.K. 2/c U.S.C. Lost February 3, 1943 North Atlantic." I did this because of a remarkable personal experience that Allan Emery relates in his book *A Turtle on a Fencepost*. The day after Pearl Harbor, Emery, like thousands of others, enlisted—his choice being the Coast Guard. He was immediately put to work in his hometown, Boston, as a quartermaster, and he was given the Friday night duty of guarding one of the wharfs. On one particular Friday he had wisely decided to get some sleep before duty and was in his bunk resting when one of his new acquaintances, Joseph Olzewski, came by in immaculate dress blues—his hat squared, piping on his snow-white cuffs, his shoes spit-shined. He gave his biggest smile and asked Emery how he looked. Emery replied that he looked great and asked what the big event was. Joe excitedly explained that at the USO the previous night a wealthy girl had invited him to spend the weekend at her apartment on Beacon Hill. She was going to take him to the opera that night and had plenty of records and alcohol. He didn't have to be back until 0700 Monday morning. He ended the story by saying, "This is going to be the greatest time of my life." Emery replied that he would be praying for him. His friend walked out but immediately reentered asking, "What did you say?"

"I said I'd be praying for you," replied Emery.

"Why will you be praying for me when I'm going to have the first great weekend in my life?"

"Because, Joe, Monday morning you'll be back aboard ship and you will not be the same person you are tonight. Sin leaves its mark."

Joe swore at Emery and went out into the night.

Emery prayed for Joe as he prepared for guard duty. And he was startled when an unsmiling and agitated Joe suddenly reappeared in the guard post floodlights.

"How can you have a good time when someone's praying for you?" he said. "You've ruined my weekend. I stood up my date, and I've been waiting until you came on duty. Now tell me how to find God."

That night Joseph S. Olzewski heard for the very first time in his life the promises of God—and he believed. The change was immediate. He joined Park Street Church, spent his free time on the Common inviting other servicemen to services, prayed with his buddies at St. Paul's Cathedral which was always open, and grew in his knowledge of the Scriptures under Dr. Harold Ockenga. Then on February 1, 1943 he volunteered for sea duty on a mine sweeper headed for Iceland, and just a few days out of New York a torpedo found its mark. —[Kent Hughes: Preaching the Word: Romans](#)

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**Continual Prayer** (Eph 6:18, 1Th 5:17) - There is a way of ordering our mental life on more than one level at once. On one level we can be thinking, discussing, seeing, calculating, meeting all the demands of external affairs. But deep within, behind the scenes, at a profounder level, we may also be in prayer and adoration, song and worship, and a gentle receptiveness to divine breathings. — Thomas Kelley - Testament of Devotion

**Spurgeon** echoes this thought - I cannot help praying. If I were not allowed to utter a word all day long, that would not affect my praying. If I could not have five minutes that I might spend in prayer by myself, I should pray all the same. Minute by minute, moment by moment, somehow or other, my heart must commune with my God. Prayer has become as essential to me as the heaving of my

lungs and the beating of my pulse.

**John Wesley's** thoughts on continual prayer speaking in the third person - [H]is heart is ever lifted up to God, at all times and in all places. In this he is never hindered, much less interrupted, by any person or thing. In retirement or company, in leisure, business, or conversation, his heart is ever with the Lord. Whether he lie down or rise up, God is in all his thoughts; he walks with God continually, having the loving eye of his mind still fixed upon Him, and everywhere "seeing Him that is invisible."

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**Prayer for Humility** - "Oh Sir," said a lady to the victorian preacher Charles Spurgeon one day. "I pray for you every day that you may be kept humble!" She was a wonderfully fine looking woman, and splendidly dressed—and Spurgeon replied, "Thank you much; but you remind me of a failure in my duty. I have never prayed for you that you might be kept humble." "Dear Sir," she cried, "there is no need for such prayers, for I am not tempted to be proud." Observed Spurgeon wryly, "How proud she was to have obtained such a delusion."

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**Camel Knees** - [Eusebius](#) records the testimony of [Hegesippus](#) that James "used to enter alone into the temple and be found kneeling and praying for forgiveness for the people, so that his knees grew hard like a camel's because of his constant worship of God, kneeling and asking forgiveness for the people. So from his excessive righteousness he was called the Just."—[Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History](#)

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[Fred Holloman](#) Prayer in the the Kansas Senate - Omniscient Father: Help us to know who is telling the truth. One side tells us one thing, and the other just the opposite. And if neither side is telling the truth, we would like to know that, too. And if each side is telling half the truth, give us the wisdom to put the right halves together. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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**A Monk's Prayers that Changed the World** - In the year 1544, my late dearest father, in the presence of us all, narrated the whole story of his journey to Rome. He acknowledged with great joy that, in that city, through the Spirit of Jesus Christ, he had come to the knowledge of the truth of the everlasting gospel. It happened in this way. As he repeated his prayers on the [Lateran staircase \(aka "Scala Sancta"\)](#), the words of the prophet Habakkuk came suddenly to his mind: "The just shall live by faith." (Hab 2:4) Thereupon he ceased his prayers, returned to [Wittenburg](#), and took this as the chief foundation of all his doctrine. - Paul Luther, Martin Luther's youngest son

In the preface to his collected Latin works, Martin Luther described an event that occurred sometime after returning to Wittenburg, while he was in the "toilet"—monastic slang for "in the pits." As he meditated on Habakkuk's words as quoted in Romans 1:17, I began to understand. This immediately made me feel as though I had been born again, and as though I had entered through open gates into paradise itself. From that moment, I saw the whole face of Scripture in a new light. The Christian world was never again the same. - Robert Morgan

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**Power of Protracted Prayer** - [Jim Elliot](#) set aside ten days for prayer beginning on July 4. On July 14 he wrote, "I asked for some word from God ten days ago, which would encourage my going to Ecuador. It came this morning in an unexpected place. I was reading in Exodus 23 when verse 20 came out vividly. "Behold I send an angel before thee to keep thee by the way and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared." Coming as it did, with such preceding feelings and simple believing for some promise, I take this as leading ... to Ecuador." God's Spirit used Exodus 23:20 to send God's servant Jim Elliot to his martyrdom and glory, which led to the [Auca](#) indians to later come to faith in Jesus Christ.

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### Do You Pray with Passion?

Be earnest, earnest, earnest—  
Mad if thou wilt;  
Do what thou dost as if the  
stake were Heaven.

[Charles Kingsley](#)

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**Pared Down Pastoral Prayer!** - Today's average pastor who, according to a Christianity Today survey, spends only three minutes a day in prayer. Perhaps this is due to our feeling that we must be present at every meeting and have our hand on every ministry, producing an overcrowded schedule that leaves no time for personal fellowship with God. How much better it would be to emulate [Andrew Bonar](#), who made these entries in his diary:

- I see that unless I keep up short prayer every day throughout the whole day, at intervals, I lose the spirit of prayer. (Eph 6:18)

- Too much work without corresponding prayer.
- Today setting myself to pray. The Lord forthwith seems to send a dew upon my soul.
- Was enabled to spend part of Thursday in my church praying. Have had great help in study since then.
- Passed six hours today in prayer and Scripture reading, confessing sin, and seeking blessing for myself and the parish.

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—[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: Acts](#)

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**Statistics on Prayer** - Nearly 90% of Americans pray to God and 60% do so daily, but the content is not uniform, says a Barna Research Group survey. Overall, 61% make specific requests of God, and 46% listen silently for a personal response. Baby Boomers (ages 28-46) and adult Baby Busters (the generation following) were less likely to engage in prayer or anticipate responses from God. Those who do not attend church pray less often and with less assurance; 63% of unchurched Americans pray regularly, compared with 82% of all Americans; and only 34% of the unchurched are certain that prayer makes a difference, a rate 22 percentage points lower than that of all Americans. "Born-again" respondents, the poll said, were most likely to "see God as worthy of their praise [84% to 54%], as able to forgive them of their sins [86% to 68%], and as personally responding to their prayers [69%-55%]." Those who did not view God in these ways continued to pray—even regularly—but their prayers reflected "thanksgiving rather than an entire range of ways of interacting with God," George Barna said. Of all participants, 95% who pray thank God, and 76% ask Him to forgive specific sins. - 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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**A James 4:2,3 Prayer** - When John Ward, a member of the British Parliament, died, a prayer was found among his papers:

O Lord, thou knowest that I have mine estates in the City of London, and likewise that I have lately purchased an estate in the county of Essex. I beseech thee to preserve the two counties of Middlesex and Essex from fire and earthquake; and as I have a mortgage in Hertfordshire, I beg of thee likewise to have an eye of compassion on that county. As for the rest of the counties, thou mayest deal with them as thou are pleased.

This is hardly the way to win friends or influence God. A pleasure-driven prayer life finds Heaven made of brass. The petty circumference of its requests simply do not interest the Father.—[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: James](#)

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**Thou Will Be Done** - Many Christians have a sort of private feud with God, sit down with Jonah under the withered vine and mutter, "I do well to be angry, angry enough to die!" (Jonah 4:9, RSV). If this is where we are, we must understand that this dead-end road is as futile as Jonah's display. Is there hidden rebellion in our lives? Is it so hidden that perhaps only those closest to us see it when they hear our morose humor and momentary bitternesses? If so, there is only one answer: submit to God, let go and say, "Though I do not understand my situation, I bow before you and submit my whole life to you." The last words of [Richard Baxter](#) provide a perfect prayer: "Lord, what thou wilt, where thou wilt, and when thou wilt." Some of us need to pray this right now, and if we do, grace will flood our souls. Will you do it?

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**Prayer: Easy and Hard** - Prayer is both the easiest and hardest discipline of the Christian life. It is the easiest in that the youngest child and the newest Christian can learn to pray. Even the slightest motion of the soul toward God is a form of genuine prayer. If a person says "Lord, have mercy," they are truly praying. But prayer is also the hardest discipline because it is the most difficult to maintain over a long period of time. In a sense it is easy to enroll in the School of Prayer but hard to get a graduate degree.

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**Keep a Positive Focus** - Pastor Steve May offers the following helpful advice about the importance of keeping a positive focus when we pray:

Whenever you pray for someone, begin by thanking God for them. Thank God for the role they've played in your life, for all that they've done for you, for the good things they've done for others. Even if you're having conflict with this person, thank God that he or she is giving you the opportunity to grow spiritually, learn forgiveness, be more patient, and on and on. If you try, you can find something to be thankful for in just about anyone....Thankful prayer (makes) the difference. Anyone can pray "against" another person. But only God can give you the grace to pray "for" them instead. When asked how he dealt with his many enemies, Abraham Lincoln replied, "If at all possible, I turn them into my friends." That radical transformation is possible as we pray with thanksgiving for those who oppose us. George Buttrick once advised praying for your enemies this way, "Lord, bless this person whom I foolishly regard as an enemy. Keep him in thy favor. Banish my resentment." - Ray Pritchard

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**Are You A Haoli?** - Those who have the occasion to visit Hawaii will soon learn a new word, if they do not already know it. The word is haoli—which is the word Hawaiians use for those from the mainland. Though often spoken today without any malice, it was once used with withering disdain. Alice Kahokuoluna gives the derivation of the term:



Before the missionaries came, my people used to sit outside their temples for a long time meditating and preparing themselves before entering. Then they would virtually creep to the altar to offer their petition and afterwards would again sit a long time outside, this time to "breathe life" into their prayers. The Christians, when they came, just got up, uttered a few sentences, said Amen and were done. For that reason my people call them haolis, "without breath," or those who fail to breathe life into their prayers.

Let's not be haolis—those who fail to breathe life into their prayers. Let's learn to take time to reflect on foundational realities of true prayer, that God is our Dear Father. Take time and breathe it in. From this foundational awareness comes our foundational petition,

"Hallowed be Thy name as Abba Father."

"God, may all historical differences and language vanish as all people bow to You as Father in the consummation of all things."

"And, God, may my life hallow Your name."

"May others see that I live as Your child."

"May others find me a caring parent like You."

"May my life be a continual invitation to Your family."

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Amen."

—[Kent Hughes - Abba Father - The Lord's Pattern for Prayer](#)

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**Power of Prayer** - Because of his careful exegesis, unrelenting moral application, and unmatched eloquence he was given a nickname which became his storied title, [Chrysostom](#), "golden-mouthed." This appellation was well-deserved, as is evidenced by his description of the power of prayer, perhaps the most exciting account ever given:

The potency of prayer has subdued the strength of fire, it has bridled the rage of lions, hushed anarchy to rest, extinguished wars, appeased the elements, expelled demons, burst the chains of death, expanded the fates of heaven, assuaged diseases, dispelled frauds, rescued cities from destruction, stayed the sun in its course, and arrested the progress of the thunderbolt. There is (in it) an all-sufficient panoply, a treasure undiminished, a mine which is never exhausted, a sky unobscured by clouds, a heaven unruffled by the storm. It is the root, the fountain, the mother of a thousand blessings!

—[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: James](#)

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**Do You Give God the "Time of Day?"** - The devotional prayer of the modern man is, "Lord, speak to me! You have sixty seconds." There is no place in the busy secular desolation to hear God say, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). Few moderns have the discipline or time to say:

Speak, Lord, in the stillness,  
While I wait on Thee;  
Hushed my heart to listen  
In expectancy.

[E. May Grimes](#)

We must slow down and take time to listen, perhaps praying Samuel's eager words, "Speak, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10).—[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: James](#)

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**Saturday Night Prayers** - In September 1978 John Alexander, then president of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, sent this communication to his staff:

Saturday Night. While a leader must be careful about talking about his prayer life lest he appear to be "lengthening his tassels and broadening his phylacteries" (i.e., parading spirituality), there is one aspect I'd like to mention in hopes some of you will join in it.

Every Saturday night I pray through a list of pastors — thanking God for them, for their ministry, for their personal friendship. I then intercede that, on this eve of another Lord's Day, the Spirit of Christ will give them a good night's rest and anoint them with wisdom, power, and joy for the morrow. On Sunday morning I go through the list again, interceding as they step to their pulpits, that their proclamation of the whole counsel of God will be simple, clear, tender where it should be gentle, bold where it should be courageous — that it will be straight and true to the minds and hearts of listeners who say, "Sir, we would see Jesus." I pray that the Lord will bind Satan from attacking pastor and laymen (especially through loveless criticism) and that Christ will touch the congregation to hear, see, understand and obey God's proclaimed truth. I invite you to join me in this

Saturday night and Sunday morning discipline of intercession. Ask God to indicate those pastors He wants on your list.

I hope that IVCF staff will train our chapter leaders in this ministry of prayer so that as students today and church leaders tomorrow they'll help lay a deepening prayer foundation beneath the shepherds of our nation's churches. The goal is an undergirding of prayer for pastors Sunday mornings.

Any volunteers?

John W. Alexander

On May 31, 1985, I received this letter from John Alexander:

Dear Kent:

Just a note to say thanks for the worship service you provided last Sunday.... Enjoyed meeting both you and Barbara.... Enclosed is a page from Inter-Varsity InterCom explaining what I had in mind when I told you I pray for you every Saturday night. There are several pastors on my list for such a prayer session; the automatic ones are those who minister to my children each Sunday morning. Since \_\_\_\_\_ has no parents, I include you as her pastor as one of the "automatics" on my list. May the Lord continue to keep His good hand upon you.

Cordially in Christ,

John

John Alexander lives out the Scriptural call to "keep on praying for all the saints." Do we intercede for others? Do we have a prayer list for our brothers and sisters in Christ, and do we use it?—[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: Ephesians](#)

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#### **Handbill Passed Out to Stimulate the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting -**

**How Often Shall We Pray?** As often as the language of prayer is in my heart; as often as I see my need of help; as often as I feel the power of temptation; as often as I am made sensible of any spiritual declension or feel the aggression of a worldly spirit. In prayer we leave the business of time for that of eternity, and intercourse with men for intercourse with God. A day Prayer Meeting is held every Wednesday, from 12 to 1 o'clock, in the Consistory building in the rear of the North Dutch Church, corner of Fulton and William Streets (entrance from Fulton and Ann Streets). The meeting is intended to give merchants, mechanics, clerks, strangers, and businessmen generally an opportunity to stop and call upon God and the perplexities incident to their respective avocations. It will continue for one hour; but it is also designed for those who may find it inconvenient to remain more than five or ten minutes, as well as for those who can spare the whole hour.

—[Jeremiah Lanphier - Revival Born in a Prayer Meeting - A MUST READ!](#)

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**A Parent's Prayer** - O Father, help me to treat my children as You have treated me. Make me sensitive to their needs and frustrations. Help me to listen with attention, insight, and understanding to what they have to say. Help me to treat them as a person of Your design and therefore of real worth. Help me to respect ... their times to talk without interrupting or contradicting them ... their ideas ... their need for freedom to make choices and to take responsibilities as they are able. O, give me the wisdom and understanding to teach my children as You have taught me. Let me not forget they are children and not little adults, being patient and helpful as they are developing skills and mental abilities and to allow them mistakes and accidents without laughing at or belittling them. Thank You for the provision of my need as a parent in charge of this flock of God. Thank You that in the Lord Jesus You have given all I need to be what I ought as a Christian parent.—Anonymous

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**Angelic Protection in Answer to Prayer** - On a dark night about a hundred years ago a Scottish missionary couple found themselves surrounded by cannibals intent on taking their lives. On that terror-filled night the couple fell to their knees and prayed that God would protect them. It was a horrible time. Intermittent with their prayers, the missionaries heard the cries of the savages and imagined them coming through the door to take their lives. As the sun began to rise, to their astonishment they found that the natives were retreating into the forest. The missionaries were absolutely amazed and filled with joy. Their hearts soared to God. It was a day of rejoicing! The couple bravely continued their work. A year later the chieftain of that tribe was saved. As the missionary spoke with him, he remembered the horror of that night and asked the chieftain why he and his men had not killed them. The chieftain replied in surprise, "Who were all those men who were with you?" The missionary answered, "There were no men with us. It was just my wife and myself." The chieftain began to argue with him, saying, "There were hundreds of tall men in shining garments with drawn swords circling about your house, so we could not attack you." That story, recorded in Billy Graham's book *Angels*, is one of the greatest stories in missionary history. The missionary was the almost legendary [John G. Paton](#) of the New Hebrides. What a glorious story for the church—a story not often repeated or experienced, yet one that does have contemporary parallels.

**Divine Intervention** - Another vivid story was shared with me by a respectable Southern California pastor's wife. One evening she was driving down the Santa Ana freeway, which is always busy. As she drove down that freeway, somehow the car door opened, and her four-year-old child tumbled out onto the freeway amidst the high-speed traffic. With her heart pounding and with horrible expectations, she pulled her car to a screeching stop and ran frantically back along the freeway. But she did not expect to see what she saw. Her child was sitting up in the fast lane of the freeway amidst the glare of headlights, his only injuries a few abrasions. The first words that came out of his mouth were, "Mommy, Mommy, I saw Jesus put up his hands and stop the cars!" Was that a child's imagination? Possibly. None of the drivers saw anyone. They just managed to stop their cars and miss him. The boy had been raised in a pious home, so perhaps he was just parroting what he had heard others say. On the other hand, it may indeed have been angelic intervention, considering the incredible danger in that unusual situation. —[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: John](#)

**Related Resource:** [Lessons from the Life of John G Paton](#)

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**When Confession Is Rejected** - (Pharaoh's "confession" in Exodus 9:27) - In certain instances the man's hope in prayer is the result of a condemning faith. There is a justifying faith and a condemning faith. "What?" say you. "Does faith ever condemn men?" Yes, when men have faith enough to know that there is a God who sends judgments upon them, that nothing can remove those judgments but the hand that sent them, and that prayer moves that hand. There are persons who yet never pray themselves, but eagerly cry to friends, "Entreat the Lord for me." There is a measure of faith which goes to increase a man's condemnation, since he ought to know that if what he believes is true, then the proper thing is to pray himself.—[C H Spurgeon - Take Away the Frogs](#)

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**Let Us All to Prayers** - Sometimes people are in such mortal danger that their only hope is to pray. C. S. Lewis (1898–1963) describes such a time in his novel *That Hideous Strength*. In the story the powers of evil have descended upon England with the intent to destroy creation and reduce man to a machine. Over against the forces of evil stands a small band of virtuous men and women; yet they are powerless to resist the onslaught. Near the end of the novel, one of them says, almost despairingly, "No power that is merely earthly will serve against the Hideous Strength." To which one of his companions replies, "Then let us all to prayers." —[Philip Graham Ryken Preaching the Word: Exodus](#)

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**Plan To Pray** - "Evening and morning and at noon I will pray." (Psalm 55:17) - I have an appointment with my dentist to have my teeth cleaned and checked. I'm confident that I'll get a good report on the condition of my teeth and gums because I floss every morning and brush two or three times every day. I have built it into my daily schedule. I have to confess that it wasn't always that way. I knew that I should pay better attention to my dental hygiene— and I intended to. But I seldom got it done because I didn't have a plan for it. The result: growing gum disease that led to extensive and uncomfortable surgery. I won't let that happen again! Many things in life are like that— including prayer. Mature Christians know that unless they plan to pray, it will not happen. Daniel set specific times for prayer (Dan. 6:10). And David followed a schedule for prayer, as Psalm 55:17 indicates. I realize that following a regular program does not guarantee effective praying. And I know it can easily become a stiff formality. Even so, we must devise a plan for praying— and stick with it. Otherwise, despite our best intentions, we will pray very little. Failure to establish good spiritual habits will lead to poor spiritual health. Plan to pray! - PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE: When is the best time for you to pray each day? Set aside that time as an appointment with God. Then ask God to help you keep your commitment. [David Egner](#)

**Plan your praying, then pray your plan.**

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**Time to Move Forward** - Far be it from me ever to say a word in disparagement of the holy, happy, heavenly exercise of prayer. But, beloved, there are times when prayer is not enough—when prayer itself is out of season.... When we have prayed over a matter to a certain degree, it then becomes sinful to tarry any longer; our plain duty is to carry our desires into action, and having asked God's guidance, and having received divine power from on high, to go at once to our duty without any longer deliberation or delay. [C H Spurgeon's sermon on Exodus 14:15](#)—[Forward! Forward! Forward!](#)

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**Why Most Christians Do Not Have a Vibrant Prayer Life** - Unless I'm badly mistaken, one of the main reasons so many of God's children don't have a significant life of prayer is not so much that we don't want to, but that we don't plan to. If you want to take a four-week vacation, you don't just get up one summer morning and say, "Hey, let's go today!" You won't have anything ready. You won't know where to go. Nothing has been planned. But that is how many of us treat prayer. We get up day after day and realize that significant times of prayer should be part of our life, but nothing's ever ready. We don't know where to go. Nothing has been planned. No time. No place. No procedure. And we all know that the opposite of planning is not a wonderful flow of deep, spontaneous experiences in prayer. The opposite of planning is the rut. If you don't plan a vacation you will probably stay home and watch TV! The natural unplanned flow of spiritual life sinks to the lowest ebb of vitality. There is a race to be run and a fight to be

fought. If you want renewal in your life of prayer you must plan to see it. Therefore, my simple exhortation is this: Let us take time this very day to rethink our priorities and how prayer fits in. Make some new resolve. Try some new venture with God. Set a time. Set a place. Choose a portion of Scripture to guide you. Don't be tyrannized by the press of busy days. We all need mid-course corrections. Make this a day of turning to prayer — for the glory of God and for the fullness of your joy. —[Desiring God - John Piper - page 182 of 399](#)

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**Walkie-Talkie** - We see repeatedly in Scripture that prayer is a **walkie-talkie** for warfare, not a domestic intercom for increasing our conveniences. The point of prayer is empowering for mission: “[Pray] for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel” (Ephesians 6:19). “Pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ” (Colossians 4:3). “Strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf...that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints” (Romans 15:30–31). “Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored” (2 Thessalonians 3:1). “Pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Matthew 9:38).....Could it be that many of our problems with prayer and much of our weakness in prayer come from the fact that we are not all on active duty, and yet we still try to use the transmitter? We have taken a **wartime walkie-talkie** and tried to turn it into a civilian **intercom** to call the servants for another cushion in the den.—[Desiring God - John Piper - page 178 of 399](#)

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**Nothing has been planned.** - Unless I'm badly mistaken, one of the main reasons so many of God's children don't have a significant life of prayer is not so much that we don't want to, but that we don't plan to. If you want to take a four-week vacation, you don't just get up one summer morning and say, “Hey, let's go today!” You won't have anything ready. You won't know where to go. Nothing has been planned. But that is how many of us treat prayer. We get up day after day and realize that significant times of prayer should be a part of our life, but nothing's ever ready. We don't know where to go. Nothing has been planned. No time. No place. No procedure. And we all know that the opposite of planning is not a wonderful flow of deep, spontaneous experiences in prayer. The opposite of planning is the rut. If you don't plan a vacation, you will probably stay home and watch TV. The natural, unplanned flow of spiritual life sinks to the lowest ebb of vitality. There is a race to be run and a fight to be fought. If you want renewal in your life of prayer, you must plan to see it. Therefore, my simple exhortation is this: Let us take time this very day to rethink our priorities and how prayer fits in. Make some new resolve. Try some new venture with God. Set a time. Set a place. Choose a portion of Scripture to guide you. Don't be tyrannized by the press of busy days. We all need midcourse corrections. Make this a day of turning to prayer—for the glory of God and for the fullness of your joy.—[Desiring God - John Piper - page 183 of 399](#)

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**Where A Man Belongs** - A famous cigarette billboard pictures a curly-headed, bronze-faced, muscular macho with a cigarette hanging out the side of his mouth. The sign says, “Where a man belongs.” That is a lie. Where a man belongs is at the bedside of his children, leading in devotion and prayer. Where a man belongs is leading his family to the house of God. Where a man belongs is up early and alone with God seeking vision and direction for his family. —[Desiring God - John Piper - page 218 of 399](#)

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**Prayer and Missions** - Consider the fact that the U.S. evangelical slogan, “Pray, give or go” allows people merely to pray, if that is their choice! By contrast the Friends Missionary Prayer Band of South India numbers 8,000 people in their prayer bands and supports 80 full-time missionaries in North India. If my denomination (**Ed**: Baptist) (with its unbelievably greater wealth per person) were to do that well, we would not be sending 500 missionaries, but 26,000. In spite of their true poverty, those poor people in South India are sending 50 times as many cross-cultural missionaries as we are!—[Desiring God - John Piper - page 201 of 399](#)

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John Hyde, better known as **Praying Hyde**, led a life of incredibly intense prayer as a missionary to India at the turn of the century. Some thought him morose. But a story about him reveals the true spirit behind his life of sacrificial prayer. A worldly lady once thought she would have a little fun at Mr. Hyde's expense. So she asked, “Don't you think, Mr. Hyde, that a lady who dances can go to heaven?” He looked at her with a smile and said quietly, “I do not see how a lady can go to heaven unless she dances.” Then he dwelt on the joy of sin forgiven. [Desiring God - John Piper - page 246 of 399](#)

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**Hudson Taylor** - It was not easy for Mr. Taylor, in his changeful life, to make time for prayer and Bible study, but he knew that it was vital. Well do the writers remember traveling with him month after month in northern China, by cart and wheelbarrow with the poorest of inns at night. Often with only one large room for coolies and travelers alike, they would screen off a corner for their father and

another for themselves, with curtains of some sort; and then, after sleep at last had brought a measure of quiet, they would hear a match struck and see the flicker of candlelight which told that Mr. Taylor, however weary, was pouring over the little Bible in two volumes always at hand. From two to four A.M. was the time he usually gave to prayer; the time he could be most sure of being undisturbed to wait upon God. [Desiring God - John Piper - page 358 of 399](#)

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**The God of Peter still lives!** (Acts 12:11-12) In late 1964 Communist Simba rebels took over the town of Bunia in Zaire and began arresting and executing anyone they considered "enemies of the revolution." One of their victims was a pastor, Zebedayo Idu. The day following his arrest was to be a great political holiday, and as part of the celebration great crowds were gathered in front of the monument to Patrice Lumumba, the spiritual leader of the revolution. There were to be speeches by dignitaries from the provincial capital, Stanleyville, and a large number of prisoners were to be executed in front of the monument. The prisoners were taken from their cells and herded onto a truck to be taken to the plaza, but for some mysterious reason the engine refused to start. The prisoners were finally unloaded and compelled to push the truck to get it started. When they finally arrived in front of the angry police commissioner's office, the furious official wanted no further delay, so he lined the prisoners up and ordered them to count off—"one, two, one, two"! The number twos were marched back to prison. The commissioner then ordered all of the number ones to march double-time to the monument, where they died a few minutes later. In their cells the twos could hear the sound of gunfire. They wondered why they had been spared and what the future held for them. Pastor Zebedayo shared with them his hope of Heaven and eternal life, and eight people found the Lord that day. Hardly had the pastor finished ministering the Word to them when a very excited messenger came panting to the door with an order. The pastor had been arrested by mistake. They were to release him at once. Pastor Zebedayo bade farewell to the remaining prisoners and returned to his home next to the chapel, where he discovered that a crowd of believers had gathered in the house of God and were on their knees praying earnestly for his safety and release. Great was their rejoicing when the answer to their prayers walked into the building. The prayer service became a praise service for God's faithfulness. If we are not seeing similar power working among us, why not? James 4:2 says, "You do not have, because you do not ask God." God can do anything he wants, but there are some things he gives only in answer to prayer. [Ray Stedman](#) has stated, "As a result of their intercession God was 'free' to act in unusual and remarkable ways." —[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: Acts](#)

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**Are You Connected?** - The question is, do we believe God is in control? Do we believe in the ministry of angels to the elect? Do we believe that prayer brings untold power?

Just before World War II in Itasca, Texas, there was a school fire that took the lives of 263 children. It was a horrifying tragedy. After the war Itasca built a new school with the finest sprinkler system in the world. Never again would the citizens of Itasca be caught with such a tragedy on their hands. Honor students were selected to take citizens of the community on tours through the new school, to show them the finest sprinkler system ever assembled. The town continued to grow, and seven years after the new school was built an addition was needed. As the new construction began, it was discovered that the sprinkler system was never connected.

Some of us need to come into better connection with the Source (**Ed**: I would add we need to make sure we test the sprinkler system! When we do we will find it has living water!), and this happens only through a growing faith and honest prayer.—[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: Acts](#)

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### Church Father's Prayers for Government

[Tertullian](#) (A.D. 160–240) wrote:

We offer prayer for the safety of our princes to the eternal, the true, the living God, whose favour, beyond all other things, they must themselves desire.... Without ceasing, for all our emperors we offer prayer. We pray for life prolonged; for security to the empire; for protection for the imperial house, for brave armies, a faithful senate, a virtuous people, the world at rest.

Finally, listen to this remarkable prayer from one of the Apostolic Fathers, [Clement of Alexandria](#):

Thou, Master, hast given the power of sovereignty to them through thy excellent and inexpressible might, that we may know the glory and honour given to them by thee, and be subject to them, in nothing resisting thy will. And to them, Lord, grant health, peace, concord, firmness that they may administer the government which thou hast given them without offence. For thou, heavenly Master, king of eternity, hast given to the sons of men glory and honour and power over the things which are on the earth; do thou, O Lord, direct their counsels according to that which is "good and pleasing" before thee, that they may administer with piety in peace and gentleness the power given to them by thee, and may find mercy in thine eyes.

**Charles Swindoll on Phil 4:6** ([see notes](#)) - let's get six words clearly fixed in our minds. These six words form the foundation of God's therapeutic process for all worrywarts.

**WORRY ABOUT NOTHING,  
PRAY ABOUT EVERYTHING.**

Say that over and over until you can say it without looking. Say the six words aloud. Close the book. Close your eyes. Picture the words in your mind. Spend a minute or more turning them over in your head. What qualifies as a worry? Anything that drains your tank of joy—something you cannot change, something you are not responsible for, something you are unable to control, something (or someone) that frightens and torments you, agitates you, keeps you awake when you should be asleep. All of that now needs to be switched from your worry list to your prayer list. Give each worry—one by one—to God. Do that at this very moment. Tell the Lord you will no longer keep your anxiety to yourself. Now then, once you buy into this all-important plan God has provided for those who wish to be free, you will begin to have time left in your day . . . lots of extra time and energy. Why? Because you used to spend that time worrying. Your addiction, like all addictions, held you captive. It took your time, it required your attention, it forced you to focus on stuff you had no business trying to deal with or solve - [Laugh Again](#)

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Two congregations of differing denominations were located only a few blocks from each other in a small community. They thought it might be better if they would merge and become one united body, larger and more effective, rather than two struggling churches. Good idea, but both were too petty to pull it off. The problem? They couldn't agree on how they would recite the Lord's Prayer. One group wanted "forgive us our trespasses" while the other demanded "forgive us our debts." So the newspaper reported that one church went back to its trespasses while the other returned to its debts!—[Leslie Flynn, When the Saints Come Storming In](#)

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**Pauses in Prayer** - Punctuation in communication is important. Think about the importance of a comma in this little note: A naval wife asked the church to pray, "John Anderson, having gone to sea, his wife desires the prayers of the congregation for his safety." When read without the first two commas: "John Anderson having gone to see his wife, desires the prayers of the congregation for his safety."—[Joe LoMusio, If I Should Die Before I Live](#)

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**Bible Study When You Have No Commentaries** - John Bunyan wrote his immortal allegory *Pilgrim's Progress* after mastering the Scriptures and sensing that God had spoken to him again and again through its pages. He said, "Although you may have no commentaries at hand, continue to read the Word and pray; for a little from God is better than a great deal received from a man. Too many are content to listen to what comes from men's mouths, without searching and kneeling before God to know the real truth. That which we receive directly from the Lord through the study of His Word is from the 'minting house' itself. Even old truths are new if they come to us with the smell of heaven upon them."

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[J. Wilbur Chapman](#) wrote concerning Bible study:

- Study it through. Never begin a day without mastering a verse from its pages.
- Pray it in. Never lay aside your Bible until the verse or passage you have studied has become a part of your being.
- Put it down. The thoughts that God gives you, put down in the margin of your Bible or your notebook.
- Work it out. Live the truth you get in the morning through each hour of the day.

- [William F Kerr, Ed., The Minister's Research Service](#)

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**Praying for Jabez** - In his nineteenth-century book, *The Holy Spirit in Missions*, [A. J. Gordon](#) relates a powerful story from an earlier book by Rev. Dr. Cox on the history of missionary work by English Baptists. It involves England's first missionary, [William Carey](#), who sailed for India in 1793. It was while Carey was almost alone in India, and greatly distressed for lack of another missionary, that the annual meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society was held in London. During the session, Carey's friends Andrew Fuller and John Ryland had preached. In his discourse, Ryland mentioned that two of Carey's sons, Felix and William, were devoted to the Lord and to the work of missions. "But," he said, "there is a third who gives him pain; he is not yet turned to the Lord." Then Ryland's voice failed as he wept from grief and concern. Finally "in a voice which seemed to exhaust a whole soul of feeling" he said, "Brethren, let us send up a united, universal and fervent prayer to God in solemn silence for the conversion of Jabez Carey." As though the Holy Spirit had suddenly fallen upon the assembly, the whole congregation of two thousand persons pleaded

in silent intercession. The result? One of the first letters afterward received bore news of the conversion of this son who had greatly pained his father by his apparent disregard for Christianity. And the time of his awakening was found to accord almost exactly with the hour of this memorable intercession. Almost immediately, he applied for missionary service, and soon Dr. Carey and the other two sons united in laying hands on the third, ordaining him to ministry. "I trust," wrote Dr. Carey, "that this will be a matter of everlasting praise. Oh, praise the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together! To me the Lord has been very gracious. I trust all my children love the Lord; and three out of four are actually engaged in the important work of preaching the Gospel among the heathen. —[Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations and Quotes](#)

### **Prayer is My Real Business**

William Carey was once reproached for spending so much time in prayer that he neglected his business. He replied that supplication, thanksgiving, and intercession were much more important in his life than laying up treasures on earth. "**Prayer is my real business!**" he said. "Cobbling shoes is a sideline; it just helps me pay expenses." The Lord honored Carey's vigorous faith, for he became a renowned missionary and was mightily used by God in India, Burma, and the East Indies.

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**A Package Deal** - Barbara, my six-year-old granddaughter, had been praying for a baby brother for months. So, she was overcome with joy when she saw her new twin brothers. That night her prayer was this happy thank-you: "Dear God, thank you for sending me a baby brother. But I thought you would like to know he arrived in two pieces." - Thomas LaMance. Christian Reader, 37.

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**Are You Praying at Full Potential?** - I used to race motorcycles. A motorcycle is a rugged machine that can take incredible abuse, but its fuel has to be pure. At refueling time, I would pour the fuel through a filter or a handkerchief to be sure no contaminants could prevent the engine from running at its full potential. Any speck of dirt could cause a loss of power. Likewise, if you let even a little sin into your heart, it's going to contaminate your prayers. Your Christian life will not achieve its full potential. - Bill Hybels

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**Six "Prayer Busters"** - The most common cause of unanswered prayer is **prayerlessness**. As James 4:2 says, "You do not have, because you do not ask God."...The second reason for unanswered prayer is the most obvious. **Unconfessed sin** cuts off our communication with the Father. As Isaiah 59:2 says, "Your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."...The third prayer buster is **unresolved relational conflict**. Matthew 5:23-24 says, "If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift."...**Selfishness** is the fourth prayer buster. "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures" (James 4:3)....The fifth prayer buster is **uncaring attitudes**. Proverbs 21:13NRSV says, "If you close your ear to the cry of the poor, you will cry out and not be heard"....**Inadequate faith** is the final prayer buster. "If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given to you. But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord" (James 1:5-8NRSV). - Bill Hybels

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**When Our Pray Life Gets Cold** - One reason we stop praying or let our prayer lives fade is that we are too comfortable. It's human nature. When the storms rage and the winds howl and the waves break over the deck, everyone on board is praying like crazy. When the dreaded phone call comes in the middle of the night, when the doctor says it doesn't look good, or when your spouse says someone else is looking mighty attractive, prayer is almost second nature. In difficult situations like those, almost everyone prays—fervently, repeatedly, hopefully, even desperately. And then the storm passes, the seas settle down, the wind diminishes, and God proves himself faithful yet one more time. A big part of our motivation to pray subsides, and the great prayer fade begins....(Another reason our prayer lives fizzle is the tendency we have of...) Forgetting God..."And again and again they tempted God, And pained the Holy One of Israel. They did not remember His power, The day when He redeemed them from the adversary." (Ps 78:41,42, cp Ps 106:7, 13)....If we find we are praying less and less, it may be because we have never made prayer a fixed part of our everyday routine....The time of day we choose for prayer doesn't matter, so long as we keep it faithfully. Prayer needs to be part of the rhythm of our daily lives....Any place can become a place of prayer. What is important, if we want to remember to pray, is to establish a particular place and a particular time for our meetings with the Lord....old-fashioned sin is plenty strong enough to create an ever-widening gap in our relationship with God. The wider the gap, the less likely we are to pray. And the less we pray, the wider the gap becomes....The good news is that you can come back into fellowship with the Father right now. You can say a prayer of repentance like this: "God, I'm sorry for\_\_\_\_. Please forgive me. I want to turn from this, and I want to come back into relationship with you." When you pray that prayer, God will restore you. You'll pray a different kind of prayer after that. You'll be back on track again. - Bill Hybels

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**The Korean Church** - In 1978 I traveled to Korea to visit the world's largest church. At that time every Friday night from eight o'clock until seven o'clock Saturday morning, ten thousand people gathered in an auditorium and prayed that God would take the church's ministry by storm. Every Saturday several thousand people went to a mountain they call Prayer Mountain, sat in its many caves and prayed that God would work in a supernatural way. In 1978 the church had 100,000 members. Some people might have thought it was large enough, but its members had a vision. Ten prayer-filled years later, the church membership was up to 450,000. Today there are over one million members. When we work, we work; when we pray, God works! I've heard it said that if you bring a thimble to God, he'll fill it. If you bring a bucket to God, he'll fill that. If you bring a five-hundred-gallon barrel to God, he'll fill that too. Are you expecting God to fill your needs? Are you asking him to do so—regularly, earnestly, persistently? I've heard it said that if you bring a thimble to God, he'll fill it. If you bring a bucket to God, he'll fill that. If you bring a five-hundred-gallon barrel to God, he'll fill that too. Are you expecting God to fill your needs? Are you asking him to do so—regularly, earnestly, persistently? - Bill Hybels

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**"I Kept On Praying"** - Some years ago we had a baptism Sunday where many people publicly affirmed their decision to follow Christ. I thought my heart would explode for joy. Afterward, in the stairwell, I bumped into a woman who was crying. I couldn't understand how anyone could weep after such a celebration, so I stopped and asked her if she was all right. "No," she said, "I'm struggling. My mother was baptized today." This is a problem? I thought. "I prayed for her every day for twenty years," the woman said, and then she started crying again. "You're going to have to help me understand this," I said. "I'm crying," the woman replied, "because I came so close—do close—to giving up on her. I mean, after five years I said, Who needs this? God isn't listening. After ten years I said, Why am I wasting my breath? After fifteen years I said, This is absurd. After nineteen years I said, I'm just a fool. But I guess I just kept praying, even though my faith was weak. I kept praying, and she gave her life to Christ, and she was baptized today." The woman paused and looked me in the eye. "I will never doubt the power of prayer again," she said. - Bill Hybels

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**Praying on "Automatic Pilot"** - God doesn't want us to pile up impressive phrases. He doesn't want us to use words without thinking about their meaning. He wants us simply to talk to him as to a friend or father—authentically, reverently, personally, earnestly. I heard a man do this once when I least expected it. I attended a conference at which a number of high-level Christian leaders were present. The conversation was intense; I had to strain to keep up with the theological and philosophical issues being discussed. Lunchtime came, and we all gathered at a nearby restaurant, the Hole in the Wall. A seminary professor was asked to pray. As we bowed our heads I thought, This prayer is going to sound like theology class.

The theologian began to pray. "Father," he said, "I love being alive today. And I love sitting down with brothers in the Hole in the Wall, eating good food and talking about kingdom business. I know you're at this table, and I'm glad. I want to tell you in front of these brothers that I love you, and I'll do anything for you that you ask me to do." He went on talking like that for another minute or two. When he said "Amen," I thought, I have some growing to do. His sincere prayer showed me how often I pray on automatic pilot. But God isn't interested in stock phrases. - Bill Hybels

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**Prayer A Lingering Fragrance** - [Amy Carmichael](#) writes:

I did not fully understand the Divine simplicity of the words "And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand," till I saw incense used, as it has been from time immemorial in India, in simple household ways. You throw a few grains on burning charcoal and a column of smoke rises straight up. Anyone coming into the room notices the fragrance long after the smoke has disappeared. It fills the room, floats out through the open doors and windows, and for an hour or so, if the air be still, you are still aware of it about the house. I never watch that white column of smoke, laden with its own peculiar fragrance, without a grateful thought of that of which it is the figure. There is nothing in our prayers that would cause them to rise. But they are cleansed and perfumed and lifted. It is all of Him who ever liveth to make intercession for us.

—[Amy Carmichael](#) in [Gold by Moonlight](#)

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**Putting in the Plug** - C. W. Slemming explains the **altar of incense** in the Tabernacle with a contemporary analogy:

I have sometimes thought of this little piece of furniture standing before the veil as an electric plug such as we use to tap the electric power laid behind our walls. Behind the veil of the tabernacle was the Shekinah Glory of the presence of the Lord, and behind the veil of the sky are all the resources of the great triune God. By putting in the plug of prayer with the hand of faith, we are able to tap those resources and find that "prayer changes things." Great things happen at the hour of prayer when incense is being offered. - [Made According to Pattern](#)

**Patrick Fairbairn** ([Typology of Scripture](#)) explains what the altar of incense teaches us about prayer and sacrifice:



That this altar, from its very position, stood in a close relation to the mercy-seat or propitiatory on the one hand, and by the live coals that ever burned in its golden vials, stood in an equally close relation to the altar of burnt-offering on the other, tells us, that all acceptable prayer must have its foundation in the manifested grace of a redeeming God,—must draw its breath of life, in a manner, from that work of propitiation which He has in His own person accomplished for the sinful.

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**The Value of Praying for Our Missionaries** - [J. O. Fraser was a missionary](#) to China in the early 1900s. He credited the conversion of hundreds of Lisu families to the prayers of his very earnest little prayer group back in England. He said,

Christians at home can do *as much* for foreign missions as those actually on the field. It will only be known on the Last Day how much has been accomplished in missionary work by the *prayers of earnest believers at home*. (cp 1Thes 2:19,10-[note](#))

**Related Resources:**

- [Prayer: The Work of Missions](#);
  - Film on [The Life of James O Fraser and the Lisu People - Breakthrough: the Docudrama - Imdb review](#)
  - [Lisu People - Joshua Project](#) - 45% of 911,000 are evangelical Christians (June, 2016)!
  - [Lisu People - OMF Article](#)
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**The Heating Plant** - Five young college students were spending a Sunday in London, so they went to hear the famed [C H Spurgeon](#) preach. While waiting for the doors to open, the students were greeted by a man who asked, "Gentlemen, let me show you around. Would you like to see the heating plant of this church?" They were not particularly interested, for it was a hot day in July. But they didn't want to offend the stranger, so they consented. The young men were taken down a stairway, a door was quietly opened, and their guide whispered, "This is our heating plant." Surprised, the students saw 700 people bowed in prayer, seeking a blessing on the service that was soon to begin in the auditorium above. Softly closing the door, the gentleman then introduced himself. It was none other than [Charles Haddon Spurgeon](#). —[Our Daily Bread](#)

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**Prayer and Health** - A group of physicians used in double-blind "drug" studies of the efficacy of Christian prayer on healing. Patients from the San Francisco General Medical Center were randomly divided into placebo and test groups. Patients in the test group were prayed for by Christians; the placebo group received no prayer. There were no statistical differences between the placebo and the prayer groups *before* prayer was initiated. The results demonstrated that patients who were prayed for suffered "less congestive heart failure, required less diuretic and antibiotic therapy, had fewer episodes of pneumonia, had fewer cardiac arrests, and were less frequently intubated and ventilated." —Rich Deem, [GodandScience.org](#)

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**Our Great Need** - Many Christians would confess that the major failure in their life is not learning to pray well. That's because there is no sin in life that proper prayer could not help you avoid. There is no need in life that proper prayer could not supply. Nothing lies outside the reach of prayer except that which lies outside the will of God. **What fools we are if we do not learn to pray!** So there is not a more important subject in all the world for a Christian—not only to learn how to pray, but how to pray with power. Prayer can do anything God can do, and God can do anything! - [Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Prayerlessness and Pride** - We tend to think we are capable of handling it ourselves. We think we can go through the day and overcome the devil in our own strength. Prayerlessness and pride always go together. But it's time to pray for protection—to get off the defensive and go on the offensive.- [Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Pray for the Fog to Lift**- George Mueller, who raised millions of dollars to feed orphans without ever asking for a dime, was once on board a sailing ship, bound for an appointment in Newfoundland. Unexpectedly, the ship stopped in the ocean. Mueller asked the captain why. He answered, "We can't move because of the fog." Mueller said, "Well, I must not miss my speaking engagement. Let's go to the chartroom and pray that God will lift the fog." The captain went along to humor him. He saw Mueller drop to his knees and ask God for a miracle. When he rose to his feet, the fog had evaporated. Now, that's a gift some people have. Not everyone, but some of us (Mt 15:28). - [Adrian Rogers](#)

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In Hebrew, intercessory prayer means to think things through with God. God wants your thoughts. That's a mystery, but it's taught in Old and New Testaments.

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**State of the State Prayer** - A Wichita pastor's opening prayer angered legislators in the Kansas House of Representatives. "We

confess we have ridiculed the absolute truth of Your Word and called it moral pluralism," prayed Joe Wright of Central Christian Church, the guest chaplain Jan. 23. "We have worshipped other gods and called it multiculturalism. We have endorsed perversion and called it an alternative lifestyle. We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery. We have neglected the needy and called it self-preservation. We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare. We have killed our unborn and called it choice. We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable. We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self-esteem." As one legislator walked out and another sat down, Wright continued. "We have abused power and called it political savvy. We have coveted our neighbors' possessions and called it ambition. We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression. We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment." He closed with a plea for God's forgiveness, blessing, and wisdom. - 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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**The Window of Heaven is Open** - When Peter the Great saw that Russia was backward in education and technology, he turned to western Europe. He "opened a window to the west." For very different reasons, when the captive Daniel prayed, he opened a window to the west. Certainly it makes no difference whether we pray with windows open or closed, whether we face east or west. It does make a difference whether or not we pray in faith. In that sense, we must open a window heavenward. **See commentary on Daniel's "Obedient Disobedience" in Prayer**

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**What's the Good of Prayer?** (Aka "The Purpose of Prayer") - Lord, teach us to pray. Luke 11:1. It is not part of the life of a natural man to pray. We hear it said that a man will suffer in his life if he does not pray, but I question it. What will suffer is the life of the Son of God in him, which is nourished, not by food, but by prayer. When a man is born from above, the life of the Son of God is born in him, and he can either starve that life or nourish it. **Prayer is the way the life of God is nourished** Our ordinary views of prayer are not found in the New Testament.

**We look upon prayer as a means of getting things for ourselves;  
The Bible's idea of prayer is that we may get to know God Himself.**

"Ask and ye shall receive." (John 16:24) We grouse (complain) before God, we are apologetic or apathetic, but we ask very few things. Yet what a splendid audacity (boldness) a child has! Our Lord says—"Except ye become as little children." (Luke 18:3) Ask, and God will do. Give Jesus Christ a chance, give Him elbow room, and no man will ever do this unless he is at his wits' end. When a man is at his wits' end it is not a cowardly thing to pray, it is the only way he can get into touch with Reality (God). Be yourself before God and present your problems, especially those things you know you have come to your wits' end over.

**As long as you are self-sufficient, you do not need to ask God for anything.**

**It is not so true that "prayer changes things" as that prayer changes me and I change things.**

God has so constituted things that prayer on the basis of Redemption alters the way in which a man looks at things. Prayer is not a question of altering things externally, but of working wonders in a man's disposition, in his inner nature. - Oswald Chambers - My Utmost for His Highest

Some people pray for a bushel,  
then carry a pint cup.

**Related Resource:** [Why Pray? See Article from Christian Answers](#)

- Whenever the insistence is on the point that God answers prayer, we are off the track. The meaning of prayer is that we get hold of God, not of the answer. - OC
- One of the reasons for our sense of futility in prayer is that we have lost our power to imagine. We can no longer even imagine putting ourselves deliberately before God. It is actually more important to be broken bread and poured-out wine in the area of intercession than in our personal contact with others. The power of imagination is what God gives a saint so that he can go beyond himself and be firmly placed into relationships he never before experienced. - OC
- Think of the last thing you prayed about—were you devoted to your desire or to God? Determined to get some gift of the Spirit or to get at God? "Your Heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him." (Mt 6:8) The point of asking is that you may get to know God better. "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." (Ps 37:4) Keep praying in order to get a perfect understanding of God Himself. - OC

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**WOULD GOD CALL YOU "MY INTERCESSOR?"**

**Holiness or Hardness Toward God?** - He...wondered that there was no intercessor...(Isaiah 59:16) - The reason many of us stop praying and become hard toward God is that we only have an emotional interest in prayer. It sounds good to say that we pray, and we read books on prayer which tell us that prayer is beneficial— that our minds are quieted and our souls are uplifted when we pray. But Isaiah implied in this verse that God is amazed at such thoughts about prayer.

Worship and [intercession](#) must go together; one is impossible without the other. Intercession means raising ourselves up to the point of getting the mind of Christ regarding the person for whom we are praying (see Php 2:5). Instead of worshiping God, we recite speeches to God about how prayer is supposed to work. Are we worshiping God or disputing Him when we say, “But God, I just don’t see how you are going to do this”? This is a sure sign that we are not worshiping. When we lose sight of God, we become hard and dogmatic. We throw our petitions at His throne and dictate to Him what we want Him to do. We don’t worship God, nor do we seek to conform our minds to the mind of Christ. And if we are hard toward God, we will become hard toward other people.

Are we worshiping God in a way that will raise us up to where we can take hold of Him, having such intimate contact with Him that we know His mind about the ones for whom we pray? Are we living in a holy relationship with God, or have we become hard and dogmatic?

Do you find yourself thinking that there is no one interceding properly? Then be that person yourself. **Be a person who worships God and lives in a holy relationship with Him. Get involved in the real work of intercession, remembering that it truly is work— work that demands all your energy, but work which has no hidden pitfalls.** Preaching the gospel has its share of pitfalls, but intercessory prayer has none whatsoever. - [Oswald Chambers - My Utmost for His Highest](#)

- Can Jesus Christ see the agony of His soul in us? He can’t unless we are so closely identified with Him that we have His view concerning the people for whom we pray. May we learn to intercede so wholeheartedly that Jesus Christ will be completely and overwhelmingly satisfied with us as intercessors. - [Oswald Chambers](#)
- It is impossible for us to have living and vital [intercession](#) unless we are perfectly and completely sure of God. And the greatest destroyer of that confident relationship to God, so necessary for intercession, is our own personal sympathy and preconceived bias. Identification with God is the key to intercession, and whenever we stop being identified with Him it is because of our sympathy with others, not because of sin. It is not likely that sin will interfere with our intercessory relationship with God, but sympathy will. It is sympathy with ourselves or with others that makes us say, “I will not allow that thing to happen.” And instantly we are out of that vital connection with God. Vital intercession leaves you with neither the time nor the inclination to pray for your own “sad and pitiful self.” You do not have to struggle to keep thoughts of yourself out, because they are not even there to be kept out of your thinking. You are completely and entirely identified with God’s interests and concerns in other lives. God gives us discernment in the lives of others to call us to intercession for them, never so that we may find fault with them.- [Oswald Chambers](#)
- Quit praying about yourself and be spent for others as the bondsman of Jesus. That is the meaning of being made broken bread and poured-out wine in reality. - [Oswald Chambers](#)
- Your part in intercessory prayer is not to agonize over how to intercede, but to use the everyday circumstances and people God puts around you by His [providence](#) to bring them before His throne, and to allow the Spirit in you the opportunity to intercede for them. In this way God is going to touch the whole world with His saints. - [Oswald Chambers](#)

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**Thinking of Prayer as Jesus Taught** - Pray without ceasing... —1 Thessalonians 5:17

Our thinking about prayer, whether right or wrong, is based on our own mental conception of it. The correct concept is to think of prayer as the breath in our lungs and the blood from our hearts. Our blood flows and our breathing continues “without ceasing”; we are not even conscious of it, but it never stops. And we are not always conscious of Jesus keeping us in perfect oneness with God, but if we are obeying Him, He always is.

**Prayer is not an exercise,  
it is the life of the saint.**

Beware of anything that stops the offering up of prayer. “Pray without ceasing...” — maintain the childlike habit of offering up prayer in your heart to God all the time.

**Jesus never mentioned unanswered prayer.**

**He had the unlimited certainty of knowing that prayer is always answered.**

Do we have through the Spirit of God that inexpressible certainty that Jesus had about prayer, or do we think of the times when it seemed that God did not answer our prayer? Jesus said, "...everyone who asks receives..." (Matthew 7:8) Yet we say, "*But...*, *but...*"

**God answers prayer in the best way—  
not just sometimes, but every time.**

However, the evidence of the answer in the area we want it may not always immediately follow.

**Do we expect God to answer prayer?**

The danger we have is that we want to water down what Jesus said to make it mean something that aligns with our common sense. But if it were only common sense, what He said would not even be worthwhile. The things Jesus taught about prayer are supernatural truths He reveals to us. [Oswald Chambers - My Utmost for His Highest](#)

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**The Key to the Master's Orders** - Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. (Matthew 9:38) The key to the missionary's difficult task is in the hand of God, and that key is prayer, not work— that is, not work as the word is commonly used today, which often results in the shifting of our focus away from God. The key to the missionary's difficult task is also not the key of common sense, nor is it the key of medicine, civilization, education, or even evangelization. The key is in following the Master's orders— the key is prayer. "Pray the Lord of the harvest..." In the natural realm, prayer is not practical but absurd. We have to realize that prayer is foolish from the commonsense point of view. From Jesus Christ's perspective, there are no nations, but only the world. How many of us pray without regard to the persons, but with regard to only one Person— Jesus Christ? He owns the harvest that is produced through distress and through conviction of sin. This is the harvest for which we have to pray that laborers be sent out to reap. We stay busy at work, while people all around us are ripe and ready to be harvested; we do not reap even one of them, but simply waste our Lord's time in over-energized activities and programs. Suppose a crisis were to come into your father's or your brother's life— are you there as a laborer to reap the harvest for Jesus Christ? Is your response, "Oh, but I have a special work to do!" No Christian has a special work to do. A Christian is called to be Jesus Christ's own, "a servant [who] is not greater than his master" (John 13:16), and someone who does not dictate to Jesus Christ what he intends to do. Our Lord calls us to no special work — He calls us to Himself. "Pray the Lord of the harvest," and He will engineer your circumstances to send you out as His laborer. [Oswald Chambers - My Utmost for His Highest](#)

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**Repentance** - The old Puritans used to pray for **the gift of tears.** If ever you cease to know the virtue of repentance, you are in darkness. Examine yourself and see if you have forgotten how to be sorry. ([Repentance](#))

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**The Key of the Greater Work** - ...I say to you, he who believes in Me,...greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. (John 14:12)

**Prayer does not equip us for greater works—  
prayer is the greater work.**

Yet we think of prayer as some commonsense exercise of our higher powers that simply prepares us for God's work. In the teachings of Jesus Christ, prayer is the working of the miracle of redemption in me, which produces the miracle of redemption in others, through the power of God. The way fruit remains firm is through prayer, but remember that it is prayer based on the agony of Christ in redemption, not on my own agony. We must go to God as His child, because only a child gets his prayers answered; a "wise" man does not (see Matthew 11:25).

Prayer is the battle, and it makes no difference where you are. However God may engineer your circumstances, your duty is to pray. Never allow yourself this thought, "I am of no use where I am," because you certainly cannot be used where you have not yet been placed. Wherever God has placed you and whatever your circumstances, you should pray, continually offering up prayers to Him. And He promises, "Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do..." (John 14:13). Yet we refuse to pray unless it thrills or excites us, which is the most intense form of spiritual selfishness. We must learn to work according to God's direction, and He says to pray. "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (Matthew 9:38).

There is nothing thrilling about a laboring person's work, but it is the laboring person who makes the ideas of the genius possible. And it is the laboring saint who makes the ideas of his Master possible. When you labor at prayer, from God's perspective there are always results.

**What an astonishment it will be to see, once the veil is finally lifted,  
all the souls that have been reaped by you,  
simply because you have been in the habit of taking your orders from Jesus Christ.**

[Oswald Chambers - My Utmost for His Highest](#)

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**Wrestling Before God** - Take up the whole armor of God...praying always... (Ephesians 6:13,18) - You must learn to wrestle against the things that hinder your communication with God, and wrestle in prayer for other people; but to wrestle with God in prayer is unscriptural. If you ever do wrestle with God, you will be crippled for the rest of your life. If you grab hold of God and wrestle with Him, as Jacob did, simply because He is working in a way that doesn't meet with your approval, you force Him to put you out of joint (see Genesis 32:24-25). Don't become a cripple by wrestling with the ways of God, but be someone who wrestles before God with the things of this world, because "we are more than conquerors through Him..." (Romans 8:37). Wrestling before God makes an impact in His kingdom. If you ask me to pray for you, and I am not complete in Christ, my prayer accomplishes nothing. But if I am complete in Christ, my prayer brings victory all the time. Prayer is effective only when there is completeness—"take up the whole armor of God..."

Always make a distinction between God's perfect will and His permissive will, which He uses to accomplish His divine purpose for our lives. God's perfect will is unchangeable. It is with His permissive will, or the various things that He allows into our lives, that we must wrestle before Him. It is our reaction to these things allowed by His permissive will that enables us to come to the point of seeing His perfect will for us. "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God..." (Romans 8:28)—to those who remain true to God's perfect will—His calling in Christ Jesus. God's permissive will is the testing He uses to reveal His true sons and daughters. We should not be spineless and automatically say, "Yes, it is the Lord's will." We don't have to fight or wrestle with God, but we must wrestle before God with things. Beware of lazily giving up. Instead, put up a glorious fight and you will find yourself empowered with His strength. - [Oswald Chambers - My Utmost for His Highest](#)

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**Praying to God in Secret** - When you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place... (Matthew 6:6) The primary thought in the area of religion is—keep your eyes on God, not on people. Your motivation should not be the desire to be known as a praying person. Find an inner room in which to pray where no one even knows you are praying, shut the door, and talk to God in secret. Have no motivation other than to know your Father in heaven. It is impossible to carry on your life as a disciple without definite times of secret prayer.

"When you pray, do not use vain repetitions..." (Matthew 6:7). God does not hear us because we pray earnestly—He hears us solely on the basis of redemption. God is never impressed by our earnestness.

**Prayer is not simply getting things from God—  
that is only the most elementary kind of prayer.**

**Prayer is coming into perfect fellowship and oneness with God.**

If the Son of God has been formed in us through regeneration (see Galatians 4:19), then He will continue to press on beyond our common sense and will change our attitude about the things for which we pray.

"Everyone who asks receives..." (Matthew 7:8). We pray religious nonsense without even involving our will, and then we say that God did not answer—but in reality we have never asked for anything. Jesus said, "...you will ask what you desire..." (John 15:7). Asking means that our will must be involved. Whenever Jesus talked about prayer, He spoke with wonderful childlike simplicity. Then we respond with our critical attitude, saying, "Yes, but even Jesus said that we must ask." But remember that we have to ask things of God that are in keeping with the God whom Jesus Christ revealed. - [Oswald Chambers - My Utmost for His Highest](#)

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**Have You Come to "When" Yet?** - The Lord restored Job's losses when he prayed for his friends. —Job 42:10

A pitiful, sickly, and self-centered kind of prayer and a determined effort and selfish desire to be right with God are never found in the New Testament. The fact that I am trying to be right with God is actually a sign that I am rebelling against the atonement by the Cross of Christ. I pray, "Lord, I will purify my heart if You will answer my prayer—I will walk rightly before You if You will help me." But I *cannot* make myself right with God; I *cannot* make my life perfect. I can only be right with God if I accept the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ as an absolute gift. Am I humble enough to accept it? I have to surrender all my rights and demands, and cease from every self-effort. I must leave myself completely alone in His hands, and then I can begin to pour my life out in the priestly work of intercession. There is a great deal of prayer that comes from actual disbelief in the atonement. Jesus is not just beginning to save us—He has already saved us completely. It is an accomplished fact, and it is an insult to Him for us to ask Him to do what He has already done.

If you are not now receiving the “hundredfold” which Jesus promised (see Matthew 19:29), and not getting insight into God’s Word, then start praying for your friends— enter into the ministry of the inner life. “The Lord restored Job’s losses *when he prayed for his friends.*” As a saved soul, the real business of your life is intercessory prayer. Whatever circumstances God may place you in, always pray immediately that His atonement may be recognized and as fully understood in the lives of others as it has been in yours. Pray for your friends *now*, and pray for those with whom you come in contact *now*. - [Oswald Chambers - My Utmost for His Highest](#)

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**Prayer—Battle in “The Secret Place”** - When you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. (Matthew 6:6)

Jesus did not say, “Dream about your Father who is in the secret place,” but He said, “...pray to your Father who is in the secret place....” **Prayer is an effort of the will** (Ed: Energized by the Spirit)

**After we have entered our secret place and shut the door,  
the most difficult thing to do is to pray.**

**We cannot seem to get our minds into good working order,  
and the first thing we have to fight is wandering thoughts.**

The great battle in private prayer is overcoming this problem of our idle and wandering thinking. We have to learn to discipline our minds and concentrate on willful, deliberate prayer. We must have a specially selected place for prayer, but once we get there this plague of wandering thoughts begins, as we begin to think to ourselves, “This needs to be done, and I have to do that today.” Jesus says to “shut your door.” Having a secret stillness before God means deliberately shutting the door on our emotions and remembering Him. God is in secret, and He sees us from “the secret place”— He does not see us as other people do, or as we see ourselves. When we truly live in “the secret place,” it becomes impossible for us to doubt God. We become more sure of Him than of anyone or anything else. Enter into “the secret place,” and you will find that God was right in the middle of your everyday circumstances all the time.

**Get into the habit of dealing with God about everything.**

Unless you learn to open the door of your life completely and let God in from your first waking moment of each new day, you will be working on the wrong level throughout the day. But if you will swing the door of your life fully open and “pray to your Father who is in the secret place,” every public thing in your life will be marked with the lasting imprint of the presence of God. - [Oswald Chambers - My Utmost for His Highest](#)

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**Your Ministry of Prayer Will Impact Souls for Eternity** - I have a book in my study written in 1914 by a man named John Faris. He said that several years earlier in Springfield, Illinois, a Bible teacher suggested to a group of men,

"When you reach home this evening write down the names of all the persons in Springfield whom you would like to have saved, and then pray for them by name, three times a day, that they may be saved. Then make your best possible efforts to introduce those persons to turn to God for salvation."

There lived in Springfield at that time an invalid woman who, physically, was almost absolutely helpless. She had been bedridden for 17 years. She had always prayed in a general way for the salvation of lost souls, but when her family shared with her this suggestion, she said, "Here is something I can do." There was an adjustable writing table at the side of her bed. She wrote down the names of 57 acquaintances. She prayed for each of these by name, three times a day. She wrote them letters telling them of her interest in them. She also wrote to Christian friends and urged them to speak to these persons about their soul’s welfare. She had unquestioning faith in God. In time, every one of those 57 people came to faith in Jesus Christ. That’s power. James said, "The prayers of a righteous person are powerful and effective." - From Rob Morgan's sermon on Ephesians 1:18-23: The Working of His Mighty Strength

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[Jerry Bridges](#) on **prayer** - Prayer is the most tangible expression of trust in God....**The great antidote to anxiety is to come to God in prayer.** We are to pray about everything. Nothing is too big for Him to handle, and nothing is too small to escape His attention. We ought to be as earnest and frequent in our prayers of thanksgiving when the cupboard is full as we would be in our prayers of supplication if the cupboards were bare....**Prayer assumes the sovereignty of God.** If God is not sovereign, we have no assurance that He is able to answer our prayers. Our prayers would become nothing more than wishes. But while God's sovereignty, along with his wisdom and love, is the foundation of our trust in Him, prayer is the expression of that trust....**Prayer is the most tangible expression of trust in God.** If we would trust God for our persecuted brothers and sisters in other countries, we must be diligent in prayer for their rulers. If we would trust God when decisions of government in our own country go against our best interests, we must pray for His working in the hearts of those officials and legislators who make those decisions. The truth that the

king's heart is in the hand of the Lord is meant to be a stimulus to prayer, not a stimulus to a fatalistic attitude.

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**A Prayer for America** - "Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our teachers and our country." This was the voluntary prayer the U.S. Supreme Court found violated the establishment clause of the Constitution in 1962 in [Engel vs. Vitale](#). It reasoned that if this prayer was allowed, it would be a step toward establishment of a state-sponsored religion. The absurdity of this reasoning is self-evident. The end of the Declaration of Independence provides: "with a firm reliance of the protection of divine [providence](#)..." At the opening of each day's session of the Supreme Court the crier states: "God save the United States and this honorable court." In 1952 the U.S. Supreme Court stated in [Zorach vs. Clauson](#): "We are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a supreme being." Carved above the entrance to the Supreme Court is: "In God we Trust." There are some of us within the legal system who desperately oppose the Supreme Court on this point and support those who courageously seek to change the law. Our children deserve better than the current moral anarchy. - [6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths](#).

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**Praying over Everything** - [Purpose in Prayer](#), [E. M. Bounds](#) quotes these words from former college professor and Confederate soldier, [General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson](#):

"I have so fixed the habit of prayer in my mind that I never raise a glass of water to my lips without asking God's blessing, never seal a letter without putting a word of prayer under the seal, never take a letter from the post without a brief sending of my thoughts heavenward, never change my classes in the lecture-room without a minute's petition for the cadets who go out and for those who come in."

[6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths](#).

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According to a poll on prayer for Newsweek (3/31/97), the following percentage said:

They ask for health or success for a child or family member when they pray—82%

They ask for strength to overcome a personal weakness—75%

They never ask for financial or career success—36%

God answers prayers—87%

God doesn't answer prayers—51%

They believe God does not play favorites in answering prayers—82%

God answers prayers for healing someone with an incurable disease—79%

Prayers for help in finding a job are answered—73%

They believe that when God doesn't answer their prayers, it means it wasn't God's will to answer—54%

They don't turn away from God when prayers go unanswered—82%

[6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths](#).

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**The Soul's Home** - Prayer is not a stratagem for occasional use, a refuge to resort to now and then. It is rather like an established residence for the innermost self. All things have a home; the bird has a nest, the fox has a hole, the bee has a hive. A soul without prayer is a soul without a home. Weary, sobbing, the soul, after roaming through a world festered with aimlessness, falsehoods, and absurdities, seeks a moment in which to gather up its scattered life, in which to divest itself of enforced pretensions and camouflage, in which to simplify complexities, in which to call for help without being a coward. Such a home is prayer. - Abraham Joshua Heschel

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**Why Is the Church Not Impacting America in the 21st Century?** - A survey indicates that the average layman spends four minutes a day in prayer; the average pastor seven minutes, and only one percent of husbands and wives have any meaningful prayer together" (The Church Around the World, Tyndale House Publishers, Feb. 1981). Is it any wonder that the church of Jesus Christ is fainting and failing? (cp Lk 18:1)

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**Make An Appointment with God** - In [Hungry for God: Practical Help in Personal Prayer](#), Ralph Martin tells of a real estate man

he knows who gets up early in the morning to pray. Another friend, an aerospace engineer prays on his lunch hour, and a third man, a production manager of a computing firm, prays during the quiet hours of the evening. The point is that it is essential to set a definite time for prayer. Martin notes that some people don't like scheduling prayer because they say it's not spontaneous. But he says that other activities that are important to us are not left to chance. They pass from the spontaneous and haphazard to the scheduled and committed. If we don't have a set time for prayer we probably won't pray.

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**All Prayer to the One With All Power** - A number of years ago a team of excavators unearthed a round metal medallion inscribed in an ancient language. It read: "To the bearer of this belongs all the power and privileges of the king of Babylon." At first thought, such gifts are almost incomprehensible. But they become insignificant when compared to the power and privileges offered through prayer by the King of kings.

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**What Happens When God's People Pray** - When John Livingstone preached at Shotts in days past many people were amazed, for through one sermon five hundred souls publicly acknowledged Christ as Savior. When they inquired into the matter they found that the previous night several hundred people had prayed all night that God's Spirit would rest upon the preacher in such power that a backslidden church and community would find out that God still had power to quicken believers and save lost souls. The great revival at Yale University came after many of the students spent weeks of prayer to God that Yale might be shaken with a heaven-sent revival.

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After drought had parched the western plains and experts predicted no end in sight, Lt. Gov. George Nigh of Oklahoma proclaimed a statewide day of prayer for rain to be observed by churches and individuals across the state on Sunday, February 29, 1976. On March 2 and 3, up to 11/2 inches of rain fell on the drought area.... A day of thanksgiving was held the following Sunday ..."

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**Prayer and Revival on the Isle of Lewis** - Two elderly women on the Isle of Lewis had a vision during the night that God would move in revival blessing and that the church would once again be crowded with young people. Stirred in spirit, one of the sisters called for the parish minister and asked him to call his officers to prayer. They agreed to meet twice a week in a certain village while the two sisters met for prayer from 10:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. Such prayer meetings continued for three months. One night a deacon rose to his feet and said in [Gaelic](#): "Brethren, it seems to me so much humbug to be praying as we are praying, and waiting as we are waiting, if we are not rightly related to God." He then opened his Bible and read Psalm 24:3-5, and then began to pray, asking the questions, "God, are my hands clean? is my heart pure?" At that moment the power of God swept into the barn (and the community) so that the next day no one went to work, but rather met in houses and in the church, gripped by the fear of God. The movement spread over the whole island and hundreds were swept into the kingdom of God.

**Related Resource:** [Watch/listen to Duncan Campbell's version](#) of this miraculous answer to prayer. Here is a note associated with the presentation:

In a small cottage by the roadside in the village of Barvas lived two elderly women, Peggy and Christine Smith. They were eighty-four and eighty-two years old. Peggy was blind and her sister almost bent double with arthritis. Unable to attend public worship, their humble cottage became a sanctuary where they met with God. To them came the promise: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground," they pleaded this day and night in prayer. One night Peggy had a revelation, revival was coming and the church of her fathers would be crowded again with young people!

[Transcript Summary of the Scottish Hebrides Revival of 1949](#)- note the emphasis on prayer

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**The Secret of Successful Church Plants** - [Dr. Gene Getz](#) has helped start a number of churches in the Dallas metroplex. Because of unusual success in these churches, many pastors, missionaries and other church leaders have visited them in order to learn their secret. But Dr. Getz is quick to affirm that it is not a secret formula that leads to success; rather, it is a commitment to prayer. "As a pastor," writes Dr. Getz, "I have determined, by God's grace, to always make prayer a priority-both in the church where I serve and in my own life."

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**The Power of Prayerful Praise** - An Anglican minister in Great Britain gave testimony to this principle of the presence of God made real through praise in times of agony. He was appointed to a church in the Midlands of England where he found nothing but defeat and distrust among the handful of people who constituted his congregation. In his own words, "the situation was deadly." The effect of all this upon his wife and himself was so traumatic that for days and weeks he went through agony. This led them both to search the Scriptures to find a solution. And the Spirit of God taught them something of praiseful praying. As the truth dawned upon them they ceased to pray for the situation and began to praise, and immediately something happened which utterly transformed their personalities. It was revival. The supernatural change was so conspicuous and contagious that folk started getting convened in the



most unexpected ways, and in a matter of weeks this old, historic church was filled to capacity. Miracles continued as hundreds of young and old were gloriously saved; and at the time of speaking they were holding daily meetings morning, noon, and night. To quote him: "Everybody was singing and praising the Lord. I have never known an experience quite like it!" - Quoted by Stephen Olford in Expository Preaching Outlines, Volume 5.

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**Sugar Cube Prayers** - Imagine a set of scales with a half kilo weight (1.1 pounds) on one side and a pile of sugar cubes being added to the other. The first cubes added seem to make no difference at all in shifting the weight. Neither do the next ten cubes...or the next ten. However, by the time one hundred cubes have been added, a point is reached where the addition of one more sugar cube starts to tip the scales. The question is which sugar cubes played the most important part in shifting the weight? Was it the first ones placed on the scales or the ones that finally tipped the weight? The answer of course is that all were equally important. The ones that tipped the scales would never have done so had the first ones not played their part. When we pray, doesn't it seem sometimes as if our prayers make no difference at all while at other times we see immediate answers? Assuming we are praying in line with God's will, the prayers that seem to make no difference are just as essential as those that bring immediate answers. There seems to be a certain "weight" of intercession that God requires to answer each prayer, whether it is removing a stronghold of the enemy, releasing funds or opening new doors for ministry. The sugar cube illustration can also be applied to evangelizing an unreached people group. Was it the playing of a [Gospel Recordings](#) cassette or CD that first drew people to Christ? Was it the showing of the Jesus film? Was it the work of a missionary or church planting team? Which was the most important component? Does it seem sometimes that our recordings make no discernible difference to the hearers while at other times they are the means that God uses to bring about the salvation of souls? If the efforts of the workers who were the first to engage the people group did not seem to bring about any results, they should not be discouraged. They are sowing where someone else will eventually reap. And those who reap and see results can be grateful for the "sugar cubes" that faithfully sowed without which there would be no reaping. So let us ask God to make us faithful 'sugar cubes' wherever we fit in His timeline-willing to pray and willing to work even without seeing visible results. And one more thing we can learn from the sugar cubes...it wouldn't do us any harm to be a little sweet either! - [Colin Stott](#)

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**Encompass the Problem with Prayer** - We must learn to encompass our problem with prayer. This is what the Israelites did. For six days they silently encircled the city one time, and on the seventh day they encircled the city seven times (Joshua 6:1-16). What were they doing as they silently walked around in this large circle? I'm sure that many of them, the spiritually-minded among them, were praying. They were literally encircling their problem in prayer. [Joy Ridderhof](#), born in 1903, started an organization called [Gospel Recordings](#), Inc. to record the gospel for every language group on earth. It is now approaching five thousand languages, and millions around the world have heard of Christ through GR recordings. But it wasn't easy. Joy, a single career woman, faced loneliness, sickness, dangerous travels, foreign intrigue, and financial crises at every step. One year, Gospel Recordings badly needed more room at its Los Angeles base. Joy and her staff prayed about it for months, and suddenly a large site became available. It seemed ideal, and the board authorized a \$6,000 deposit. The property cost ten times that much, but Joy refused to publicly appeal for funds. She was in Wheaton, Illinois, as the deadline approached. If \$60,000 didn't materialize within a week, the property would be lost along with the \$6,000 deposit. Only half the amount was on hand, and Joy's staff called her in crisis. Her laconic instructions were to claim Joshua 3:5 and to follow the Jericho pattern for the remaining seven days. And cable the branch offices to join us. No other explanation was given, but none was needed. The staff understood. Cables flew around the world : BUILDING DEADLINE OCTOBER NINTH FOLLOW JERICO PATTERN NEXT SEVEN DAYS JOSHUA 3:5. The walls of Jericho had fallen after the Israelites had circled them for seven days. In the same way, the staff of Gospel Recordings encircled the problem with prayer, two hours a day for seven days. The walls fell. In an overseas call from London, a British GR staffer announced an unexpected legacy had just arrived for the ministry, and it was exactly enough to complete the building's purchase. The home staff burst into the Doxology, and Joy Ridderhof continued her speaking tour through Illinois with a new story of God's faithfulness. This is the pattern we see throughout the Scripture....Learn to encompass your problems in prayer. Encircle them. Surround them. Pray without ceasing, and don't get discouraged. Jesus said, "We should always pray and not give up." (Luke 18:1) - From a sermon by Rob Morgan on Joshua 6:1-27 What to Do With Insoluble Problems

**Related Resource:** [Prayer Thoughts from Colin Stott at Gospel Recordings](#)

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**Prayer and Praise** - Notice that the Lord's Prayer both begins and ends with praise. "Our Father in heaven, Your name be honored as holy," and, "Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever." All powerful prayer is packed with praise. Why? Because praise is an expression of faith. Prayer is faith turned inside out. Faith is what causes our prayers to be answered. When we pray in the will of God with clean hearts, we can expect God to answer us. And if we have difficulty with our praying, it may be because we are not praising Him enough....The most powerful prayers are always filled with worship, knowing that He is "enthroned on the praises of His people" (Ps. 22:3).- [Adrian Rogers](#)

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**We Have His Heart and His Hand** - When I got ready to go away to college, my dad said to me, "Son, I wish I could pay your way to school. I'm not able to, you know, but I sure would like to." That always meant a lot to me. I'm glad, though, that my heavenly Father will never say to me, "Son, I'd like to, but I can't." Our heavenly Father is the King of kings. We have the heart of the Father and the hand of the King. We have a Father who can hear us and a king who can answer us. Therefore, we should always pray earnestly, fervently, expectantly, and praisefully unto Him, because He is both willing and able.- [Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Prayer of Faith** - An analysis of our prayers might afford the disconcerting discovery that many of them are not the prayer of **faith** at all, only the prayer of **hope**, or even of **despair**. We earnestly hope they will be answered, but have no unshakable assurance to that effect. God has, however, undertaken to answer only the prayer of faith. "Whatever you pray for and ask, believe that you have got it, and you shall have it" (Mark 11:24, Moffatt). — [J Oswald Sanders](#)

[E. M. Bounds](#) - Prayer goes by faith into the great orchard of God's exceeding great and precious promises, and with hand and heart picks the ripest and richest fruit.

[John Blanchard](#) - There are no depths from which the prayer of faith cannot reach heaven.

[Thomas Watson](#) - "The prayer that is faithless is fruitless....**Faith** is to prayer what the feather is to the arrow; it feathers the arrow of prayer, and makes it fly swifter, and pierce the throne of grace.....When faith sets prayer on work, prayer sets God on work.....Patience in prayer is nothing but faith spun out."

[Alexander Whyte](#) - "No prayer!--No faith!--No Christ in the heart. Little prayer!--Little faith!--Little Christ in the heart. Increasing prayer!--Increasing faith!--Increasing Christ in the heart! Much prayer!--Much faith!--Much Christ in the heart! Praying always!--Faith always!--Christ always!"

[C H Spurgeon](#) - "If we begin by doubting, our prayer will limp. Faith is the tendon of Achilles and if that is cut, it is not possible for us to wrestle with God.....Unbelieving prayers! Shall I call them prayers? Prayers without faith! They are birds without wings, ships without sails, beasts without legs. Prayers that have no faith in Christ are prayers without the blood on them. They are deeds without the signature, without the seal, without the stamp. They are impotent, illegal documents.....The best prayers have usually been the shortest. An arrow may easily be too long, and prayers should be like arrows shot from the bow of faith. If they are short, it does not matter so long as they are sharp and sent on their way with a good pull of the bowstring."

[Andrew Murray](#) - The effective prayer of faith comes from a life given up to the will and the love of God. Not as a result of what I try to be when praying, but because of what I am when I'm not praying, is my prayer answered by God.

[Matthew Henry](#) said that praying in the Spirit is to pray "under His guidance and influence, according to the rule of His word, with faith, fervency, and earnestness; this is praying in the Holy Ghost."

[William Gurnall](#) - Prayer, it is the very natural breath of faith.

[Wesley L. Duewel \(or here\)](#) - The prayer of faith is a prayer willing to believe and prevail for God's answer in a situation that is utterly impossible. Regardless of the difficulty of the situation, you require no external confirmation but believe God in spite of appearance. Your eyes are on God, not on the situation.

[Billy Graham](#) - Prayer is more than a wish turned heavenward . . . it is the voice of faith directed Godward....I have never met anyone who spent time in daily prayer, and in the study of the Word of God, and was strong in faith, who was ever discouraged for very long.

[Adrian Rogers](#) - It is not the eloquence and form of our prayers that gets them delivered but the stamp of faith. Like they say, "Pray, believe, and you'll receive. Pray and doubt; you'll do without."

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**Encouraged by Prayer** - A first-grader named Billy had a classmate Jim, who lost his father in a tractor accident. Billy prayed for Jim every day. One day as Billy was walking down the stairs at school, he saw Jim and decided to reach out to him.

"How are you getting along?"

"Oh, fine, jus' fine."

Billy continued, "Do you know, I've been praying for you ever since your daddy was killed."

The other little guy stopped and looked at Billy, grabbed his hand, then led him out back behind the school building. Then he opened up.

"You know, that was a lie when I said things were going fine; they aren't fine. We are having trouble with the cows and the machines. My mother doesn't know what to do. But I didn't know you were praying for me."

Just goes to show us, doesn't it, how many people are hurting, but don't feel free to say so until we voluntarily reach out to

them. — [Marion Leach Jacobsen, Crowded Pews and Lonely People](#)

**Our praying should be the prayer of faith,  
not faith in prayer.**

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**What We Pray For** - According to a Yankelovich Poll reported in USA Today commissioned for the Lutheran Brotherhood, nine out of ten adults in America say they pray. What do they pray for most often?

- 98%—Our own families
- 81%—World's Children
- 77%—World Peace
- 69%—Co-workers

[Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations and Quotes](#)

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U.S. News and the Internet site Beliefnet funded a poll to learn more about why, how, where and when people pray. Here is a summary of the findings:

- 75% percent were Christian.
  - 64% say they pray more than once a day.
  - 56% say they most often pray for family members, with 3.3% saying that they pray for strangers.
  - A little over 38% say that the most important purpose of prayer is intimacy with God.
  - 41% say that their prayers are answered often.
  - 1.5% say that their prayers are never answered.
  - Over 73% say when their prayers are not answered, the most important reason is because they did not fit God's plan.
  - 5% say that they pray most often in a house of worship.
  - 79% say that they pray most often at home.
  - 67% say that in the past six months, their prayers have related to continually giving thanks to God. —Pastor's Weekly Briefing, 12/24/04
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**Release the Controls, Close Our Eyes, and Pray** - Tom Monaghan in his book *Pizza Tiger* shares an incident that occurred when he was flying his Cessna 172. I flew over to Pontiac one day that summer to see Eldon Huff. The ceiling was very low when I started back, and once again clouds closed in on me. In trying to ease myself below them, I lost control of the plane. It stalled, and I found myself in a spin. I pulled back on the control yoke with all my might, But I couldn't budge it. Plowed fields were whirling up toward me, and I realized there was nothing left to do but pray. I released the controls, closed my eyes, and folded my hands under my chin: "Father in Heaven, please help me" I began, and I felt a miraculous change take place. The spinning stopped and suddenly the plane was flying level again. Great advice when we're in a tail spin: release the controls, close our eyes, and pray. - 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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**Safe on Your Knees** - A group of amateur climbers were scaling part of the Matterhorn mountain near Zermatt, Switzerland. As they came to a narrow, hazardous passage, about to make a turn, a gust of wind swept down on them. The experienced guide, knowing the danger this posed for the group, quickly shouted, "Get down on your knees! You are safe only on your knees!" How true this is in the Christian life as well. We are safe only as we are continually in fellowship with our Lord in prayer. As Paul wrote, "Pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). See: Joshua 5:14; 1 Chronicles 16:11; Daniel 6:10—**See commentary on Daniel's "Obedient Disobedience" in Prayer**; Ephesians 6:18 - (6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.)

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An Ellis Research survey for Facts & Trends finds just 16% of pastors are very satisfied with their personal prayer lives, 47% are somewhat satisfied, 30% somewhat dissatisfied and 7% very dissatisfied. Their median amount of prayer time per day is 30 minutes. During that time, a typical pastor spends 12 minutes with prayer requests, 8 in quiet time, 7 giving thanks, 7 more in praise, and 5 confessing sin. The top 5 things they pray for are individual congregation member's needs, congregation's spiritual health, wisdom in leading church, spiritual growth for church, and personal spiritual growth. —Facts & Trends 5/6/05

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The Bible contains 377 references to praise and 375 references to prayer.

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A Gallup poll finds 76% of Americans favor "a constitutional amendment to allow voluntary prayer in public schools," while just 23% oppose such an amendment. Only 23% of Americans prefer some type of spoken prayer, while 69% favor a moment of silence for

contemplation or silent prayer. These views are essentially the same as those expressed a decade before in a similar poll.

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**When Tasks Are Hard** - In a certain cotton factory there is a card on the walls of the workrooms that reads: "If your threads get tangled send for the foreman." One day a new worker got her threads tangled, and she tried to disentangle them, but only made them worse. Then she sent for the foreman. He came and looked. Then he said to her: "You have been doing this yourself?" "Yes," she said. "But why did you not send for me according to instructions?" "I did my best," she said. "No, you did not," the foreman said. "Remember that doing your best is sending for me."—Moody Monthly

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Sir Isaac Newton said that he could take his telescope and look millions and millions miles into space. Then he added, "But when I lay it aside, go into my room, shut the door, and get down on my knees in earnest prayer, I see more of heaven and feel closer to the Lord than if I were assisted by all the telescopes on earth."

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**Identify With the Need** - A young pastor was preparing a sermon in his study when there was a knock at his door, and someone told him that a child had been hit by a car in front of his church. He was informed that the ambulance was there, and the child was getting help. He looked up and said he would be right out after finishing his thought. Then his secretary came to the door and announced that it was his own daughter who had been hit by the car, and the pastor jumped up from his desk and ran to the street. Our identity with the need makes all the difference in the world.—[Rodney Stortz - Preaching the Word: Daniel](#)

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**Forty Years of Prayer for China** - In 1940 Vincent and Margaret Crossett were missionaries in Mainland China. They struggled against poverty and paganism in a remote village in order to tell others about Jesus. The work was very slow and difficult, but after much sacrifice a small church was established. The church was no larger than a small Bible study group. Right on the threshold of this small triumph for the kingdom of God, Satan began his work. The Communist takeover of China during the Cultural Revolution forced all missionaries to leave China. The Crossetts hated to leave. Their fledgling flock of believers hardly seemed ready to withstand the coming onslaught. An atheistic, dictatorial government dedicated to wiping out all Christian influence was beginning its rule with ruthless power. How could the little church survive? From the world's perspective there was nothing anyone could do. The church seemed destined to die. But Vincent and Margaret did not see through the world's eyes. They saw through the eyes of faith that their God was faithful to those who honor him. The Crossetts were like faithful family sedans. They continued to do their duty. Though the missionaries were chased out, their prayers were not. For nearly forty years the Crossetts daily kept their prayer window opened toward China. They dutifully prayed in faith that God would one day triumph over Communism. The Crossetts heard nothing of their Chinese friends for forty years, but still they faithfully prayed for God to be victorious in the church they had left behind. Finally the walls of China came down. As the political climate changed, the nation was opened to western visitors. The Crossetts returned to the village where they had left the tiny, struggling group of believers. There was no small church in the village anymore! Instead, from that Bible study had grown a church of four thousand people! This body of believers had planted dozens of other churches as well, each with a membership of at least a thousand. All the Crossetts did was pray with their prayer window open to the focus of their prayer—China. The God of Daniel is alive and well.—[Rodney Stortz - Preaching the Word: Daniel](#)

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**The Need for Daily Confession** (1Jn 1:9-note - "confess" is in the present tense = continually!) - It is not only the unbelievers in America who have sinned. We are all sinners and fall short of the glory of God. The Westminster Shorter Catechism says, "We sin daily in thought, word, and deed." A prayer of confession used hundreds of years ago in the time of the Reformation says, "Deepen the sorrow within us for our sins." The Pilgrims were a godly people, but when a drought struck their land, they turned to the Lord, humbly confessing their sins. Edward Winslow described the drought and their confession:

There scarce fell any rain, so that the stalk of that [planting which] was first set, began to send forth the ear before it came to half growth, and that which was later, not like to yield any at all, both blade and stalk hanging the head and changing the color in such manner as we judged it utterly dead. Now were our hopes overthrown, and we [were] discouraged, our joy turned to mourning ... because God, which hitherto had been our only shield and supporter, now seemed in His anger to arm Himself against us. And who can withstand the fierceness of His wrath?

These and the like considerations moved not only every good man privately to enter into examination with his own estate between God and his conscience, and so to humiliation before Him, but also to humble ourselves together before the Lord by fasting and prayer. To that end, a day was appointed by public authority, and set apart from all other employments.—[Rodney Stortz - Preaching the Word: Daniel](#)

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**George Mueller's Answered Prayer** - A Scotch brother said: "I was an intensely worldly man, yet I never found satisfaction. When my father passed away, who was a delightful Christian, I looked over his papers, and saw he had given large sums of money to Mr.

Mueller's orphanage. I said, 'I am sure my father would like me to help that work. I will go down.' I went, and there was a revival on for boys and girls, so I listened to the message. God saved me. They said, 'We are not surprised, for at this Home, for thirty-eight years, Mr. Mueller never ceased to pray for you.'" —God's Revivalist

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**How Big Must It Be?** - Mr. Spurgeon said: "I remember hearing it said of a godly man: 'Mr. So-and-so is a gracious man, but he is very strange; for the other day he prayed to God about a key he had lost.' The person who told it to me regarded with astonishment the idea of praying to God about a lost key; and he seemed altogether surprised when I assured him that I prayed in like manner. What! Pray about a key? Yes. Please tell me how big a thing must be before you can pray about it? If a certain size is appointed, we should like to have it marked down in the Bible, that we might learn the mathematics of prayer. Would you have it recorded that, if a thing is so many inches long, we may pray about it; but if it happens to be about a quarter of an inch too short, we must let it alone? If we might not pray about little things, it would be a fearful calamity; for little things cause us great worry, and they are harder to deal with than great things. If we might not pray about minor matters, it would be a terrible loss of comfort."

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**Where He Learned Most** - The Pilgrim reports Dr. Harry A. Ironside as a young preacher visiting the aged Alexander Fraser and listening enthralled as one truth after another from God's Word was opened up by Mr. Fraser until he could restrain himself no more and cried out, "Where did you learn these things?" "On my knees on the mud floor of a little sod cottage in the north of Ireland," replied Mr. Fraser. "There, with my Bible open before me, I used to kneel for hours at a time, and ask the Spirit of God to reveal Christ to my soul and to open the Word to my heart. He taught me more on my knees on that mud floor than I could ever have learned in all the colleges and seminaries in the world."

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Francis of Assisi spent 75 percent of his time in prayer and 25 percent in preaching and apostolic service. Yet we think of him primarily as a preacher. He was so energized by the Spirit of God that he made a significant mark on his world in a small amount of time each day or week.

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When we preach, people listen, but when we pray, God listens. When we preach, people act, but when we pray, God acts.

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**Access to the Throne** - In the Kensington Museum, there is a picture of Dr. Johnson, waiting outside in the anteroom of nobility or royalty to take his turn for an audience. The Lord our God, the King of kings, will give us an audience at any moment of the day, and, meeting with us, will bless us there. - W. M. Strathan

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**Daily Prayer** - As those who keep clocks wind them up daily, lest the weights should run down, and the clock stop; so we must set apart some portion of every day for meditation and prayer, lest our hearts should so far descend, through the weight of the cares of this world, that our course in godliness should be hindered and stopped. - Cawdray.

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**What Prayer Has Done** - Prayer has divided seas, rolled up flowing rivers, made flinty rocks gush into fountains, quenched flames of fire, muzzled lions, disarmed vipers and poisons, marshalled the stars against the wicked, stopped the course of the moon, arrested the sun in its rapid race, burst open iron gates, recalled souls from eternity, conquered the strongest devils, commanded legions of angels down from heaven. Prayer has bridled and chained the raging passions of man, and routed and destroyed vast armies of proud, daring, blustering atheists. Prayer has brought one man from the bottom of the sea, and carried another in a chariot of fire to heaven. What has not prayer done?

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**Prayer from the Heart** - It is not the gilded paper and good writing of a petition, that prevails with a king, but the moving sense of it. And to that King who discerns the heart, heart-sense is the sense of all, and that which he only regards. He listens to hear what that speaks, and takes all as nothing where that is silent. All other excellence in prayer is but the outside and fashion of it: this is the life of it. - Leighton

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A man who learned to pray when three years old was converted in his old age, and used to say, "I am the old man who said his prayers for seventy years, and yet all that time had never prayed at all."

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**Spurgeon** - Prayer is the rustling of the wings of the angels that are on their way bringing us the boons of heaven. Have you heard prayer in your heart? You shall see the angel in your house. When the chariots that bring us blessings rumble, their wheels sound with prayer. We hear the prayer in our own spirits; and that prayer becomes the token of the coming blessings. Even as the cloud

foreshadoweth rain, so prayer foreshadoweth the blessing; even as the green blade is the beginning of the harvest, so is prayer the prophecy of the blessing that is about to come

When thou art wrestling, like Jacob with the angel, and art nearly thrown down, ask the Holy Spirit to nerve thine arm. Consider how the Holy Spirit is the chariot-wheel of prayer. Prayer may be the chariot, the desire may draw it forth; but the Spirit is the very wheel whereby it moveth.

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**Is Your Pump Primed?** - When a pump is frequently used, the water pours out at the first stroke, because it is high; but, if the pump has not been used for a long time, the water gets low, and when you want it you must pump a long while; and the water comes only after great efforts. It is so with prayer. If we are instant in prayer, every little circumstance awakens the disposition to pray, and desire and words are always ready: but, if we neglect prayer, it is difficult for us to pray; for the water in the well gets low. - Felix Neff.

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As parents take more pleasure in their children's stammering than in the eloquence of others, even so the Lord takes pleasure in the prayers of his children.

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**Prayer and Faith** - Prayer is the bow, the promise is the arrow: faith is the hand which draws the bow, and sends the arrow with the heart's message to heaven. The bow without the arrow is of no use; and the arrow without the bow is of little worth; and both, without the strength of the hand, to no purpose. Neither the promise without prayer, nor prayer without the promise, nor both without faith, avail the Christian anything. What was said of the Israelites, "They could not enter in, because of unbelief," the same may be said of many of our prayers: they cannot enter heaven, because they are not put up in faith. - Salter

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**Emblems of Prayer** - Incense; a bow drawn by the hand of faith; the air by which we live; the little pitcher which fetches the water from the brook; the barometer of the soul; the tuning of an instrument; the link that connects earth with heaven; the "gift of the knees,"= the [Yoruba](#) Christian's phrase for prayer; the letter sent from the child on earth to his "Father in heaven." - Bowes

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Mr. Spurgeon visited a dying woman, who desired that he should pray especially for the conversion of her only child, a daughter. Mr. Spurgeon, by some means, mistook the term daughter, and prayed as for a son. As he was leaving, he was told of his mistake. "Oh!" said he, "that makes no difference. Our mistakes will not keep the Lord from giving us the blessing." So it proved. The girl was converted shortly after her mother's death.

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**The Power of Prayer** - J. Edgar Hoover, director of the F.B.I., says: "The spectacle of a nation praying is more awe-inspiring than the explosion of an atomic bomb. The force of prayer is greater than any possible combination of man-made or man-controlled powers, because prayer is man's greatest means of tapping the infinite resources of God. Invoking by prayer the mercy and might of God is our most efficacious means of guaranteeing peace and security for the harassed and helpless peoples of the earth."—Selected

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**PUMP CONDITIONS.**—When a pump is frequently used, the water pours out at the first stroke, because it is high; but, if the pump has not been used for a long time, the water gets low, and when you want it you must pump a long while; and the water comes only after great efforts. It is so with prayer. If we are instant in prayer, every little circumstance awakens the disposition to pray, and desire and words are always ready; but, if we neglect prayer, it is difficult for us to pray; for the water in the well gets low. —George Noble

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**MUST WIND UP.**—As those who keep clocks wind them up daily, lest the weights should run down, and the clock stop; so we must set apart some portion of every day for meditation and prayer, lest our hearts should so far descend, through the weight of the cares of this world, that our course in godliness should be stopped—George Noble

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**AT MASTHEAD.**—"Where do you find a place to pray in?" was asked of a pious sailor on board a whaling ship. "Oh!" he said, "I can always find a quiet spot at the masthead." "Sam, do you find a spot for secret prayer?" asked a minister of a stable-boy. "Oh, yes, sir! that old coach is my closet."—George Noble

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**Regardless of Your Spiritual Maturity You Can Pray** - Other people can pray for us, but they cannot pray in our place. There are no subs or pinch hitters in praying. The newest and most immature Christian can and should pray. Imagine parents who have a teenage son who wins first place in a speech contest and who are thrilled with his accomplishment. But imagine that these same parents also have a baby who smiles, coos, and makes a sound like "gargle-de-goo-goo." They are just as thrilled with their baby son's earliest efforts at communication and expression as with their older son's outstanding speech ability. And God our Father is

just as pleased when a new believer attempts to express prayer to Him as when the most mature saint communicates with Him. God wants each Christian to pray to Him and no one else's prayers can substitute. —[Understanding Christian Theology - Charles Swindoll](#)

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**Barna Survey on Prayer and Millennials** - About one-quarter of 18- to 29-year-olds are practicing Christians, meaning they attend church at least once a month and strongly affirm that their religious faith is very important in their life. A majority of Millennials claim to pray each week, one-quarter say they've read the Bible or attended a religious small group this week, and one in seven have volunteered at a church in the past seven days. —[5 Reasons Millennials Stay Connected to Church](#)

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A man scarcely needs to be reminded that he must breathe. It is essential to his very life that he should breathe. And it is essential to our spiritual life that we should pray. I never thought it necessary to prepare a discourse to exhort you to eat, neither ought it to be necessary to exhort Christians to pray. It should be to you an instinct of your new nature, as natural to your spiritual being as a good appetite is to a man in health. There should be a holy hunger and thirst to pray. And the soul never prays so well as when it is reminded, not by the hour of the day or night, but by its real needs, and when it resorts to its place of private prayer, not because it thinks it ought, but because it feels that it must, and shall, and will go there, and is delighted at the privilege of having communion with its God.—[C H Spurgeon](#)

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There was a very large sum of money to be paid for the building of the orphanage, and I was up with certain friends at Regent's Park, dining at the house of one of our brethren. I there mentioned that I was short two thousand pounds to meet an account which would very soon be due, but that I was sure God would graciously give it, for it was his work, and he would supply its need in answer to prayer. We were discussing as to whether it was not rather bold to speak too positively about answers to a prayer of such a kind, and while we were still discoursing there came a telegram from the Tabernacle to me, saying, "A person unknown has called and left 2,000 pounds in bank notes for the orphanage." I read the telegram to the friends assembled, and their gratitude and astonishment abounded.—[C H Spurgeon](#)

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Not long ago a woman came to see me about joining the church. She was in great trouble, for her husband had gone away, under rather sad circumstances, to Australia, and she could not hear any news of him. I said to her, "Well, let us pray for him." When I had prayed for his conversion, I prayed that he might come back to his wife, and I said to her, "Your husband will come back to you. I am persuaded that God has heard my prayer. So when he returns, bring him to see me in this room."

In a little over twelve months that woman was in my vestry with her husband. I had forgotten the circumstances till she recalled them to me. About the time of our prayer, God had met with him on the sea, while he was reading one of my sermons. He was brought to the feet of Jesus, he came back, joined this church, and is with us this day in answer to that prayer.

"Oh," says someone, "that is merely a coincidence."

Well, that woman did not think so, nor did her husband, nor do I. You may call it a coincidence if you like, but I call it an answer to prayer. And as long as I get such coincidences, I shall be perfectly satisfied to go on praying!—[C H Spurgeon](#)

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A 7 year old boy standing in front of 100 other kids and prayed: "Jesus, thank You that some of us get to play football and go to church, and for safety on the ride here, and for forgiveness of our sins, and for eternal life. We love You, Jesus. Please don't ever forget how much we love You!"

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[Martin Luther](#), when [Melancthon](#) was dying, went to his deathbed and said, "[Melancthon](#), you shall not die!"

"Oh," said Melancthon, "I must die! It is a world of toil and trouble."

"Melancthon," said he, "I have need of you, and God's cause has need of you, and as my name is Luther, you shall not die!"

The physician said he would. Well, down went Luther on his knees, and began to tug at death. "Drop him," said Luther, "drop him, I want him!"

"No," said death, "he is my prey, I will take him!"

"Down with him," said Luther, "down with him, death, or I will wrestle with you!" And he seemed to take hold of the grim monster and hurl him to the ground. And he came off victorious up from the very shades of death. He had delivered Melancthon from death by prayer!—[C H Spurgeon](#)

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[Mr Mueller](#) supports 300 orphan children on no resources but his own faith and prayer. When he needs anything, he calls them together, offers supplication to God, and asks that necessities may be supplied. When I saw what a great work he had done by his faith, and began to remark upon it, he said, "Oh, it is only a little thing that I have done. Faith could do far more than that. If it were God's will that I should feed the universe on prayer and faith, I could do it. I believe God has made me to be here to be to the world a proof that he hears and answers prayer."—[C H Spurgeon](#)

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A mother has been anxious for her children's conversion. At last she says, "These many years have I sought God for this one blessing; I will seek no longer. I will pray another month, and then if he hears me not, I think I can never pray again."

Mother, retract the words. Blot out such a thought from your soul, for in this you are limiting the Holy One of Israel. He is trying your faith. Persevere, persevere while life lasts, and if your prayers be not answered in your lifetime, perhaps from the windows of heaven you shall look down and see the blessing of your prayers descend on the head of your child.—[C H Spurgeon](#)

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I saw the other day in a newspaper a sketch concerning myself, in which the author offers me one rather pointed rebuke. I was preaching at the time in a tent, and only part of the people were covered. It began to rain just before prayer, and one petition was, "O Lord, be pleased to grant us favorable weather for this service, and command the clouds that they rain no more on this assembly!" Now he thought this preposterous. He admits that it did not rain a drop after it. Still, of course, he did not infer that God heard and answered the prayer. If I had asked for a rain of grace, it would have been quite credible that God would send that. But when I ask him not to send a temporal rain, that is fanaticism. I bless God, however, that I fully believe the absurdity, preposterous as it may appear. I know that God hears prayer in temporal things.—[C H Spurgeon](#)

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**Listening to God** - A voice-over actor sang "Let it Go"—a popular song from the Disney animated movie Frozen—while imitating various Disney characters' voices. He uploaded the video to YouTube, and it received over 2.5 million views, generating much positive feedback. Many of the viewers guessed which of their favorite Disney characters sang parts of the song—from Winnie the Pooh to Mickey Mouse. How could they guess the voices? That's easy: They have heard them many times before. Christians who are in the habit of listening to God will recognize his voice when he speaks to them.—Jim L. Wilson and Joe Lam

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I can never forget a certain illness, when I had been racked with pain and brought very low with heaviness of spirit. I felt driven almost to despair one night, until I laid hold of God in an agony of prayer and pleaded with him something like this: "If my child were in such anguish as I am in, I would listen to him and relieve him if I could. Thou art my Father, and I am thy child. Then wilt thou not treat me like a child?" Almost at the very moment when I presented that plea before God, my pain ceased, and I fell into a sweet slumber, from which I woke up with "Abba! Father!" on my lip and in my heart.—[C H Spurgeon](#)

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**Fight or Pray?** "He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart." -Luke 18:1 (Luke 18:1-8) When my son Ben was 6 years old, he had a playground adversary. According to Ben, this fellow had gone too far, and he thought the only solution was to fight it out. So I talked to him about the Christ-like way to handle the situation. I asked him, "Did you pray to the Lord for understanding and help to avoid a fight?" He didn't answer, so I asked him again. This time with childish candor he blurted out, "No, I don't want to pray. I'd rather beat him up." How revealing! The problem was that he didn't feel weak enough to seek God's help. We often hesitate to pray for the Lord's guidance in a tough situation because we think we can work it out ourselves. But if that's our attitude, we are not yet in the place where God will come to our assistance. He wants us to sense that we really are helpless. Jesus told the parable of the widow and the unjust judge to encourage us to continue bringing our concerns to the Father. If we are not persistent in seeking His help, we may "lose heart" (Lk. 18:1) because our own efforts are inadequate. And God, unlike an unjust judge, longs to come to our aid. What problems are facing you? Are you going to fight or pray? —Martin R. DeHaan II

Pray, always pray, the Holy Spirit pleads,  
Bring to thy God thy daily, hourly needs;  
All earthly things with earth shall pass away;  
Prayer grasps eternity; pray - always pray!  
—Bickersteth

The best way to stay on your feet is to get down on your knees.

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**God's Answer to the Prayer of Faith** - Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. (Revelation 2:10) One winter when the Roman emperor Licinius was persecuting the Christians, his Thundering Legion was stationed at Sebaste. Because 40 men in that company had declared themselves believers, they were sentenced to spend the night naked on a frozen pool. A large fire was kindled in a house nearby, and food and a warm bath were prepared for any who would renounce their faith. As daylight faded, 40 warriors continued to resist in spite of the bitter cold—some walking quickly to and fro, some already sleeping that sleep which ends in death, and some standing, lost in prayer. These words arose to heaven, "O Lord, 40 wrestlers have come forth to fight for Thee. Grant that 40 wrestlers may gain the victory!" Finally, one of them could endure the



suffering no longer. He left the others and went into the house where Sempronius and his men were on guard. But still the petition went up from those able to speak, "O Lord, 40 wrestlers have come forth to fight for Thee. Grant that 40 wrestlers may gain the victory!" Their prayer was answered. Sempronius the centurion was touched by his comrades' bravery, and the Holy Spirit moved upon his heart. Declaring himself a Christian, he went to the frozen pond and took the place of the one defector. When the long night was over, 40 glorious spirits, Sempronius among them, had entered into the presence of Christ.

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**Eric Liddell's Great Secret** - It almost goes without saying that when we think of the modern Olympics and Christians in the same sentence, we think of Eric Liddell, the Flying Scotsman. Eric was born in 1902 in China where his parents were missionaries for the London Mission Society. He attended Edinburgh University where he was hailed as one of their best track and field runners ever. He ran the 100 yards and the 220 yards for the university. Liddell represented England in the 1924 Paris Olympics. When he learned the heats were to be run on Sunday, he declared that he could not run on Sundays as it would violate his convictions regarding the Sabbath. He switched to the 400 meter competition where he won a gold medal. His story has been made famous in the movie Chariots of Fire. What many people don't know is that after the Olympics, he followed in his parents' footsteps as a missionary to China. It was there during World War II that he was interned in the Weishien Concentration Camp where he died while serving Christ Jesus. Sally Magnusson, in her biography of Liddell ([The Flying Scotsman](#)), explained the secret of his radiant life:

"Every morning about 6 a.m., with curtains tightly drawn to keep in the shining of our peanut-oil lamp... he used to climb out of his top bunk, past the sleeping forms of his dormitory mates. Then, at the small Chinese table, (he would sit) with the light just enough to illumine (his) Bibles and notebooks. Silently (he) read, prayed, and thought about the day's duties, noted what should be done. Eric was a man of prayer..."

That was his great secret. He knew how to devote his mornings to meeting with his divine Coach. There are many lessons that can be drawn from Eric Liddell's life, but chief among them is this: Champions for God often devote their morning hours to spending time with Him. As [Eric Liddell](#) knew, when we begin the morning with God, we can enjoy His presence all day long. As Henry Ward Beecher said, "The first hour of the morning is the rudder of the day." - Rob Morgan's sermon on 1 Corinthians 9:24-27: Going for Gold (Ed: One might also call it "Going for God!")

**Related Resource** - [The Story of Eric Liddell \(1:17 min video\)](#) from Radio Bible Class - Discovery

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**These Forty Years** - [Solomon Ginsburg](#), a Polish Jew, became a flaming evangelist across both Europe and South America. In 1911, needing rest, he decided to head to America on furlough. His route took him to Lisbon where he planned to cross the Bay of Biscay to London, then on to the States. Arriving in Lisbon, Ginsburg found the bulletin boards plastered with weather telegrams warning of terrific storms raging on the Bay of Biscay. It was dangerous sailing, and he was advised to delay his trip a week. His ticket allowed him to do that, and he prayed about it earnestly. But as he prayed, he turned to his W.M.U. prayer calendar and found the text for that day was Deuteronomy 2:7—"For the Lord your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand. He knows your trudging through this great wilderness. These forty years the Lord your God has been with you; you have lacked nothing." The Lord seemed to assure him that his long, worldwide travels were under divine protection. Ginsburg boarded ship at once, crossed without incident, and caught the Majestic in London. His transatlantic voyage was smooth and restful. Only after arriving in the United States did Solomon learn that had he delayed his trip in Lisbon, he would have arrived in London just in time ...just in time to board the Titanic.—[Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations and Quotes](#)

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**911 Calls** - In the early morning hours Sharon Edge was concerned for her boyfriend Curtis Mitchell, who was having severe abdominal pain and needed to go to the hospital. Sharon called 911 and was assured that help was on the way. Two, three, four calls later, help still had not arrived. The delay in response was a result of a heavy snowfall that had Pittsburgh at a standstill. Three times, the ambulance had been as close as a football field's length from the house but paramedics did not bother to walk through the snow to rescue Curtis. About 30 hours after the initial call, Sharon made her tenth and last call to 911. This call was to report that Curtis was dead. I can't imagine the frustration and helplessness Sharon must have felt. She needed help—she called for help, but help never came. One thing I can assure you today is that if you call on the Lord he will show up.—Jim L. Wilson and Wendell Ray

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**The Ban on Prayer** - Notice on the school bulletin board

**"In the event of nuclear attack or other national catastrophe all bans on prayer will be lifted."**

See: 1 Timothy 2:8

**Related:** Did you hear about the two small schoolboys who were sitting in the corner facing the wall?

"What are you here for?" one asked.

"I got caught talking to Joy! What about you?"

"I got caught talking to God!"

There will always be prayers in public schools—as long as there are final exams to take.—B. Norman Frisch

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**Two Unusual Prayers and One Glorious Answer** - 1 Timothy 2: 5 says, "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men." Recently I read that illustrates this very well. It was the testimony of a Romanian gentleman named [Richard Wurmbrand](#) (see [here also](#)) who suffered for Christ for many years in Communist prisons. In his book [Tortured for Christ](#) he tells of his own conversion, how he came to Christ. He said that he was brought up in a Jewish family in which no religion was recognized, and in childhood he received no Christian training. By age 14, he was a confirmed, convinced [atheist](#). He read many atheistic books, and he felt the Bible was the most dangerous volume in the world. And yet, he felt something missing in his own life. He was an atheist, but atheism did not give peace to his heart. One day, he decided to try praying something, just to see what would happen. He prayed aloud, saying,

*"God, I know surely that You do not exist. But if perchance you exist, which I contest, it is not my duty to believe in you; it is your duty to reveal yourself to me."*

Unknown to him at the same time in a village high in the mountains of Romania, there was a carpenter, a Christian, who also offered an interesting prayer to God:

*"My God, I have served you on earth and I wish that I should not die before I bring a Jew to Christ, because Jesus was from the Jewish people. But I am poor, old and sick. I cannot go around and seek a Jew. In my village there are none. Bring Thou a Jew into my village and I will do my best to bring him to Christ."*

So here were two men, living far apart, unknown to each other, yet **both offered an unusual prayer**. A young Jewish atheist praying to know if God exists, and an old Christian carpenter praying for the privilege of leading a Jew to the Lord. Richard Wurmbrand later said,

*"Something irresistible drew me to that village. I had nothing to do there. Romania has twelve thousand villages. But I went to that village. Seeing I was a Jew, the carpenter courted me as never a beautiful girl had been courted. He saw in me the answer to his prayer and gave me the Bible to read. I had read the Bible out of cultural interest many times before. But the Bible he gave me was another kind of Bible. As he told me afterward, he prayed for hours together with his wife for my conversion. The Bible he gave me was written not so much in words, but in flames of love fired by his prayers. I could scarcely read it. I could only weep over it, comparing my bad life with the life of Jesus; my impurity, my hatred with his love."*

And as he read that Bible, Richard Wurmbrand met God through Jesus Christ and spent the rest of his life advancing the Gospel he had previously sought to destroy. He found the gate of heaven. —From a sermon by Rob Morgan on Genesis 28:10-22: Jacob's Ladder: Gate of Heaven

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Now there's even a "dial-a-prayer" for [atheists](#). You call a number and nobody answers!

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**Your Ministry of Prayer Will Impact History!** - When I read [Edith Schaeffer's](#) book [Common Sense Christian Living](#), **I came across a concept that has changed my life—and my prayer life!** While talking about prayer, Mrs. Schaeffer focused on the mind-boggling fact that **prayer makes a difference in history**. She wrote, "*Interceding for other people makes a difference in the history of other people's lives.*" Looking at the life of the apostle Paul, she noted that he always asked others to pray for him because he expected "*a difference to take place ... in answer to prayer. Paul expect[ed] history to be different because intercession [was] taken seriously as an important task.*" This mature understanding of prayer encouraged me in two distinct ways. **First**, I came to grips with the power of prayer to change lives. I knew from experience that prayer had changed my life, but ... the lives of others? That idea was new to me. It seemed impossible, but Mrs. Schaeffer assured me that even I, a young Christian, could have a role in the mysterious ways of God. She helped me believe that my infant prayers could somehow **make a difference in history!** The **second** revelation was recognizing **prayer as a ministry**, an important realization for me. At the time, I was a mother with two little ones at home, and I felt left out at church. I struggled because I couldn't attend all the wonderful women's studies and events, even though I knew that my place was at home. Coming face-to-face with the fact that prayer is a ministry ended my feelings of uselessness and ineffectiveness.....How can we cultivate a heart of prayer and enjoy the blessings that accompany a life of committed and devoted prayer? Here are some quick thoughts.

- **Start a prayer log** to record requests and responses as you travel your own personal journey of prayer.

• **Set aside some time each day** to linger with the Lord in prayer and remember that something is better than nothing. Begin small—and watch for the mighty effects!

• **Pray always** (Ephesians 6:18) and in all places, enjoying God's presence with you wherever you go (Joshua 1:9).

• **Pray faithfully for others**—including your enemies (Matthew 5:44)!

• **Take seriously the powerful privilege of the ministry of prayer.**

- Elizabeth George - [A Woman After God's Own Heart](#)

We can change the course of events  
if we go to our knees in believing prayer.  
Billy Graham

God shapes the world by prayer.  
The more prayer there is in the world the better the world will be,  
the mightier the forces of against evil

- [E. M. Bounds](#)

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**Prayer and Providence** - [A.T. Pierson](#), put it well:

“Prophecy and Providence are...twin sisters. There is no grander thought in this Bible than that, back of all these apparently capricious, conflicting, and accidental changes of human history, there is an infinite God whose omniscience and omnipresence forbid that anything should escape His knowledge or evade His power, and whose goodness assures a benevolent design, even behind seeming disaster.”

Someone said that history is **His-story**, and the founders of our nation believed this. On Thursday, June 28, 1787, as the Constitutional Convention was deadlocked in bitter debate, the venerable Benjamin Franklin ([who was actually not a Christian but a Deist, a believer in deism](#)) rose with a remarkable suggestion—that they seek God's guidance:

“In this situation of this Assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights to illuminate our understanding?”

“In the beginning of the contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayer in this room for Divine protection. Our prayers, Sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending **Providence** in our favor... have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? Or do we imagine we no longer need His assistance?”

Then Franklin said,

“I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth -- that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid?”

The providence of God means that we shouldn't panic during times of national and international uncertainty, like those who don't have such assurance as we do. It's easy to watch the television news every night at bedtime, then retire depressed and discouraged. How much better to turn off the television and open the Bible at bedtime, then go to sleep reassured that “The Lord is great, and our Lord is above all gods. Whatever the Lord pleases He does, in heaven and in earth” (Psalm 135:6). God doesn't ordain evil nor is He the author of sin. He does allow disasters to occur and wars to rage, but He is able to turn the tides of history towards their appointed ends, and even those events that frighten us don't take Him by surprise or catch Him unawares. I know a lady who considers her **daily newspaper a prayer guide**. She feels she can influence the world through prayer, and she prays over the headlines each day, knowing her prayers can influence world events. As Christians we should all feel that way. Jesus said, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations” (Mark 11:17). -From a sermon by Rob Morgan on the book of Daniel - "Jesus Shall Reign"

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**A Prayer Meeting that Changed America** -“Their foot shall slide in due time.” (Deuteronomy 32:35) Today's ominous verse of Scripture is one of the most famous in Western history, for it sparked the [First Great Awakening](#) that brought revival to colonial America. On a July Sunday in 1741, [Jonathan Edwards](#) stood to preach in Enfield, Connecticut. **During the previous night, a group of godly women had spent the entire evening praying for God's visitation on their town.** Using this text, Edwards quietly spoke these words:

*In this verse is threatened the vengeance of God on the wicked unbelieving Israelites, who were God's visible people, and who lived under the means of grace; but who, notwithstanding all God's wonderful works towards them, remained void of counsel, having no understanding in them.*

Edwards went on to say,

*Unconverted men walk over the pit of hell on a rotten covering, and there are innumerable places in this covering so weak that they will not bear their weight, and these places are not seen. The arrows of death fly unseen at noon-day; the sharpest sight cannot discern them. God has so many different unsearchable ways of taking wicked men out of the world and sending them to hell ... they have deserved the fiery pit, and are already sentenced to it ... the devil is waiting for them, hell is gaping for them, the flames gather and flash about them...*

As Edwards preached, the audience was seized by a tidal wave of fear. Strong men gripped their seats, shaking, crying. Women fell to the floor. Many in the crowd begged God's forgiveness, and by the end of the day, 500 people in the village were converted. The revival swept to nearby towns, then from city to city. Under the preaching of Edwards and [George Whitefield](#) and others, thousands entered the kingdom, transforming the moral and spiritual complexion of America. Therefore, Edwards said at the conclusion of his famous sermon, *let everyone that is out of Christ now awake and fly from the wrath to come*. —[Robert Morgan - From This Verse](#)

**Read the entire sermon that set America ablaze with revival - [Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God](#)**

### **Role of Prayer in History**

Prayer in 1620 safely guided the Mayflower with the Pilgrims to a new world.

Prayer in 1623 saved the Pilgrim fathers from starvation.

Prayer in 1777 at Valley Forge saved the Continental Army and won the war for American Independence.

Prayer at Philadelphia saved the Constitutional Convention and gave birth to the American Way of Life.

Prayer in 1857 saved America from economic destruction.

Prayer in 1918 ended World War I and lack of prayer started World War II.

Prayer saved England at Dunkirk. Myriads of fliers and servicemen of all nations lost at sea were saved through prayer.

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**The Mysterious Association of A Prayer Burden and a Crushed Communist Coup** - A modern-day intervention of God was recounted by a missionary from Indonesia. It seems that in August, 1965 [President Sukarno](#) of that country became ill and news of this leaked through to Peking, who saw this as their opportunity to organize a coup. Plans were set in motion and all who stood in the way were liquidated. Lists were drawn up of those who should be killed after the takeover, and this included missionaries who were active in that land. In fact, mass graves had been dug two months before September 30th (the target date) so that bodies could be easily disposed of. Without full knowledge of what was going on in the capital, a humble pastor in an obscure part of the country was burdened to pray. Calling his members together, he asked them to pray and fast with him, and not return to work until God had lifted the burden of prayer from his heart. A day went by, then a second, and then a third. At last he announced, "Victory has come. You may return to your homes and to your jobs." Later he visited one of the missionaries down river and told his story. He confessed he had never known such a burden, nor had he received such an assurance of resounding triumph. **Amazed, the missionary checked the dates and learned that the hour of victory coincided with the collapse of the Communist coup!**

**Related Resource:** [Details of the Failed Communist Coup](#)

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**God Sent a Hurricane in Answer to Prayer** - During colonial days the British settlements in New England were under constant attack by the French. One day word came that a mighty armada of 40 ships was setting out from Nova Scotia to conquer the colonies and claim the territory of New England for France. Our pious forefathers called a day of repentance and prayer. In the Old South Church in Boston they laid hold of God. While they were praying, a wind suddenly sprang up. The group pleaded with the Almighty Creator that the wind might be utilized for the destruction of the invading fleet. The wind grew into a mighty storm and then into a hurricane, so powerful that the invading armada, under the command of Duke D'Anville, found a watery grave along the rock-bound coast of New England.

**Read the full story of [The Miraculous Defeat of the French Fleet, 1746](#)**

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**Prayer and the The Battle of Lexington, April 19, 1775** - The Shot Heard Round the World - "A few farmers had assembled, willing to defend their homes, but determined not to commence hostilities, and unsuspecting of the sudden onslaught. The firing was soon over, and the royal troops remained masters of the field; but **the sacrifice of that little band revolutionized the world**. It was the first scene in the drama which was to carry with it the destinies of mankind." From this inauspicious beginning grew the American

Revolution and the birth of the nation of the United States of America. What is less well known was what was transpiring "behind the scenes."

The Providential hand of God is evident in this event. About one month earlier, on March 22, the Governor of Connecticut had called upon the colony to observe a **"Day of public Fasting and Prayer...** that God would graciously pour out his Holy Spirit on us, to bring us to a thorough repentance and effectual reformation;... That He would restore, preserve and secure the liberties of this, and all the other American Colonies, and make this land a mountain of Holiness and habitation of Righteousness forever.— That God would preserve and confirm the Union of the Colonies in the pursuit and practice of that Religion and virtue which will honor Him..." **What day had [Governor Jonathan Trumbull](#) (Ed: A student of theology with license to preach) selected for them to be praying?** "Wednesday, the nineteenth Day of April" – the very day that fighting had begun! God had an entire colony praying on the day that the **"[shot heard 'round the world](#)"** occurred, which eventually led to the independence of the United States and a new era of liberty for mankind.

[Read the Full Story of Prayer, Providence and the Battle of Lexington!](#)

The role of prayer and birth of America is further documented -

During times of calamity or crisis both church and civil authorities would proclaim **days of fasting and prayer**; and when God responded with deliverance and blessing, they would proclaim **days of thanksgiving and prayer**. From 1620 until the American Revolution at least 1000 such days were proclaimed by governments at all levels (Ed: So much for the so-called division of church and state foisted on us by the anti-God crowd! Fortunately there was no ACLU or Supreme Court at that time!), and many more by various churches. ([Click for full list of these days of fasting and prayer](#)) This continued during our struggle for independence, through our first century as a nation, and, in some measure, even up until today.....

On October 17, 1777, [British General Burgoyne was defeated by Colonial forces at Saratoga](#) Earlier, General Howe was supposed to have marched north to join Burgoyne's 11,000 men at Saratoga. However, in his haste to leave London for a holiday, Lord North forgot to sign the dispatch to General Howe. The dispatch was pigeon-holed and not found until years later in the archives of the British army. This inadvertence, plus the fact that contrary winds kept British reinforcements delayed at sea for three months, totally altered the outcome at Saratoga in favor of America.<sup>1</sup>

In response to the victory, the Continental Congress proclaimed a day of thanksgiving and praise to God. In part, they stated,

*"Forasmuch as it is the indispensable duty of all men to adore the superintending [providence](#) of Almighty God, . . . and it having pleased Him in His abundant mercy not only to continue to us the innumerable bounties of His common providence, but also to smile upon us in the prosecution of a just and necessary war for the defence and establishment of our inalienable rights and liberties, particularly in that He hath been pleased . . . to crown our arms with most signal success: it is therefore recommended . . . to set apart Thursday, the 18th day of December, for solemn thanksgiving and praise."*

They recommended for everyone to confess their sins and humbly ask God, "through the merits of Jesus Christ, mercifully to forgive and blot them out of remembrance" and thus He then would be able to pour out His blessings upon every aspect of the nation.

This is the official resolution of our Congress during the Revolutionary War! No wonder the blessings of God flowed upon this nation. Similar resolutions were also issued by the Commander of the American army, [George Washington](#).

Read the entire fascinating article [America Relies on God - Public Days of Fasting and Thanksgiving During the American Revolution](#) - **We need to see a return of the modern church to days of fasting and prayer for our nation....before it is too late!**

An Added Anecdotal Story - You may read in your United States history how [George Washington](#) found rest and relief in prayer during the trying times he and his soldiers passed through at [Valley Forge](#). With all the cares and anxieties of that time upon him, he used to have recourse to prayer. One day a farmer approaching the camp heard an earnest voice. On coming nearer, he saw George Washington on his knees, his cheeks wet with tears, praying to God. The farmer returned home and said to his wife: "George Washington will succeed! George Washington will succeed! The Americans will secure their independence!" "What makes you think so, Isaac?" asked his wife. The farmer replied: "I heard him pray, Hannah, out in the woods today, and the Lord will surely hear his prayer. He will, Hannah; thee may rest assured He will."

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**Praying for Sufficient Grace** - In the early days of the English Keswick Bible Conference in the Lakes District of England, one of the most popular Bible teachers was a man named [Prebendary Webb-Peploe](#). When Dr. Webb-Peploe was a young man, one of his dear children died suddenly while the family vacationed at the seaside. Returning from the funeral, the father was wracked with

grief, and he went into his study and knelt in prayer, beseeching God to make His grace sufficient. "Lord," he said, "please make your grace sufficient." But he felt no comfort, and he sobbed in dark despair and pain. He tried to read his Bible, but there seemed no message there for him. Then he happened to glance up and see the framing over the fireplace. It was the very text of Scripture about which he had been praying—2 Corinthians 12:9. For the first time he noticed that one word was printed in capital letters, the word IS: My grace IS sufficient for thee." Suddenly the light came on. "Lord, forgive me," he cried. "I have been asking Thee to make Thy grace sufficient for me, and all the time Thou hast been saying to me, 'My grace IS sufficient for thee.' I thank Thee for sufficient grace and I appropriate it now. - From Rob Morgan's sermon on 2 Corinthians 12:9: My Grace is Sufficient

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**Wesley's Prayer Room** - Said Warren W. Wiersbe, pastor of Moody Church: "One of the most moving experiences of my life came when I stepped from John Wesley's bedroom in his London home into the little adjacent prayer room. Outside the house was the traffic noise of City Road, but inside that prayer chamber was the holy hush of God. "Its only furnishings were a walnut table which held a Greek New Testament and a candlestick, a small stool and a chair. When he was in London, Wesley entered the room early each morning to read God's Word and pray." The guide in Wesley's home told me: "This little room was the powerhouse of Methodism!" - Paul Tan - Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations

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**Maclaren's One Hour** - [Alexander Maclaren](#) was one of the clearest Bible Expositors of the age. How he became such a Bible scholar is worthy of note. One who in his early ministry was an assistant to the great Baptist preacher, once asked him what had contributed most of all to his success. Doctor Maclaren, after deprecating the idea that he had attained "success," said that he owed all that was in himself and his ministry to the habit, never broken, of spending one hour a day "alone with the Eternal." The hour which he took was from nine to ten in the morning. His assistant says that he was sometimes allowed to be in the room with the pastor, but no word was allowed. In his well-worn armchair he sat, with his big Bible on his knees, sometimes reading its pages, more frequently his hand over his face. During that hour he did not allow himself to read even the Bible for texts, or as a student. It was read as a child would read a letter from an absent father; as a loving heart would drink in again the message from a loved one far away.—Pittsburgh Christian Advocate

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**George Mueller's Morning Devotion** - George Mueller, who developed highly successful ministries to homeless children in the 19th century, wrote this in his diary on May 9, 1841:

It has pleased the Lord to teach me a truth, the benefit of which I have not lost for more than fourteen years. The point is this: I saw more clearly than ever that the first great primary business to which I ought to attend every day was, to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not how much I might serve the Lord, or how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man might be nourished... Before this time my practice had been, at least for ten years previously, as an habitual thing, to give myself to prayer after having dressed myself in the morning. Now, I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the Word of God, and to meditation on it, that thus my heart might be comforted, encouraged, warned, reprov'd, instructed... The first thing I did, after having asked in a few words the Lord's blessing upon His precious Word, was to begin to meditate on the Word of God, searching as it were into every verse to get blessing out of it; not for the sake of public ministry of the Word, not for the sake of preaching on what I had meditated upon, but for the sake of obtaining food for my soul. The result I have found to be almost invariably this, that after a very few minutes my soul has been led to confession, or to thanksgiving, or to supplication; so that, though I did not, as it were, give myself to prayer, but to meditation, yet it turned almost immediately more or less into prayer. When thus I have been for a while making confession or intercession or supplication, or have given thanks, I go on to the next words or verse, turning all, as I go, into prayer for myself or others, as the Word may lead to it... By breakfast time, with rare exceptions, I am in a peaceful if not happy state of heart.

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**The Power of Prayer to Break Down Spiritual Strongholds** - This week I had lunch with a very interesting man named David Watson, who is executive director of an organization named Asian Partners International. He told me of a time when he entered the mystical city of [Banaras \(Varanasi\)](#), in India, on the Ganges River. This is a city that has over 3000 years of continuous inhabitation, and it is one of the seven holy cities of the Hindus and a stronghold of satanic power. It's reported that there are thirty-three hundred million shrines and a half million images of the deities in this city. Since it would take a lifetime to visit all these shrines, pilgrims are urged to come to the holy city and never leave. That makes it the most revered spot in the world for a Hindu to die. According to David Watson, no mission's project has ever lasted more than six months here. It is a city that Satan has owned. Well, David told me that he came to Banaras, uncertain of how to go about starting a church. For several days he wandered around, praying and thinking. One day he met a young man who appeared to be a "hippie." He ate tomatoes and bread, and that's all, because his funds were low. David invited him for a meal, and there he learned that this young man was a Christian, from a Christian family, and had

moved to Banaras from Australia. The young man, whose name was Kim Dyer, said, in effect, "I only know how to do two things—to shear sheep and to pray. One day on my father's ranch in Australia, I was shearing sheep and praying at the same time, and the Lord seemed to impress me to come here to this city of Banaras. I sold my truck and my handful of possessions and have moved here, but I'm not sure why." David said, "Can you be a prayer warrior for this city? And can you lead a prayer network here? If I send people to pray for this city, can you take them around on prayer walks and teach them how to pray for this city?" Kim said, "I can talk to one person all right, but I can't talk to more than one person at a time. I get nervous." So David began sending people to Kim, and Kim began teaching them how to pray for this city. More and more people developed a burden for Banaras, and from 1989 to 1993, all they did was pray. Now, Kim Dyer goes everywhere, teaching on the subject of prayer, speaking to large groups without any fear. And 300 churches have been started in the city of Banaras. - From a Sermon by Rob Morgan on Luke 11:1-13 Jesus' Little Sermon on Prayer

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**Never Give Up!** - (Acts 7:55-58, 59, 60) Today I'd like for us to study the results of his (Stephen) martyrdom and see how God answered his dying prayer....Two godly men were stoned in the Bible--one in the Old Testament and one in the New. Zechariah and Stephen. Both of them uttered dying prayers regarding the ones who were slaying them, and both prayers were answered. In the Old Testament, Zechariah asked God to judge his persecutors (2 Chronicles 24:17-22), and God did. In the New Testament, Stephen asked God to forgive his persecutors....And thus Stephen's dying prayer was answered (Acts 9:3-6, 15), and the young man Saul was converted to Jesus Christ and became Paul the Apostle, the greatest missionary the world has ever known....We must be careful to beseech heaven for the salvation of even the most unlikely people, and we mustn't give up praying. Jesus taught us we should always pray and not lose heart (Luke 18:1). A few weeks ago, Jonathan and Yvonne Thigpen were here in our services. Yvonne once told me how her father became a Christian. While Yvonne was growing up, she knew there were periods of time when her dad was under profound conviction, but he adamantly resisted the Gospel. Once, for example, when evangelist Bobby Jackson was conducting a revival in a nearby church, he visited Yvonne's dad and witnessed to him. Her father reacted with hostility, but for two weeks afterward he was sullen and disturbed. "Yet he never yielded his life to Christ," said Yvonne, "and that just broke our hearts. But we continued praying." Some years later, Yvonne's mother, a severe diabetic, became ill and lapsed into a coma. She was so bad off that, to everyone's surprise, her husband actually said a prayer, something like this: "Lord, I just can't bear to lose Ruth right now. If you'll spare her life, I'll give you my heart." Ruth did recover. And Yvonne recalls, "On the first Sunday my mother was able to return to church, my dad went with her and stepped out and gave his heart and life to the Lord Jesus Christ." How long had Yvonne and others been praying for him? Twenty-five years. "As soon as I accepted the Lord as a child," she said, "I started praying for him. And we prayed twenty-five years." - From sermon by Rob Morgan on Acts 7-8: No Hopeless Cases

**D. L. Moody** - Though we may not live to see the answer to our prayers, if we cry mightily to God, the answer will come.

**E. M. Bounds** - Prayers are deathless. The lips that uttered them may be closed in death, the heart that felt them may have ceased to beat, but the prayers live before God, and God's heart is set on them and prayers outlive the lives of those who uttered them; outlive a generation, outlive an age, outlive a world...

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**Delayed Answers to Prayer** - Broom Hilda, a cartoon character, is a little three-foot-high witch who is all hair and face. In one amusing comic strip she approaches a wishing well and, standing next to it, puts her hands on the edge of the well and says loudly, "I don't want anything!" And the next panel is quiet. Then she steps back and says, "I just thought you'd enjoy knowing there was one satisfied person around." The cartoon character Ziggy is standing, looking up on a mountain. The sky is dark and there's one cloud up there. Ziggy says, "Have I been put on hold for the rest of my life?" Sometimes prayer feels like that, doesn't it? "Will You ever answer?" As one man put it, "The heavens are brass and nothing comes back." —Tom Wilson cartoon, Universal Press Syndicate, July 18, 1980 (Quoted in [Swindoll's Ultimate Book of Illustrations and Quotes](#))

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**Lengthy Prayers** - Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer told a story on the subject. It seems that a certain minister was in the habit of profound prayers, oftentimes resorting to words beyond the ken of his simple flock. This went on week after week, to the dismay and frustration of the congregation. At last, a wee Scottish woman in the choir ventured to take the matter in hand. On a given Sunday, as the minister was waxing his most eloquently verbose, the little woman reached across the curtain separating the choir from the pulpit. Taking a firm grasp on the frock tail of the minister, she gave it a yank, and was heard to whisper, "Jes' call Him Fether, and ask 'im for somethin'." [Richard Seume, Shoes for the Road](#) (Quoted in [Swindoll's Ultimate Book of Illustrations and Quotes](#))

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**Stop and Start** - On one occasion, evangelist Dwight L. Moody had been the recipient of numerous benefits from the Lord. In his abundance, he was suddenly seized with the realization that his heavenly Father was showering on him almost more than he could take. Encouraged and overwhelmed, he paused to pray. With great volume he simply stated, "Stop, God!" Now that's spontaneous. It is also a beautiful change from, "Eternal, almighty, gracious Father of all good things, Thy hand hath abundantly and gloriously supplied our deepest needs. How blessed and thankful we are to come to Thee and declare unto Thee ..." and on and on and on,

grinding into snore city. After I had told that story in one service, a fellow said to me, "I've got another one for God. God, start! I mean, He can stop on Moody, but I want Him to start with me, I need some of that."—Charles R. Swindoll, [Strengthening Your Grip](#)

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**Prayer Changes Nothing!** - The late [Dr. Donald Barnhouse](#), greatly admired American pastor and author, once came to the pulpit and made a statement that stunned his congregation: "Prayer changes nothing!" You could have heard a pin drop in that packed Sunday worship service in Philadelphia. His comment, of course, was designed to make Christians realize that God is sovereignly in charge of everything. Our times are literally in His hands. No puny human being by uttering a few words in prayer takes charge of events and changes them. God does the shaping, the changing; it is He who is in control. Barnhouse was correct, except in one minor detail. Prayer changes me. When you and I pray, we change, and that is one of the major reasons prayer is such a therapy that counteracts anxiety.—Charles R. Swindoll, [Strengthening Your Grip](#)

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**A Martyrs' Prayer** - This prayer was written by seven anonymous martyrs in 1528 just before their painful death. The youngest, a fourteen-year-old boy, refused to recant his faith despite being promised wealth for life.

O Lord, Thou art our Shield,  
We turn to Thee.  
For us it is a minor pain  
When they take our lives.  
Eternity Thou has prepared for us,  
So when we suffer shame and stress here  
It is not for nothing, We will be amply repaid.

[Persecution.org](#)

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Trams and trolleys and some buses have long poles which reach up and bring electricity and power to the motors from overhead wires. The pole may be within an inch of the wire, yet no power can pass; the bus or trolley stays in the same place. The people inside can sing and shout and preach and hold a great meeting, but when they get out they are still at the same place.—[Cameron V. Thompson, Master Secrets of Prayer](#)

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Our baby Joy set her heart on a certain present. She asked her sisters how many pennies it would take to buy it. Then she prayed for 1,400 pennies. A few days later some friends came by with a jar of money they were saving for us. In it were slightly more than 1,400 pennies.—[Cameron V. Thompson, Master Secrets of Prayer](#)

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**Fanny Crosby's Prayer Life** - [Fanny Crosby](#), though blinded in infancy, greeted friends and strangers alike with a cheerful "God bless your dear soul." And, according to her own statement, she never attempted to write a hymn without first kneeling in prayer. If this be true, Fanny Crosby spent considerable time on her knees. She wrote no less than 8,000 songs. Miss Crosby was often under pressure to meet deadlines. It was under such circumstances in 1869 that she tried to write words for a tune Composer W. H. Doane had sent her. But she couldn't write. Then she remembered she had forgotten her prayer. Rising from her knees, she dictated—as fast as her assistant could write—words for the famous hymn, "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross." But one day in 1874, Fanny Crosby prayed for more material things. She had run short of money and needed five dollars—even change. There was no time to draw on her publishers, so she simply prayed for the money. Her prayer ended, she was walking to and fro in her room trying to "get into the mood" for another hymn when an admirer called. Greeting the stranger with "God bless your dear soul," the two chatted briefly. In the parting handshake the admirer left something in the hymn-writer's hand. It was five dollars. Rising from a prayer of thanks the blind poetess wrote: "All the way my Saviour leads me."—Clint Banner

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**"Synchronized Prayers"** - In 1947, while I was travelling on horseback - Cental China with Mr. Fred Mitchell, we came to a spot that was notorious as a robber hideout. The missionary accompanying us was keeping a sharp look-out. Suddenly we came upon a body lying beside the path. The victim was obviously not long dead. The brigands had been at work. A few days later I received a letter from my wife, asking whether we had been in any danger on a date and at a time she named. On that particular night she had been suddenly awakened with the strong impression that I was in danger. She rose and prayed until the burden lifted and peace returned. On consulting my diary, I discovered that this midnight prayer synchronized with the time we were passing through that robber-infested area. God heard and answered the prayer for the safety of His servants. - [John Oswalt Sanders](#) **Have you ever had a strong urge to pray for someone? What did you do?**

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**Have You Unwrapped Your Heavenly Presents?** (Read James 4:2-3) - I once imagined I was in Heaven. Walking along with the



Angel Gabriel I said,

'Gabe, what is that big building there?'

'You'll be disappointed,' he answered.

'I don't think you want to see it.'

But I insisted, and he showed me floor after floor of beautiful gifts, all wrapped and ready to be sent.

'Gabriel, what are all these?'

He said, I thought rather sadly, 'We wrapped these things, but people never called for them.' —[John R. Rice](#)

[Charles Swindoll's](#) version - Heaven is filled with a room that will surprise all of us when we see it. The room has within it large boxes neatly packaged with a lovely ribbon on top with your name on it, "Never delivered to Earth because never requested from Earth."

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While very ill, John Knox, the founder of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, called to his wife and said, "Read me that Scripture where I first cast my anchor." After he listened to the beautiful prayer of Jesus recorded in John 17, he seemed to forget his weakness. He began to pray, interceding earnestly for his fellowmen. He prayed for the ungodly who had thus far rejected the gospel. He pleaded in behalf of people who had been recently converted. And he requested protection for the Lord's servants, many of whom were facing persecution. As Knox prayed, his spirit went Home to be with the Lord. The man of whom Queen Mary had said, "I fear his prayers more than I do the armies of my enemies," ministered through prayer until the moment of his death.—[Our Daily Bread](#)

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**Ambassador On Duty** - Late one night a salesman drove into a strange city and tried to get a room in a hotel. The clerk informed him that there was no vacancy. Disappointed, he started to leave the lobby when a dignified gentleman offered to share his room with him. Gratefully the traveler accepted his kindness. Just before retiring, the man who had shown such hospitality, knelt and prayed aloud. In his petition he referred to the stranger by name and asked the Lord to bless him. Upon awakening the next morning, he told his guest it was his habit to read the Bible and commune with God at the beginning of each day, and he asked if he would like to join him. The Holy Spirit had been speaking to the heart of this salesman, and when his host tactfully confronted him with the claims of Christ, he gladly received the Savior. As the two were ready to part, they exchanged business cards. The new believer was amazed to read, "[William Jennings Bryan](#), Secretary of State." —Paul R. Van Gorder

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**Power of United Prayer** - A new believer was greatly impressed with the custom of his pastor to occasionally pray all night with his deacons and other consecrated Christians. One night, as they were praying in the pastor's study in the church, a dentist with a drinking problem wended his way home. The hour was late. Seeing a light beaming from the pastor's study, he went to investigate. He was told that he had been one of those for whom they had unitedly prayed during the hours of the night. It wasn't long before the dentist was on his knees crying to God for mercy and forgiveness! Oh, the power of united prayer! - Stephen Olford

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**Where Are These Men Today?** - It is said that Richard Baxter stained his study walls with his praying breath, and streams of living water poured forth carrying salvation to hundreds. [David Brainerd](#) so pleaded with God for the Indians of America that in the depths of the woods on the coldest winter mornings his clothes were wet and frozen with the perspiration that flowed from his body. George Whitefield, after prolonged closet wrestlings "went to the devil's fair and took more than a thousand souls out of the paw of the lion in a single day." Where, in our easy-going, pleasure-seeking, crime-rampant 'present evil age' are there mighty pleadings, and penitential groanings, and sobs for dying souls? ..." - Stephen Olford

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[David Brainerd](#) was a man of great spiritual power. The work which he accomplished by prayer was simply marvelous. [Dr. A. J. Gordon](#), in giving a sketch of Brainerd's experience, said,

"In the depths of those forests, alone, unable to speak the language of the Indians, he spent whole days literally in prayer. What was he praying for? He knew that he could not reach those savages; he did not understand their language. If he wanted to speak at all, he must find somebody who could vaguely interpret his thought; therefore he knew that anything he should do must be absolutely dependent upon the power of God. So he spent whole days in prayer, simply that the power of the Holy Ghost might come upon him so unmistakably that these people should not be able to stand before him. What was his answer? Once he preached and the interpreter was so intoxicated that he could hardly stand up. That was the best he could do. Yet scores were converted through that sermon. We can account for it only by the tremendous power of God behind him."—Selected

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**Luther Prays for Melancthon** - When Melancthon was seriously ill at Weimar in 1540, Luther audaciously stormed the heights of heaven, came back, took Philipp's hand and thundered in his ear the words: "Be of good comfort, Philipp, you will not die! Our Lord God must hear me! I have pleaded all His promises on prayer in the Holy Scriptures that I could remember; so that He must hear me!" Melancthon awoke as out of a deep swoon; began to breathe deeply and regularly; new life burst through his veins; and he became well. - Stephen Olford

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**Putting Your Money Where Your Prayer Is** - A family in a certain neighborhood was in dire need. This need was discussed, and it was decided to meet at the church at a certain hour and pray about the matter. Everyone present offered an urgent prayer for the relief of the family and were preparing to leave when a wagon loaded with groceries stopped at the door of the church. A lad shouted, "Folks, here's my dad's prayer for that family." - Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations by Peter Lee Tan

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When asked how much time he spent in prayer, [George Mueller's](#) reply was, "Hours every day. But I live in the spirit of prayer. I pray as I walk and when I lie down and when I arise. And the answers are always coming." There are moments when, whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees. [Mueller](#) once wrote in his diary...

It has pleased the Lord to teach me a truth, the benefit of which I have not lost for more than fourteen years. The point is this: I saw more clearly than ever that the first great primary business to which I ought to attend every day was to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not how much I might serve the Lord, or how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man might be nourished....

Before this time my practice had been, at least for ten years previously, as a habitual thing, to give myself to prayer after having dressed myself in the morning. Now, I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the Word of God, and to meditation on it, that thus my heart might be comforted, encouraged, warned, reprov'd, instructed....

The first thing I did, after having asked in a few words the Lord's blessing upon His precious Word, was to begin to meditate on the Word of God, searching as it were into every verse to get blessing out of it; not for the sake of public ministry of the Word, not for the sake of preaching on what I had meditated upon, but for the sake of obtaining food for my soul. The result I have found to be almost invariably this, that after a very few minutes my soul has been led to confession, or to thanksgiving, or to supplication; so that, though I did not, as it were, give myself to prayer, but to meditation, yet it turned almost immediately more or less into prayer. When thus I have been for a while making confession or intercession or supplication, or have given thanks, I go on to the next words or verse, turning all, as I go, into prayer for myself or others, as the Word may lead to it....

By breakfast time, with rare exceptions, I am in a peaceful if not happy state of heart.

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**FIVE FINGER PRAYERS** (Php 4:6,19,James 5:13-18) Pray for one another. --James 5:16 - Prayer is a conversation with God, not a formula. Yet sometimes we might need to use a "method" to freshen up our prayer time. We can pray the Psalms or other Scriptures (such as The Lord's Prayer), or use the ACTS method (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication). I recently came across this "Five-Finger Prayer" to use as a guide when praying for others:

- \* When you fold your hands, the thumb is nearest you. So begin by praying for those closest to you--your loved ones (Philippians 1:3-5).
- \* The index finger is the pointer. Pray for those who teach--Bible teachers and preachers, and those who teach children (1 Thessalonians 5:25).
- \* The next finger is the tallest. It reminds you to pray for those in authority over you--national and local leaders, and your supervisor at work (1 Timothy 2:1-2).
- \* The fourth finger is usually the weakest. Pray for those who are in trouble or who are suffering (James 5:13-16).
- \* Then comes your little finger. It reminds you of your smallness in relation to God's greatness. Ask Him to supply your needs (Philippians 4:6,19).

Whatever method you use, just talk with your Father. He wants to hear what's on your heart. —Anne Cetas

Here is another variation on this same story:

A Christian woman teaching in Africa thought to devise a good way to remind her young students of the need of praying daily, not only for self but also for others.

Holding up her arm, the woman explained, "When I am ready to pray, children, I look at my left hand. I notice that my thumb is the digit closest to me. This reminds me to pray for those near me — my family, my friends, my neighbors."

Taking hold of her index finger she added, "My teachers used to point this one at us in school. Some-times the preacher too will shake-this finger in church as a needed warning. So as I come to this part of my hand I pray for my teachers, the preachers, and others who have been my guides."

The children waited eagerly for her next comment. "My middle finger," she continued, "is my largest one. It stands above the others. This brings to my mind the rulers of our country, and others in authority, and I pray for them. This next finger is called the weakest," she added. "It makes me think of the helpless, the sick, and the poor who require my aid. I ask the Lord to supply their wants and strengthen them in body and soul."

Coming to her "pinky," she concluded, "This one stands for me, and so I finish by praying for myself and all the things that I need."

The children never forgot that simple lesson; and it might be well even for older folk to bear it in mind when they fold their hands to speak to God. Our text says that it is a sin to fail to remember others before the Throne. If you have been guilty of such neglect, go down the fingers of your hand and let them remind you of your necessary duty of intercession!

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**Confident Access** - 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 - [Mont Saint-Michel](#) is a tidal island located about a half-mile off the coast of Normandy, France. For centuries it has been the site of an abbey and monastery that has attracted religious pilgrims. Until the construction of a causeway, it was notorious for its dangerous access that resulted in the death of some pilgrims. At low tide it is encompassed by sand banks, and at high tide it is surrounded by water. Accessing the island was a cause for fear. Access to God for Old Testament Jews was also a cause for fear. When God thundered on Mt. Sinai, the people feared approaching Him (Ex. 19:10-16). And when access to God was granted through the high priest, specific instructions had to be followed (Lev. 16:1-34). Accidentally touching the ark of the covenant, which represented the holy presence of God, would result in death (see 2 Sa 6:7-8< /a>). But because of Jesus' death and resurrection, we can now approach God without fear. God's penalty for sin has been satisfied, and we are invited into God's presence: "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace" (Heb. 4:16). Because of Jesus we can come to God through prayer anywhere, anytime. —Dennis Fisher

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**The Bus Driver** - A pastor and a bus driver went to heaven. The bus driver got a big beautiful mansion with large rooms. The preacher got only a one-room bungalow, so he went to St. Peter and said, "How come a I got a very small place and the bus driver got that beautiful house? I've preached the Good News all my life!" St. Peter replied, "When you preached, the people fell asleep. When the bus driver drove his bus, people prayed." - Bo Reud

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**Advancing on Your Knees** - Each spring and summer since 1976 Hans Mullikin, a 39-year-old Baptist lay preacher from Marshall, Texas, has been crawling on his knees toward the White House in Washington. On November 22 he ended his 2 1/2 year, 2,560-kilometer crawl only to be told that President Carter was too busy to see him. To the obvious question, "Why?" Mr. Mullikin replied: "I just wanted to show America that we need to get on our knees and repent.... This is something I had in my heart and wanted to do for my country. Said Mr. Mullikin in an interview: "The hardest part of the whole trip was getting down on my knees the first morning." He wore a white T-Shirt with S.O.N. across his chest, representing his "Save Our Nations" slogan (as in The Calgary Herald, Nov. 23). For his incredible crawl Mr. Mullikin wore a pair of bulky, well-worn goalie pads strapped to his knees with ten layers of padding underneath. As he crawled, he gripped a bar with a tricycle wheel on each end. Each night, he jogged back to his truck to sleep. The next morning, he drove to the stopping point and resumed his crawl. He crawled during the spring and summer months, and in the winter returned to Marshall to his job at a lumber mill. We admire Mr. Mullikin's zeal. We do not know about his wisdom. Yet the Church may learn from his symbolic crawl. The Church will only advance on its knees. For those who know anything at all about prayer for revival, they will recognize that "the hardest part" is getting down on our knees for the first time. - 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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**Solomon's Prayer** - "So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who

is able to judge this great people of Yours?" (1Kings 3:9) - At 5 P.M. on April 12, 1945, [Vice President Harry Truman](#), wearied by his afternoon in the United States Senate, ducked into Sam Rayburn's private office in the Capitol. Someone mentioned to him that the White House had called. Harry picked up the phone and dialed the number, National 1414. Press Secretary Steve Early came on, voice tense, asking Truman to come to the White House "quickly and quietly." He was to enter the main entrance on Pennsylvania Avenue. Harry exited the room alone, then began racing through the ornate halls of the Capitol, shoes pounding marble. He jumped in his old Mercury and sped through the traffic. At 5:25, he pulled under the north portico. Two ushers took his hat and escorted him to the small elevator. Waiting for him upstairs was Eleanor Roosevelt. "Harry," she said, "the president is dead." Truman groped for words. "Is there anything I can do for you?" he asked at length. "Is there anything we can do for you?" Eleanor replied. "You are the one in trouble now." That night, Truman took the oath of office as president of the United States, his hand resting on an inexpensive Gideon Bible grabbed from the desk of the White House's head usher. The following Monday, Truman addressed a joint session of Congress. His speech lasted but fifteen minutes. Most of it had been written by presidential speechwriters, but the conclusion he had added himself. The Congress was hushed and the nation spellbound by their radios as he said:

At this moment I have in my heart a prayer. As I have assumed my duties, I humbly pray Almighty God, in the words of King Solomon: "Give therefore Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this Thy so great a people?" I ask only to be a good and faithful servant of my Lord and my people. (**Ed comment: May his tribe increase in Was hington, DC!**)

—[Robert Morgan - From This Verse](#)

**Follow-up** - God answered Truman's prayer in a most striking manner, causing him to show favor to [Chaim Wiseman](#) and the [Zionist movement](#) that was seeking to reestablish a homeland in Palestine. And so even against advice of some of his most trusted advisors Truman agreed to recognize the birth of the new nation of Israel ([see hour long BBC documentary on the Birth of Israel](#)), becoming the first nation to do so. One wonders if this was not one of the reason America was birthed with a godly heritage and why she has been so blessed over the centuries since 1776? (see Genesis 12:3)

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**"Never Again" Feel Awkward Praying in a Restaurant!** - [Charles Colson](#), former special assistant to President Richard Nixon, went to prison for his role in the Watergate scandal and was converted to Christ through reading C. S. Lewis' Mere Christianity. He wrote of his conversion in Born Again, a book that was launched with a backbreaking tour that ended up in California. Arriving late at his hotel, he and his friend Fred Denne went to the coffee shop for a snack. The room had a Spanish motif; red tile on the floor, wrought iron tables and chairs. A waitress in a pink uniform waited on them. The men noticed she looked like a young starlet, blondish hair and pleasant-faced.

"Two cheese omelets, one milk, and one iced tea," said Fred.

After she left, the two men reviewed the next day's schedule a few minutes, then decided to ask the Lord's blessings on their anticipated meal. They bowed their heads, and, as blessings go, it was fairly long. When they raised their heads, the waitress was standing nearby, omelets in hand.

"Hey," she said loudly, "were you guys praying?" Everyone in the small room turned to look at them.

"Yes, we were," said Colson.

"Hey, that's neat," said the waitress. "I've never seen anybody do that in here before. Are you preachers?"

They said no, but she persisted in asking questions. Then she said, "I'm a Christian. At least I was once."

"What happened?" the men asked.

"I accepted Jesus as my Savior at a rally when I was a teenager. Then I went to live in Hawaii. Well, I just lost interest, I guess. Forgot about it."

"I don't think you lost it," Colson said gently. "You just put it aside for a while."

The waitress seemed thoughtful. "It's funny, but the moment I saw you guys praying I felt excited all over again."

They talked to her at some length about returning to the Lord, about the prodigal son, and about the Lord's love and forgiveness.

Later during their stay at the hotel they saw her again. "Hey, you guys," she shouted. She told them she had already called a Christian friend and was joining a Bible study the next day. "And I'm going to find a church, too. I've come back."

Colson later wrote, "**Until that night, I had felt awkward at times praying over meals in crowded restaurants NEVER AGAIN.**"

-[Charles W. Colson, Life Sentence - Page 106](#)

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**Someone Prayed** - "When the days of feasting had completed their cycle, Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, "Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually." (Job 1:5) - The greatest thing we do for our children is to pray for them, to be their prayer warriors, to be their champions before the throne of grace....Last week a friend of mine, David Sutton, told me of a man whom he had recently led to the Lord and baptized. This man had been resistant to the Gospel for years, and when David or others

tried to witness to him, he'd shrug them off. Then, during a little episode of sickness, he had a change of heart and he accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior; and he was baptized. The unusual thing was his age. He was nearly 100 years old. David said, "He was in his 90s, and he's the oldest person I've ever baptized." When I heard that story, my first thought was: Someone undoubtedly prayed for him a long time ago. He must have had a praying mother or a praying father; and, though delayed, those prayers were answered in the end.....We have a man in our church—Joe Henderson—who recently told me a story from his own life. He was saved many years ago, during the years surrounding World War II. He was so excited that he wanted to witness to his half-brother, a very wealthy man and heir to a great fortune. Joe was very zealous and his witness was evidently too assertive. It caused a rupture in their relationship. For many years the brothers had little to do with each other. My friend prayed every day for his brother—and he **prayed virtually every day for 56 years**. Finally the man had a stroke and sent word that he would like to see Joe. Joe and Betty came and spent a half hour and prayed for the man, but they were careful to be gentle in their approach. On the next visit, the man said, "Brother, I am born again!" He gave witness to his conversion—after having been prayed for 56 years..... Job 42:10 says: "After Job had prayed for his friends, the Lord made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before." Notice that—Job's blessings were doubled. Everything was exactly doubled. Job 42:12 says: The Lord blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the first. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand donkeys. And he also had seven sons and three daughters....His sheep were doubled, his camels were doubled, his oxen were doubled, his donkeys were doubled—but not his children. Before his affliction, he had ten children; and after his affliction everything was doubled—but not his children. He had ten before and ten after. Why? Because his first ten were still alive and well and in heaven; and so he had twenty after all.....Pray for your children and be their intercessor day and night. Everything was doubled....Finally, be prayerful. One thing is missing from chapters 4 through 37 of Job—at no time during those chapters did Job's friends gather around and pray for him! - Rob Morgan Sermon on Job "I'm Worried About My Kids"

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**Loud and Clear** - Up in Roan Mountain, there was a church having trouble with their new sound system; sometimes the CB traffic would filter in through the speakers. One morning the pastor rose for his morning prayer and said, "Our Father in heaven..." And just at that moment, the words blared back: "10-4, Good Buddy. You're coming in loud and clear!" - Rob Morgan

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**Going Directly to the Lord** - Mrs. Oswald Chambers once said of her husband, "Like all teachers of forceful personality, he constantly had people longing to pour out their intimate troubles to him. I remember at the close of one meeting a woman came up to him with the words, "Oh, Mr. Chambers, I feel I must tell you about myself.' As he led her away to a quiet corner, I resigned myself to a long wait; but he was back again in a few minutes. As we went home, I remarked on the speed with which he managed to free himself, and he replied, "I just asked her if she had ever told God all about herself. When she said she hadn't, I advised her to go home and pour out before Him as honestly as she could all her troubles, then see if she still needed or wanted to relate them to me." Chambers knew the importance of going directly to Jesus when faced with a special need or a trying situation. - 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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**Are You Losing Hope, Adrift At Sea?** - Several years ago in an old bookshop in Naperville, Illinois, I found a book entitled [We Thought We Heard The Angels Sing](#), written by Lieutenant James Whittaker who was one of seven men whose plane crashed into the Pacific Ocean on October 21, 1942. Their leader was the famous Captain [Eddie Rickenbacker](#), and these seven men found themselves stranded on three rafts with no water and only four oranges. Tying their boats together, they drifted day after day without food or water, sometimes delirious, tortured by the relentless sun, and constantly encircled by the triangular dorsal fins of sharks. It seemed impossible for them to survive, but one of the men, Private Johnny Bartek, was a dedicated Christian who always carried a little New Testament with him so that he could have his daily devotions. It was a pocket-sized, khaki-bound Testament with a zipper arrangement that made it waterproof. Even there, in the middle of the heartless Pacific, Bartek had his devotions; but it wasn't very private and immediately the other six men wanted to know what he was doing. When he explained to them about his daily Bible reading and prayer, they asked him why they couldn't all share in that. And so the men started having their daily devotions and they started at the beginning of the book, in the Gospel of Matthew. Soon, of course, they came to this very passage, to 6:31-34. It immediately became their hope, inspiration, and prayer: What shall we eat? What shall we drink? —Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. As the men read those verses day after day, a remarkable series of miracles started happening. Provision arrived in the nick of time, often in bizarre ways. Just when they were near starvation, for example, a bird would inexplicably land on Rickenbacker's head and they would grab it, carve it up for food, and use its innards for fishing bait. Just when they were near death by thirst, a cloud would drift over and fill their raft with water. **Day after day as they read these verses, prayed, and claimed these promises, God would somehow send food and water, sometimes even a fish jumping into their raft.** For 21 never-to-be-forgotten days they drifted under the blazing sun in the middle of the vast Pacific. Through that experience, Lieutenant James Whittaker, for one, the author of the book, gave his life to Jesus Christ. "I don't think there was a man of us who didn't thank God for that little khaki covered book," he said. **"It led us to prayer and prayer led us to safety."** - Rob Morgan Sermon on Matthew 6:19-34 Consider the Lilies

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**Do You Ever Experience a "Burden" to Pray?** - (Mrs Gracie) was very tired, and she had the house to herself, her husband, [Colonel Archibald Gracie](#), being on a trip. But she couldn't sleep. An oppressive fear came over her, for she suddenly felt that her husband was in peril. She began to pray, and with great earnestness she prayed through the night, seeking release from her prayer vigil, seeking assurance. But none came until five o'clock in the morning. At that point, a deep sense of peace and well-being came over her, and she fell asleep. The date was April 14, 1912. Her husband, Colonel Archibald Gracie, was sailing from Europe to America—aboard the Titanic. The ship on its maiden voyage had struck an iceberg, and Colonel Gracie was among the terrified passengers who had given up all hope of being saved. He did all he could to save the women and children, and then as the ship slipped beneath the waters he cried out to his wife, "Goodbye, my darling." And he was sucked beneath the sea. Instinctive he began to swim upward through the ice-cold water, crying in his heart, "Goodbye, my darling, until we meet again." Suddenly he came to the surface and found himself near an overturned lifeboat. Along with several others, he climbed aboard. He finally found himself cold and terrified, but out of danger, at about five o'clock in the morning, the very time that peace had come to his praying wife. There is, in good, growing Christian marriages, a bond of friendship and love that transcends physical dimensions. There is, in good, growing Christian marriages, a spiritual dynamic that only Christ can impart, a cord that only Christ can weave. - Rob Morgan - Sermon on Genesis 2, Ephesians 5:25-32: A Bride For Her Husband

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**Are You Connected When You Pray?** - I had an acquaintance back in Elizabethton who opened up an optometry practice. For the first day or two, he had not a single patient. Finally he saw a man walking up the sidewalk, and, wanting to appear busy, my friend picked up the phone and pretended to be talking on the phone, jotting down an imaginary appointment in his calendar. The man entered the office and waited patiently until my friend had finished the pretend conversation and hung up the phone. Then he looked up, smiled, and said, "May I help you." "Yes," said the man. "I'm here from the phone company. I've come to install your telephone." Most everyone prays. I think the last poll I say on the subject said that 95% or so of all American adults pray. But the question is, are they connected? Are the lines up? Is the phone operational? Paul is telling us here to "pray in the Spirit." That is, to pray within the context of a Spirit-filled life. To pray as the Holy Spirit prompts and helps and guides and strengthens us. - Sermon by Rob Morgan - Romans 8:26-30 All Things Work Together

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**We Do Not Know What to Pray For** - In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for." (Romans 8:26) - Why don't we know what we should pray for? Because we are not omniscient. We don't know everything, nor can we see into the future. So we don't know whether the things we're asking for will turn out being good or bad for us. An old story illustrates this point very well. A Chinese gentleman lived on the border of China and Mongolia. In those days, there was constant conflict and strife along the perimeter. The Chinese man had a beautiful horse, a mare. One day, she leaped over the corral, raced down the road, crossed the border, and was captured by the Mongolians. His friends came to comfort him. "That's bad news," they said sadly. "What makes you think it's bad news?" asked the Chinaman. "Maybe it's good news." A few days later the mare came bolting into his corral, bringing with it a massive snow white stallion. His friends crowded around. "That's good news!" they cried. "What makes you think it's good news?" he asked. "Maybe it is bad news." Later that week, his son was riding the stallion, trying to break it. He was thrown off and he broke his leg. The friends came. "That's bad news," they cried. "What makes you think it is bad news?" asked the Chinese gentleman. "Maybe it's good news." The next week, war broke out with Mongolia, and a Chinese general came through town drafting all the young men. He took them all and they were all later killed, except for the young man who couldn't go because his leg was broken. The Chinaman said to his friends, "You see, the things you thought were bad turned out good; and the things you thought were good turned out bad." And thus we are. We don't know if the things we want will really be good for us, or bad. We can't see the future. That's why James tells us to say, "If it be thy will..." For God does know the future. He is Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. He knows the end from the beginning. And he knows how all things will turn out.- Sermon by Rob Morgan - Romans 8:26-30 All Things Work Together

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**Pray At All Times** - . Ephesians 6:18 "Pray at all times" (pray on all occasions) - We discover, as we read the Psalms, that King David took this approach. In Psalm 4 he prayed before going to bed. In Psalm 5, he prayed before beginning his day. In Psalm 5, he prayed when he felt like groaning. In Psalm 6, he prayed when he had sinned. In Psalm 7 he prayed when he was under attack. In Psalm 8, he prayed when he was overwhelmed with the beauty of nature. In Psalm 9, he prayed when he was happy and God seemed close at hand. In Psalm 10, he prayed when God seemed far away. - Sermon by Rob Morgan: Ephesians 6:18-25: An Ancient Prayer

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**With All Prayer and Petition** (Ephesians 6:18) - There are **written prayers**. Sometimes when I'm having trouble praying in any other way, I'll write out a prayer. If in the future when one of my great, great grandchildren uncovers my journal in a forgotten box in the attic, he'll find many prayers that I've written out. It's a biblical practice, for many of the psalms are written prayers. One of the most interesting stories I've ever read has to do with the Southern evangelist Mordecai Ham. In 1934 he was asked to conduct a citywide crusade in Charlotte, North Carolina, but in the beginning the crusade went badly. In my files, I have a copy of the prayer

Mordecai Ham wrote out on the stationary of his Charlotte hotel. He prayed: "Lord, give us a Pentecost here. ... Pour out thy Spirit tomorrow. ... " His prayer was answered beyond his dreams, because it was during that campaign that Billy Graham was won to Christ.

....there are **bedtime prayers**. I read about one little girl who was having her bedtime prayers. Her mother heard her laughing up a storm. Going into her room, she scolded her for laughing and giggling during her prayer. But she replied, "It's okay, Mom. I was just telling God a joke." I don't usually tell God jokes, but I hope that my prayer is as pleasant and natural and real as that. Katrina and I end each day by praying together in bed, and almost always my last waking thoughts are in prayer.

...there are **quick prayers**. I've recently learned a new prayer technique from the writings of missionary [Amy Carmichael](#) who learned it herself from the famous Bible teacher, Dr. F. B. Meyer. She said that Dr. Meyer told her that when he was young he was very irritable, and an old man told him he had found relief from this very thing by looking up the moment he felt it coming and saying, "Thy sweetness, Lord." Amy Carmichael said that she learned that whenever she came across someone she didn't like, to look up and say quietly, "Thy love, Lord." On one occasion, Jesus offered a prayer that was nothing more than a sigh offered up to heaven. And I've found that sometimes I can just lift my heart up to heaven and say, "Your sweetness, Lord." "Your love, Lord." "Your patience, Lord." "O Lord... (followed by the name of a person for whom I'm concerned).

....there are **sung prayers**. Many of the hymns and songs that we sing each week are prayers, and many of these we've memorized, some even from childhood. How wonderful, when taking a walk or driving along the road or standing in the shower, to be able to pray:

May the mind of Christ my Savior  
Live in me from day to day;  
By His grace and power controlling,  
All we do and say.

....there are **walking prayers**. Over the last three or four years, I've heard the term "prayer walking" in which people combine their physical exercise with their prayer times, and pray all the while they are walking. And other people literally walk around a particular geography, claiming it for the Lord. But this is nothing new. I've recently studied the life of the Civil War evangelist E. M. Bounds, and I read that every afternoon in his little town in Alabama he would go for a long afternoon walk and pray for every family in the houses that he passed. But there's an even earlier example. In the Old Testament book of Joshua, the children of Israel conducted a prayer walk of sorts around the city of Jericho, claiming it for the Lord. - Sermon by Rob Morgan: Ephesians 6:18-25: An Ancient Prayer

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**Keep on Asking** (Mt 7:7) - Have you ever noticed how children ask? Boy, do they ask—freely and often! One story tells of a little boy who was misbehaving one night when his father was trying to get him into bed. The boy's mother had gone to a meeting and his father was taking care of things at home. Long after the little boy had been tucked in for the night, he was doing the classic drink of water routine: "Dad? I need a drink of water." His father came upstairs and gave him a drink of water, and of course a short time later the boy had to go to the bathroom. This happened several times. Finally the exasperated dad reached the limit of his patience and said, "No more. Young man, you get into bed and you stay there." A few minutes later, however, this father heard the pitter-patter of little feet upstairs. He bolted to the foot of the stairs, this time angry that his reading had been interrupted. He yelled up to his misbehaving son, "Look, I'm telling you for the last time! You get in bed and you stay in bed! If you get out of bed one more time, you're in trouble. I'll be coming up there and you'll get a whipping!" For a moment it was very quiet. Then a little voice drifted down: "Daddy, when you come up here to give me a whipping, could you bring me a glass of water?" That's how children are. They never quit. It doesn't matter how many times you say no, they keep coming back. They keep asking. They ask and ask and ask. I think that's what Jesus is talking about here. He wants us to come to Him and...ask. - David Jeremiah in [Prayer: The Great Adventure](#)

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**Praying Like a Child** - One of my professors in seminary, [Dr. Howard Hendricks](#), told us how a highly intelligent lecturer came for a visit in his home. After the man had settled in and everyone sat down to eat, the Hendricks family had a little time of family worship. When it came time to pray, the children, in typical childlike fashion, thanked Jesus for the tricycle and the sandbox and the fence. Later this very sophisticated theologian began to chide Dr. Hendricks: "You don't mean to tell me that you're a professor in a theological seminary and you teach your children to pray for things like that?"

"I certainly do," replied Dr. Hendricks, who then asked a question of his own: "Do you ever pray about your Ford?" Dr. Hendricks knew the man did, because the vehicle was riding mostly on faith and frayed fabric.

"Oh, of course I pray for my Ford," said the lecturer, "but that's different."

"Oh, really?" said Dr. Hendricks. "What makes you think your Ford is more important to God than my boy's tricycle?" Then he pressed him further. "You're on the road a lot. Do you ever pray for protection?"

"Brother Hendricks, I never go anywhere but that I pray for the Lord's journeying mercies."

"Well, safety is essentially what my boy is praying about when he thanks Jesus for the fence. That fence keeps those big dogs on the other side. Is it any different for him to pray for safety than it is for you?"

The lecturer, of course, had no answer. For prayer is not only about high-powered theological concerns, but about tricycles and

fences and childlike requests made in simple faith. Jesus tells us to ask, to seek, to knock, in the simplicity of childlike prayer (Mt 7:7). And He promises that our prayers will be heard. - David Jeremiah in [Prayer: The Great Adventure](#)

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**Prayer Warriors** - A "prayer warrior" is a person who is convinced that God is omnipotent—that God has the power to do anything, to change anyone and to intervene in any circumstance. A person who truly believes this refuses to doubt God. - Bill Hybels

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**Prayer is Like an Iceberg** - Have you ever seen a bright blue iceberg? In Alaska I stared in awe at a mountain lake filled with beautiful blue icebergs that had broken off Portage Glacier. Immediately my mind went back to an article in a Family Time magazine that compared our secret praying to an iceberg. The "Absolutely No Boating" on the edge of the lake reminded me that eight-ninths of the bulk of an iceberg is below the waterline—out of sight. Only one-ninth is visible above the surface. The next day at our prayer seminar in Anchorage I explained how prayer should be like those icebergs, with about one-ninth showing in our public group praying and eight-ninths out of sight in our secret closets. - Evelyn Christianson in [A Journey Into Prayer](#)

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**Prayer on a Dark Night** - Several years ago my father, still a relatively young man and extremely active, died of a heart attack. As I drove to my mother's house in Michigan, I wondered how I would continue to function without the person who believed in me more than anyone else ever has or ever will. That night in bed, I wrestled with God. "Why did this happen? How can I put it all together in my mind and in my life? Am I going to recover from losing my father? If you really love me, how could you do this to me?" Suddenly, in the middle of the night, everything changed. It was as if I had turned a corner and was now facing a new direction. God simply said, "I'm able. I'm enough for you. Right now you doubt this, but trust me." That experience may sound unreal, but its results were unmistakable. After that tear-filled, despairing night, I was never again tortured by doubt—either about God's care for me or about my ability to handle life without Dad. Grief, yes—his death wounded me deeply, and I will always miss him. But it did not set me adrift without anchor or compass. In the middle of the bleakest night I have ever known, one overpoweringly intimate moment with God gave me courage, reassurance and hope. - Bill Hybels - [Too Busy Not to Pray](#)

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**"Missionary Eyes"** - Pray that God will give you "Missionary Eyes." Those are eyes that see the real needs of the people you meet. Pray that God will bring at least one person across your path who needs the help only you can give. That's a prayer God will answer, for there are folks all around you who are just barely making it. - Ray Pritchard

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**A Pattern of Prayer** - read recently in the magazine Christianity Today, which recently ran a profile of the British pastor, John Stott, pastor emeritus of the famous All Soul's Church in London, on his 80th birthday. The article was written by a former research assistant to Dr. Stott, who knew his daily habits intimately. He said that Dr. Stott begins every day at 5 a.m. He swings his legs over the side of the bed and starts the day with a version of this Trinitarian prayer.

Good morning, heavenly Father; good morning, Lord Jesus; good morning, Holy Spirit. Heavenly Father, I worship you as the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. Lord Jesus, I worship you, Savior and Lord of the world. Holy Spirit, I worship you, Sanctifier of the people of God. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. Heavenly Father, I pray that I may live this day in your presence and please you more and more. Lord Jesus, I pray that this day I may take up my cross and follow you. Holy Spirit, I pray that this day you will fill me with yourself and cause your fruit to ripen in my life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons in one God, have mercy upon me. Amen.

For decades, Stott has begun each day with a version of that Trinitarian prayer. And then he has a small leather notebook, stuffed full of folded papers and held together with a rubber band. Each morning, having read three chapters of the Bible and meditated over them, he opens this prayer notebook and prays for families, friends, ministries, and even for strangers. He keeps a daily prayer list that is always under revision. Then he has a prayer calendar that lists missionary projects and people groups all over the world. He prays over these things without haste or hurry. This is the way he begins each morning, and every one of us needs to develop a pattern of regular prayer in our lives. We may not do it just as John Stott does. After all, he is 80 years old, has never married, and perhaps has a quieter situation than most of us. But it is essential that we develop some sort of "quiet time" in our lives for regular daily prayer and Bible study.- Sermon by Rob Morgan: Ephesians 6:18-25: An Ancient Prayer

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**Pray that You Wear Well to the End** - Our old age is simply the capstone of the tower we've been building all our lives. Solomon's tower was flawed by spiritual carelessness and compromise. He was too busy with his gold and his girls to pay attention to his God. He gained the whole world, and lost his own soul. Andrew Bonar, the great Scottish Christian, frequently recalled his father's words to him: Andrew! Pray that we may wear well to the end! The secret to wearing well to the end is living well from the beginning. - Sermon by Rob Morgan - Psalm 19:1-14 Aging Gracefully: Potholes in Pathway



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**Can You See the Crowds?** - Earlier this year when I was in Edinburgh, Scotland, I visited the famous Charlotte Baptist Chapel, and spent a good deal of time with its minister, Rev. Peter Grainger. In fact, I've asked him to come over and preach for us in the year 2004. Peter told them that Charlotte Baptist Chapel has a history going back 200 years. It was established by a contemporary of William Carey, but after 50 years after its founding, it fell on hard times, and attendance was reduced to about 30 people. They were on the verge of shutting down the church. But the clerk of the church at that time was a man of vision and faith. Every Sunday he would take his little boy to the church services and say, "Can you see the crowds?" The son would say, "Dad, there are no crowds. There's almost nobody here." But the man would say, "I can see the crowds." He believed that God would revive the church. About that time, the church called a new pastor, a man by the name of Joseph Kemp, who came and called the church to prayer and to revival. Kemp had visited the Welsh Revival of 1904, and under his minister a great revival broke out in Edinburgh and at Charlotte Baptist Chapel, and for a number of years a thousand people were converted each year, year after year. After Joseph Kemp, the famous Bible teacher W. Graham Scroggie became the pastor, and after him Sidlow Baxter, and after him Alan Redpath, and to this day, nearly 100 years later, Charlotte Baptist Chapel has one of the most vibrant, evangelistic, refreshing ministries in the United Kingdom. So I say to you today: "Can you see the crowds?" Can you see a church that is larger, smaller, deeper, wider, and higher? Can you see a church that is reaching around the world? That is reaching out to you? And when all is said and done, when the day is over and the sun is sinking into the horizon, we'll look back with thanksgiving and say, "It was all of God. To Jesus Himself be all the glory." - Sermon by Rob Mogan: Acts 2 - Can You See the Crowds?

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**Hold the Line** - A woman telephoned the manager of a large opera house and told him she had lost a valuable diamond pin the night before at the concert. The man asked her to hold the line. A search was made and the brooch was found; but when he got back to the phone, the woman had hung up. He waited for her to call again, and even put a notice in the paper, but he heard nothing further. What a strange and foolish person, we say, but isn't this the way some of us pray? We tell the Lord all about our needs, but then fail to "hold the line." As a result, we miss the joy of answered prayer and the thrill and reward of a persistent faith. - 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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One poor soul entered the school of prayer after his arrival in hell. He asked for relief from his agony; it was refused. He asked that a beggar warn his brothers; he was turned down. He was praying to Abraham, a man; he could not locate God. He dared not ask to get out; he plainly knew that he was beyond hope. Prayerless on earth, unanswered in hell, he suffers on as the man who tried to learn to pray too late. (See Luke 16:19-31) - [Cameron V. Thompson, Master Secrets of Prayer](#)

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**Prayer Put on Hold** - Two Irishmen, Pat and Mike, had narrowly escaped death on a sinking ship. They were floundering around in icy ocean waters on a couple of planks. Pat was addicted to the grossest profanity and he thought he ought to repent of it and then the Lord would come to his rescue. Mike thought his theology was sound. Pat began to pray, but just before arriving at the main thesis of his repentant prayer, Mike spotted a ship coming toward them. As delighted as Columbus when he first spotted the North American shore, Mike hollered, "Hold it, Pat. Don't commit yourself. Here's a ship." Pat immediately stopped praying! Isn't that the way many of us are? The only time we pray is when we are "in a jam." As soon as things improve we forget God.—[John Haggai, How to Win over Worry](#)

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**Love And Prayer** - They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing. —Psalm 92:14 (Ps 92:1-15)  
In a popular children's book, Winnie the Pooh watches Kanga bound away. I wish I could jump like that, he thinks. Some can and some can't. That's how it is. We see younger or more able men and women doing extraordinary things that we cannot do. They can; we can't. That's how it is. It's easy to feel useless when we can't do the things we were once capable of doing. It's true that we may not be able to "jump" like we once did, but we can love and we can pray. These are the works that time and experience have prepared us to do well. Love is the very best gift we have to give to God and to others. It is no small matter, for love is the means by which we fulfill our whole duty to God and our neighbor. Our love for one person may seem to be a small action, but love is the greatest gift of all (1 Cor. 13:13). And we can pray. Paul encouraged the Colossians to "continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving" (Col. 4:2). Our prayers are a powerful force in the universe! Love and prayer are mighty works indeed, the mightiest works for any of us. Why? Because our God, who wants to use us, is an all-loving and all-powerful God.

Begin the day with God;  
Kneel down to Him in prayer;  
Lift up thy heart to His abode,  
And seek His love to share.  
—Dann

God pours His love into our hearts that it might flow out to others

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**Thoughtful Prayer** - It is a terribly serious thing to pray. The real seriousness comes not in the possibility that our prayer may not be answered; the appallingly serious thing is that it may be answered. A real answer to prayer will usually let us in for more than we ask for. A man prays for strength, for instance, without much thought of the matter, as though strength could be wrapped up in a package like a pound of tea and handed to one. Strength must be grown; it comes from struggle against obstacles. The only way in which a prayer for strength can be answered is by putting a man into a place where he will have to struggle. We ought to take good care before we ask for strength! God may overhear us and answer us. So it is with the frequent prayer that we may have the spirit of Jesus. Many people make that prayer thoughtlessly without realizing that if they really had the spirit of Jesus, it would knock themselves and their whole world upside down. - Halford E Luccock

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**Pigeon Walk** - Daniel...knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God.- Daniel 6:10-note (Daniel 6:1-23) Have you ever wondered why a pigeon walks so funny? It's so that it can see where it's going. Because a pigeon's eyes can't focus as it moves, the bird actually has to bring its head to a complete stop between steps in order to refocus. So it proceeds clumsily -- head forward, stop, head back, stop. In our spiritual walk with the Lord, we have the same problem as the pigeon: We have a hard time seeing while we're on the go. We need to stop between steps -- to refocus on the Word and the will of God. That's not to say we have to pray and meditate about every little decision in life. But certainly our walk with the Lord needs to have built into it a pattern of stops that enable us to see more clearly before moving on. Daniel's practice of praying three times a day was an essential part of his walk with God. He realized that there's a certain kind of spiritual refocusing that we can't do without stopping. His stops gave him a very different kind of walk -- one that was obvious to those around him. What about us? At the risk of being thought of as different, as Daniel was, let's learn this valuable lesson from the pigeon: "Looking good" isn't nearly as important as "seeing well."—Martin R. De Haan II (**Ed: See commentary on Daniel's "Obedient Disobedience" in Prayer**)

There is a blessed calm at eventide  
That calls me from a world of toil and care;  
How restful, then to seek some quiet nook  
Where I can spend a little time in prayer.  
—Bullock

Time in Christ's service requires time out for renewal.

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The history of missions is the history of answered prayer. From Pentecost to the Haystack meeting in New England and from the days when [Robert Morrison](#) landed in China to the martyrdom of [John and Betty Stam](#), prayer has been the source of power and the secret of spiritual triumph.

Every step in the progress of missions is directly traceable to prayer. It has been the preparation for every new triumph and the secret for all success. — [A.T. Pierson](#)

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**The Shantung Revival** - One night in China, Southern Baptist missionary [C. L. Culpepper](#) stayed up late for devotions, but as he tried to pray he felt like stone. Finally he asked, "Lord, what is the matter?"

I had opened my Bible to Romans 2:17. It seemed the Apostle Paul were speaking directly to me when he said, "But if you call yourself a Christian and rely upon the Gospel, and boast of your relation to God, and know His will, and approve what is excellent; and if you are sure you are a guide to the blind, a light to those in darkness, a correction to the foolish, a teacher of children—you then who teach others, will you not teach yourself?"

The Holy Spirit used this verse like a sword to cut deeply into my heart. He said, "You are a hypocrite! You claim to be a Christian! What have you really done for Christ? The Lord said those who believed on Him would have rivers of living waters flowing from their inmost being! Do you have that kind of power?"

Culpepper awakened his wife, and they prayed into the night. The next morning at a prayer meeting with fellow workers, he confessed to pride and spiritual impotence, saying his heart was broken. The Holy Spirit began to so convict the others of sin that they could hardly bear it. I watched their faces grow pale, then they began to cry and drop on their knees or fall prostrate on the floor. Missionaries went to missionaries confessing wrong feelings toward one another. Chinese preachers, guilty of envy, jealousy and hatred, confessed their sins to one another.

The revival spread through the seminary, the schools, the hospital, and the area churches. Perhaps the deepest impact was made on Culpepper's friend [Wiley B. Glass](#), a much respected missionary. As Glass sat in the meetings, a man's face came before him and God seemed to be asking him about his attitude toward that man. Glass had hated the man for many years, and suddenly the Holy Spirit brought him under deep conviction. In great anguish, Glass went to Culpepper, fell on his shoulder, and said, "Charlie, pray for me!" Both men went to their knees, but Glass was so distressed he couldn't express his problem. He was pale as death and

kept groaning in his anxiety. I prayed with him and for him several times during that day and the next. In the evening of the second day he came running to me and threw his arms around me. "Charlie, it's gone!" he exclaimed. I said, "What's gone?" He replied, "That old root of bitterness."

He told me that thirty years earlier, before he came to China, a man had insulted his wife. The insult had made him so angry he felt he could kill the man if he ever saw him again. He realized a called servant of God should not feel that way, and it had bothered him for years. Finally he just turned the man over to God. When the Holy spirit began working in his heart during that week, the question came, "Are you willing for that man to be saved?"

He answered, "Lord, I'm willing for You to save him ... just keep him on the other side of heaven!" Finally, he came to the place where he said, "Lord, if that man is alive, and if I can find him when I go on furlough, I will confess my hatred to him and do my best to win him to You." When he reached that decision, the Lord released the joys of heaven to his soul, and he was filled with love and peace. He became a more effective preacher for the Lord, and during the next few years he led hundreds to Christ. - [The Shantung Revival by C L Culpepper](#); see also [Higher ground: Biography of Wiley B. Glass, missionary to China](#)

#### Related Resource:

- [C L Culpepper's audio description of the Shantung Revival](#) - It was preceded by four years of prayer - "We got under conviction of sin and we had to make restitution...."

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**Ask in Faith-** But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. (James 1:5,6) Kara, a converted orphan girl, lived in a part of India where wickedness and spiritual darkness were prevalent. Fearing she would be made a slave and suffer abuse, she appealed to a visiting missionary who taught in another village to take her into her home. The sympathetic woman replied, "I'm sorry, but we have no vacant rooms and no money to build any." Kara tried to hold back the tears as she said, "O Missionary, please pray that God will let you take me, and I'll pray too." When the woman reached home that night, she found a letter from America with a large sum of money. Encouraged, she decided to use it to build an extra little room for the child who so badly needed a place to stay. The next morning she sent a helper to fetch Kara. She didn't expect them to return until late that night, for the journey was long. So she was surprised when the messenger came back with the young girl at noon. "When I prayed," the child said simply, "God assured me that it was His will for me to come to your home, so I thought I might as well get started." "She was almost here when I met her," said the missionary's helper with an approving smile. —[Our Daily Bread](#)

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Minister: "So your mother says your prayers for you each night. What does she say?" The youngster replied, "Thank God he's in bed."—[Swindoll's Ultimate Book of Illustrations and Quotes](#)

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A man was being pursued by a roaring, hungry lion. Feeling the beast's hot breath on his neck and knowing his time was short, he prayed as he ran. He cried out in desperation, "O Lord, please make this lion a Christian." Within seconds, the frightened man became aware the lion had stopped the chase. When he looked behind him, he found the lion kneeling, lips moving in obvious prayer. Greatly relieved at this turn of events—and desirous of joining the lion in meditation, he approached the king of the jungle. When he was near enough, he heard the lion praying, "And bless, O Lord, this food for which I'm exceedingly grateful!" —[Swindoll's Ultimate Book of Illustrations and Quotes](#)

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**A Heart For Prayer** - While traveling on an airplane with her 4- and 2-year-old daughters, a young mom worked at keeping them busy so they wouldn't disturb others. When the pilot's voice came over the intercom for an announcement, Catherine, the younger girl, paused from her activities and put her head down. When the pilot finished, she whispered, "Amen." Perhaps because there had been a recent natural disaster, she thought the pilot was praying. Like that little girl, I want a heart that turns my thoughts toward prayer quickly. I think it would be fair to say that the psalmist David had that kind of heart. We get hints of that in Psalm 27 as he speaks of facing difficult foes (v.2). He said, "Your face, Lord, I will seek" (v.8). Some say that David was remembering the time he was fleeing from Saul (1 Sam. 21:10) or from his son Absalom (2 Sam. 15:13-14) when he wrote this psalm. Prayer and dependence on God were in the forefront of David's thinking, and he found Him to be his sanctuary (Ps. 27:4-5). We need a sanctuary as well. Perhaps reading or praying this psalm and others could help us to develop that closeness to our Father-God. As God becomes our sanctuary, we'll more readily turn our hearts toward Him in prayer. - Anne Cetas

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**Are You Too Comfortable When You Pray?** [William R. Newell](#) says kneeling is a good way to pray because it is uncomfortable. Daniel prayed on his knees (Daniel 6:10-note). [Jim Elliot](#) said, "God is still on His throne, we're still His footstool, and there's only a knee's distance between!" He also said, "That saint who advances on his knees never retreats."—[Elisabeth Elliot, Shadow of the Almighty](#)

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**His Face Said it All!** - J. C. Macaulay was born in Belfast, grew up in Scotland, and spent most of his ministry pastoring and teaching in Canada. In his book on personal evangelism, he tells this story: I think, for instance, of an elderly German who lived a rough life in the Northern Ontario bush. His English was poor, his mind undeveloped, and his life one of very narrow limits. His countenance was dark and hard. But the Spirit of God stirred in his soul a sense of need, and he found his way to our services. One Sunday evening I took him into a little side room and tried to present the way of salvation. He did not seem to understand, and I almost despaired of his coming to the light. Finally I suggested that we kneel down and pray. I prayed that God would give light to the darkened mind. When we lifted our heads and arose from our knees, I saw something that startled me, and which I shall never forget. The darkness and the hardness had completely fallen away from my friend's countenance. Instead, his face was lit up with a heavenly glow, like a sunburst. His limited vocabulary made it impossible for him to say much, but his face spoke volumes. The presence of the Lord in that little room was so real, and the joy was unspeakable. - [J. C. Macaulay and Robert H. Belton, Personal Evangelism](#)

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**Depth Not Length** - When the Gettysburg battleground became a national cemetery, Edward Everett was to give the dedication speech and Abraham Lincoln was asked to say "a few appropriate words." Everett spoke eloquently for one hour and fifty-seven minutes then took his seat as the crowd roared its enthusiastic approval. Then Lincoln stood to his feet, slipped on his steel spectacles, and began what we know today as the "Gettysburg Address." Poignant words "... The world will little note nor long remember ..."—suddenly, he was finished. No more than two minutes after he had begun he stopped. His talk had been so prayerlike it seemed almost inappropriate to applaud. As Lincoln sank into his settee, John Young of the Philadelphia Press whispered, "Is that all?" The President answered, "Yes, that's all."

Don't underestimate two minutes with God in prayer.—[Charles R. Swindoll, Quest for Character](#)

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**A Lottery Prayer** - A man purchased a lottery ticket that would pay him \$100,000 if it turned out to be the lucky one. He asked my friend, a pastor, to pray that his number would be picked so he could give one-tenth of his winnings to the Lord. My friend hesitated, then said, "All right, but first let me ask you this: Are you willing to give God the same percentage of your present weekly income?" The fellow looked surprised and dismayed. "B-b-but I need that to live on," he stammered. This man's seemingly spiritual request was merely a cover-up for selfishness, and God doesn't honor such prayers. Scripture verses like Matthew 21:22, "whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive," are not sweepstakes promises that cater to our selfish nature, nor are they tickets to wealth and success. While the Bible contains many statements about God's willingness to hear and answer our prayers, John 15:7 defines the condition: We must live in fellowship with Christ and cherish His words in our hearts. The more we study God's Word, know the mind of Christ, and desire His will, the more we'll pray with right motives—and the more answers to prayer we'll see.

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**Lord, teach us to pray.** (Luke 11:1; Mt 6:10-14) James Francis has given a concise explanation of The Lord's Prayer recorded in Matthew 6:9-13. He notes that it begins with worship and ends with intercession: "When we are told to pray, 'Our Father in heaven,' we are admonished to come simply as a child addressing his Father. When we exclaim, 'Hallowed be Your name,' it is as a worshiper addressing his God. 'Your kingdom come' reminds us that we petition the throne as a citizen who approaches his King. 'Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven' emphasizes that we come as a servant speaking to his Master. 'Give us this day our daily bread' pictures us as a beggar approaching his Benefactor. 'And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors' is the plea of a sinner seeking pardon from his Savior. 'And do not lead us into temptation' depicts a pilgrim beseeching his Guide for safe, providential direction. 'But deliver us from the evil one' is the cry of one ... who seeks help from his great Defender." As we meditate on the deep significance of our Lord's instructions about prayer, our own prayers will become more effective. —H. G. Bosch

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**Prayer and Providence** - Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. (Colossians 4:2) When a missionary to Haiti returned to the United States, she reported a wonderful answer to prayer. She explained that during her most recent term on the field she had been told that she might have cancer. A biopsy was performed and sent away for analysis, but the medical report didn't come back for several weeks. As she waited for word, she could find no peace of mind. She recalled that she was afraid of what might happen to her husband and their small children. There seemed to be no relief to her distress. But one evening her anxiety suddenly lifted like a cloud. She had a deep and inexpressible awareness that the Lord would take care of the needs of her family, regardless of the outcome. Then it occurred to her that it was Wednesday evening—prayer meeting night back in the States. She also realized that it was the first Wednesday night after she and her husband had notified friends and supporters of their struggle. These facts convinced this faithful missionary couple that God had given them an opportunity to sense His answer to the prayers of others on their behalf. In addition, the medical report soon came back with the welcome news that there was no cancer. This true incident carries a needed reminder to all of us who are Christians. The emphasis given to prayer in Colossians 4 highlights the kind of support we should be giving one another. Let's pray for the needs of others and then watch to see what the Lord does. —M R De Haan II

Prayer is one of the necessary wheels of the machinery of providence.

**Pray Through** - "Confess your trespasses to one another; and pray for one another; that you may be healed." James 5:16 - While waiting for the teller at a bank counter in Liverpool, England, evangelist Charles Alexander picked up a pen and began to write on a pad of paper. Two words had gripped his heart: "Pray Through." So he wrote them over and over until the paper was filled from top to bottom. When the teller returned to the window, the preacher transacted his business and left. The next day, a friend visited Alexander to tell him a striking story. A businessman had come into the bank shortly after Alexander had left. He was discouraged and weighed down with financial troubles. As he began to do his banking at the same counter, he noticed the pad with its long columns of "Pray Through." When he learned from the teller that Charles Alexander had printed those words, he exclaimed, "That is the very message I need! I have tried to worry through in my own strength, and have only mentioned my troubles to God. Now, I am going to pray through until I get light." Our heavenly Father waits to hear fervent, earnest, persistent prayer from us rather than feeble, apathetic requests. When troubles surround us, let's determine to "pray through." —P R. Van Gorder

Oh, men and women, pray through; pray through! Do not just begin to pray and pray a little while and throw up your hands and quit; but pray and pray and pray until God bends the heavens and comes down. [R. A. Torrey](#)

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**It's The Knees** (James 5:13-18) Continue earnestly in prayer. Col 4:2;—Both of my knees were hurting, and I could not figure out why. I hadn't done anything to damage them or put undo pressure on them. Or had I? I recalled that over the previous few days I had been working on the walls in our house, scrubbing them and getting them ready for painting. And then I had painted them. All the while, as I stood on the short ladder to reach the top, I had been pressing my knees against the ladder for balance. I was, in effect, being supported by my knees. Then a new thought came to mind: When was the last time my knees hurt because I was on them praying? It had been a while. Although it's true that people pray all the time without kneeling, the question I asked myself is a convicting one. Whether we are on our knees, standing up, or seated, how often do we use prayer to support ourselves? We can find help from many sources—friends, counselors, books—but there's nothing better than the support and strength we get from God when we pray. "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16). Prayer has power. We are to "continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant" (Colossians 4:2). How are your knees? —Dave Brannon

When I kneel before my Master,  
I can feel His presence there,  
And the load of care and sorrow  
Seems much easier to bear.  
—Anon

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**Prayer Marathon** - Do you struggle to maintain a consistent prayer life? Many of us do. We know that prayer is important, but it can also be downright difficult. We have moments of deep communion with God and then we have times when it feels like we're just going through the motions. Why do we struggle so in our prayers? The life of faith is a marathon. The ups, the downs, and the plateaus in our prayer life are a reflection of this race. And just as in a marathon we need to keep running, so we keep praying. The point is: Don't give up! That is God's encouragement too. The apostle Paul said, "Pray continually" (1 Thess. 5:17), "keep on praying" (Rom. 12:12NLT), and "devote yourselves to prayer" (Col. 4:2). All of these statements carry the idea of remaining steadfast and continuing in the work of prayer. And because God, our heavenly Father, is a personal being, we can develop a time of close communion with Him, just as we do with our close human relationships. [A. W. Tozer](#) writes that as we learn to pray, our prayer life can grow "from the initial most casual brush to the fullest, most intimate communion of which the human soul is capable." And that's what we really want—deep communication with God. It happens when we keep praying. —Poh Fang Chia

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#### **Yuppie Prayer** (Young Upwardly Progressive Professionals)

Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray my Cuisinart to keep.  
I pray my stocks are on the rise,  
and that my analyst is wise,  
that all the wine I sip is white  
and that my hot tub's watertight,  
that racquetball won't get too tough,  
that all my sushi's fresh enough.  
I pray my cordless phone still works,  
that my career won't lose its perks,  
my microwave won't radiate,

my condo won't depreciate.  
I pray my health club doesn't close  
and that my money market grows.  
If I go broke before I wake,  
I pray my Volvo they won't take.

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**Three Times a Day at 91** - Several years ago, Mrs. Flooie Cassel, ninety-one, wrote an article in [Alliance Witness](#), describing the various ministries she conducts for the Lord from her room in the nursing home. One was that of prayer.

"Missionaries give me prayer requests which I remember before God's throne three times a day. This practice began a number of years ago at a women's missionary meeting. We had a speaker who talked about tithing our time as well as our money. That evening I knelt and asked the Lord how much time I should spend in prayer. He definitely told me three hours a day. I began spending one hour each morning, afternoon and evening in prayer. "But then I got very busy with child evangelism classes, giving demonstrations on the use of flannel graph material, speaking at women's meetings. I began to slip up on my prayer time in the afternoon. Soon I was too ill to teach or speak. "I had heard a sermon on how Daniel waited twenty-one days to learn something from the Lord. So I began waiting for the Lord to reveal to me why I was no longer able to draw upon 'His supernatural strength for my supernatural tasks,' as [Dr. A. B. Simpson](#) so ably expressed it. (Read Da 6:10-note)

"After several nights of waiting on the Lord in prayer, I understood. The Lord said, 'I will not let you teach again until you get back to your three hours a day in prayer.'

"I asked forgiveness for my neglecting prayer and promised, with the help of the Holy Spirit, never to forget this important lesson. Now in my ninety-first year, I still have this ministry of prayer three times a day."

—Flossie Cassel, "Fourscore and Eleven is No Time To Quit," The Alliance Witness, March 8, 1978, 10–12. as quoted in [Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations and Quotes](#)

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**A Pithy Prayer** - A Wichita pastor's opening prayer angered legislators in the Kansas House of Representatives. "We confess we have ridiculed the absolute truth of Your Word and called it moral pluralism," prayed Joe Wright of Central Christian Church, the guest chaplain Jan. 23. "We have worshipped other gods and called it multiculturalism. We have endorsed perversion and called it an alternative lifestyle. We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery. We have neglected the needy and called it self-preservation. We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare. We have killed our unborn and called it choice. We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable. We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self-esteem." As one legislator walked out and another sat down, Wright continued. "We have abused power and called it political savvy. We have coveted our neighbors' possessions and called it ambition. We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression. We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment." He closed with a plea for God's forgiveness, blessing, and wisdom.

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**Prayer for Revival** - There are no shortcuts when it comes to revival. The church desperately needs revival, but it is not going to come by quick and easy methods. [Evan Roberts](#) prayed for eleven years before the Welsh Revival broke out, and his ministry during that remarkable time broke him physically. More than one hundred thousand people were converted to Christ during that mighty awakening, but it was not the result of manufactured meetings (they were spontaneous) or man made promotions. True revival goes deeper than that. —[Warren Wiersbe](#)

**Related Story** - The [Second Great Awakening](#) lasted much longer than the one in the 1740s, and had a profound influence on America and the world. In Great Britain, [John Erskine](#) of Edinburgh published a fervent plea for prayer, and two pastors took him up —John Sutcliffe and [Andrew Fuller](#) ([John Piper's book on Fuller](#)). Their personal prayers and the prayers of others whom they influenced paved the way for the Second Great Awakening. Yorkshire begin to feel the effects of these "concerts of prayer," and soon the revival spread to rural Britain. In America, [Boston's Isaac Backus](#) took up the same call to prayer. In the region around Kentucky, the Second Great Awakening began with [James McGready](#). Camp Meetings held by men like James McGready, [Barton Stone](#), and, later, [Peter Cartwright](#) swept thousands into the kingdom. In New England and the East, the awakening began at Hampden-Sydney College and spread up from Virginia into New England. In Lee, Massachusetts, in 1792, [Rev. Alvan Hyde](#) wrote:

A marvelous work was begun, and it bore the most decisive marks of being God's work. So great was the excitement though not yet known abroad, that into whatever section of the town I now went, the people in that immediate neighborhood, would leave their worldly employments, at any hour of the day, and soon fill a large room.... All our religious meetings are very much thronged....  
([original quote](#))

[Timothy Dwight](#), president of Yale University, became the unofficial leader of the Awakening in the Northeast as the awakening spread through the great colleges and universities that dotted the landscape.

- [Del Fehsenfeld Jr](#) once asked "If revival in this land depended on your prayers, your faith, your obedience, would we ever experience revival?"
- [A. W. Tozer](#) - Have you noticed how much praying for revival has been going on of late - and how little revival has resulted? I believe the problem is that we have been trying to substitute praying for obeying, and it simply will not work. To pray for revival while ignoring the plain precept laid down in Scripture is to waste a lot of words and get nothing for our trouble. Prayer will become effective when we stop using it as a substitute for obedience. Prayer is not so much the cause of a revival as the human preparation for one.
- [Samuel Logan Brengle](#) - All great soul-winners have been men of much and mighty prayer, and all great revivals have been preceded and carried out by persevering, prevailing knee-work in the closet."

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**Five Finger Prayers** - A Christian teacher devised a good way to remind her young students of the need for intercessory prayer (1Ti 2:1,2). Holding up her arm, the woman explained, "When I am ready to pray, children, I look at my left hand. My thumb is the digit closest to me. This reminds me to pray for those near me —my family, my friends, my neighbors." Moving on, she touched her index finger and said, "When I was in school, my teacher always pointed this one at us. Preachers sometimes use it when they make a point or give a warning. So, as I come to this part of my hand, I pray for teachers, preachers, and others who have guided me." The children waited eagerly for her next comment. "My middle finger is my largest one. It stands above the others. This brings to my mind the rulers of our country and others in authority, and I pray for them. The fourth finger is the weakest. It makes me think of the helpless, the sick, and the poor. I ask the Lord to supply their needs and to strengthen them in body and soul." Coming to the little finger, she concluded, "This one stands for me, and so I finish by praying for myself and all the things that I need." The children never forgot that simple lesson. —[Our Daily Bread](#)

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Jews around the world may now send prayers via fax to the Wailing Wall. How sad that many Christians won't send prayers to God via "air mail."

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**A Prayer for Sickness** - (James 5:14-16) A woman at Eisenach lay very sick, having endured horrible paroxysms, which no physician was able to cure, for it was directly a work of the devil. She had had swoonings and four paroxysms, each lasting three or four hours. Her hands and feet bent in the form of a horn; she was chill and cold; her tongue was rough and dry; her body was much swollen. She, seeing Luther, who came to visit her, was much rejoiced thereat (on account of that), raised herself up, and said: "Ah! My loving father in Christ, I have a heavy burden upon me, pray to God for me," and so fell down in her bed again. Whereupon Luther sighed and said: "God rebuke thee, Satan, and command thee that thou suffer this, his divine creature, to be at peace." Then turning himself towards the standers-by, he said: "She is plagued of the devil in the body, but the soul is safe, and shall be preserved; therefore let us give thanks to God, and pray for her"; and so they all prayed aloud the Lord's Prayer. After which, Luther concluded with these words: "Lord God, heavenly Father! Who hast commanded us to pray for the sick, we beseech thee, through Jesus Christ, thy only Son, that thou wouldst deliver this thy servant from her sickness, and from the hands of the devil. Spare, O Lord, her soul, which, together with her body, thou hast purchased and redeemed from the power of sin, of death, and of the devil." Whereupon the sick woman said, "Amen." The night following she took rest, and the next day was graciously delivered from her disease and sickness. - [Martin Luther's Table Talk - DCLVIII](#)

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**Bombshell Answers to Prayer** (Read Luke 18:1-8 "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." -Luke 18:1- Prayer is more than a privilege—it is a solemn obligation. The Scriptures tell us "men **OUGHT** . . . to pray." More than that, such intercession should not be "hit or miss" and spasmodic, but fervent and constant. "Men ought **ALWAYS** to pray." Finally, each petition should be uttered with faith and hope so discouragement will not easily seal our lips or dull our interest. We are "not to faint." During World War II a man in Sussex, England, sent some money to the Scripture Gift Mission, mentioning that he wished he could enclose more but that the harvest had been very disappointing on his farm owing to the lack of water. He also mentioned that he was very fearful because so many bombs were being dropped by the Germans, and asked for their prayers that he and his family might be spared in the siege. Mr. Ashley Baker answered on behalf of the mission and said that although they could not ask the Lord that no bombs should be dropped on his land, they would pray that God's will for their lives in this matter would prevail! Shortly after the farmer received the communication, a huge German missile crashed down on his place. None of his family or the livestock was injured. However, the bombshell went so deep into the ground that it liberated a submerged stream! The spring continued to flow and yielded water not only for his own farm, but also sufficient to solve the irrigation problem of his neighbors. The next year, due to a bountiful harvest, he

was able to send a \$200 offering to the mission. All were impressed anew with the thought that God is "able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think." (Eph. 3:20). If we ask the Lord for His will for our life with faith, hope, and a good conscience, we may get some "bombshell answers" to our prayers, but they will be infinitely wiser and more blessed than anything we could personally request.—[Our Daily Bread](#)

God's ways are not like human ways,  
He wears such strange disguises.  
He tests us with His long delays,  
And then our faith surprises!  
—Anon

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**Just in Time** - And it shall come to pass that, before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. (Isaiah 65:24) A widow, her young son, and her invalid daughter lived in a poor part of London. They had to move there because of the death of her husband and other problems that beset the family. The woman and her son went to a gospel meeting and they received the Savior. Friends in the church would gladly have helped them financially, but the family did not make their needs known. The day came when their resources were exhausted and their meager income would stretch no further. That evening, while the mother and her son knelt in prayer beside the bed of the invalid daughter, this dear woman committed her need to God, being assured that His promises would never fail. The next morning the mailman delivered a letter. In the envelope was the equivalent of a week's wages. It had come from New Zealand and was sent by a total stranger. The benefactor had heard of the husband's death and had been moved to help the woman and her children. The letter had gone first to the village where they had lived, then it was forwarded to London. Five months after leaving New Zealand it finally arrived—the morning after the family prayer. —[Our Daily Bread](#)

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**God's Wall** - Some fifty years ago, one bitter January night, the inhabitants of the old town of Sleswick were thrown into the greatest distress and terror. A hostile army was marching down upon them, and new and fearful reports of the conduct of the lawless soldiers were hourly reaching the place. In one large, spacious cottage dwelt an aged grandmother with her widowed daughter and her grandson. While all hearts quaked with fear, this aged woman passed her time in crying out to God that he would "build a wall of defense round about" them, quoting the words of an ancient hymn. Her grandson asked why she prayed for a thing so entirely impossible as that God should build a wall about their house, that should hide it; but she explained that her meaning only was that God should protect them. At midnight the dreaded tramp was heard, an enemy came pouring in at every avenue, filling the houses to overflowing. But, while most fearful sounds were heard on every side, not even a knock came to their door; at which they were greatly surprised. The morning light made the matter clear; for, just beyond the house, the drifted snow had reared such a massive wall that it was impossible to get over it to them. "There!" said the good woman triumphantly: "do you not see, my son, that God could raise up a wall around us?" - 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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**Answered Prayer** - As the sounds of battle drew closer to Saigon on April 29, 1975, biology teacher Thoa Nguyen gathered his family. South Vietnam would soon fall to the Communists. "We will never surrender our beliefs," said Thoa, a devout Christian. "We must leave our country." But at the airport Thoa, his school-principal wife, Son, and their seven children were turned back. The following morning a band of Communist youths seized Thoa and pushed him into the street to be executed. "Please, dear God, help!" Son screamed as a pistol touched Thoa's head. Suddenly a woman ran forward. The Nguyens, she said, were popular for their good deeds as teachers. An execution without trial would harm the revolution. God answered Son's prayer as Thoa and his family were released. - Moody's Today in the Word

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**Answer Promised** - Prayer is much like a check to be countersigned by two parties. I sign the check and send it up to heaven. If Jesus Christ also signs it, it does not matter how large it is—it'll be honored. - John Walvoord

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**Coming to A King** - John Newton had received from the Lord some almost unbelievable answers to his petitions, and so he often engaged in "large asking." In support of this practice he would frequently tell the story of a man who asked Alexander the Great to give him a huge sum of money in exchange for his daughter's hand in marriage. The ruler consented and told him to request of his treasurer whatever he wanted. So he went and asked for an enormous amount. The keeper to the funds was startled and said he couldn't give him that much without a direct order. Going to Alexander, the treasurer argued that even a small fraction of the money requested would more than serve the purpose. "No," replied Alexander, "let him have it all. I like that fellow. He does me honor. He treats me like a king and proves by what he asks that he believes me to be both rich and generous." Newton concluded the story by saying, "In the same way, we should go to the throne of God's grace and present petitions that express honorable views of the love, riches, and bounty of our King!"

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**Looking in the Wrong Place** - Today many Christians spend a great deal of time and effort vainly looking for blessings already available to them. They pray for God's light, although He has already supplied light in abundance through His Word. Their need is to follow the light they already have. They pray for strength, although His Word tells them they can do all things through Christ who strengthens them (Philippians 4:13). They pray for more love, although Paul says that God's own love is already poured out within their hearts through the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). They pray for more grace, although the Lord says the grace He has already given is sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9). They pray for peace, although the Lord has given them His own peace, "which surpasses all comprehension" (Philippians 4:7). It is expected that we pray for such blessings if the tone of the prayer is one of seeking the grace to appropriate what is already given, rather than one of pleading for something we think is scarcely available or is reluctantly shared by God. - John MacArthur

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**Teach Us Lord** - Prayer is a form of communication between God and man and man and God. It is of the essence of communication between persons that they should talk with each other from the same basic agenda. Wherever this is not done, communication tends to break down. If, however, an atmosphere of trust can be maintained, then one learns how to wait and be still. It is instructive to examine the prayer life of the Master from this point of view. I am always impressed by the fact that it is recorded that the only thing that the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to do was to pray. - Howard Thurman - A Strange Freedom

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**Seeing Into Heaven** - Isaac Newton said that he could take his telescope and look millions and millions of miles into space. Then he added, "But when I lay it aside, go into my room, shut the door, and get down on my knees in earnest prayer, I see more of Heaven and feel closer to the Lord than if I were assisted by all the telescopes on earth."

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**Prayer Wisdom** - Prayer is no petty duty, put into a corner; no piecemeal performance made out of the fragments of time which have been snatched from business and other engagements of life; but it means that the best of our time, the heart of our time and strength must be given.

Prayer that affects one's ministry must give tone to one's life. The praying which gives color and bent to character is no pleasant hurried pastime. Praying is spiritual work; and human nature does not like taxing, spiritual work. Human nature wants to sail to heaven under a favoring breeze, a full, smooth sea. Prayer is humbling work!!!

So we come to one of the crying evils of these times, maybe of all times—little or no praying. Of these two evils, perhaps little praying is worse than no praying. Little praying is a kind of make-believe, a salve for the conscience, a farce and a delusion.

The little estimate we put on prayer is evidence from the little time we give to it.

It is necessary to iterate and reiterate that prayer, as a mere habit, as a performance gone through by routine or in a professional way, is a dead and rotten thing.

Prayer is not a little habit pinned onto us while we were tied to our mother's apron strings: neither is it a little decent quarter of a minute's grace said over an hour's dinner, but it is a more serious work of our most serious years.

No leaving can make up for the failure to pray. No earnestness, no diligence, no study, no gifts will supply its lack. - [E. M. Bounds](#)

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### Things to Pray for

- We should ask God to make the gospel message clear (Col. 4:4).
- Pray for boldness in the one doing the evangelism (Eph. 6:19).
- Pray that the individual believes the Word of God (Rom. 10:17, 1 Thess. 2:13).
- Pray that Satan is bound from blinding them from the truth (2 Thess 2:13).
- Pray for the safety of the messengers (2 Thess. 3:2).
- Pray for the success of the gospel and that they will believe in Christ as their Savior (John 1:12, 5:24, 6:27–29, 2 Thess. 3:1).
- Pray that the one who receives Christ as Savior may grow spiritually and bear fruit (Matt. 13:23, John 15:16, Col. 1:6, 2:6, 7).

—The Scocaster, Vol. 40, No. 10, March 7, 1999 ([Bible.org](#))

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**The Accomplishments of Prayer** (Psalm 61:1-8) - Whenever David found himself in a tight spot, he instinctively turned to God in prayer. Prayer is the natural breath of the believer. It enables you to accomplish what you cannot accomplish by yourself.

**First**, prayer enables you to reach farther (Psalm 61:2). David was homesick. Although he was away from Jerusalem, he was not away from God. No matter where you are, you can reach out through prayer and touch the lives of family, friends and

missionaries.

**Second**, prayer enables you to go higher (Psalm 61:2). David was overwhelmed and wrapped in gloom. When he prayed, God lifted him up and put him on a high rock, in a tower that He built for him (Ps 61:3). Prayer puts you on the mountaintop and enables you to get a clear perspective of your situation.

**Third**, prayer enables you to come closer (Psalm 61:4). "The shelter of your wings" is not referring to a mother hen gathering her chicks before a storm breaks; it is talking about getting under the wings of the cherubim in the Holy of Holies. Through Jesus you can enter into the presence of God and dwell under His wings.

**Fourth**, prayer enables you to grow richer (Psalm 61:5). In prayer you draw upon the heritage you have in Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:3).

**Fifth**, prayer enables you to live fuller (Psalm 61:6, 7). It's not the length of life that counts but the depth. Prayer puts depth into your life. I pity people who depend upon worldly entertainment instead of the fullness of life in Christ.

**Finally**, prayer enables you to be happier (v.8). Prayer and praise always go together. David starts out crying and ends up praising. He starts out praying and ends up rejoicing. Spend time with the Lord in prayer. It will change your life. Evaluate your praying. Is it accomplishing in your life what it accomplished in David's? If not, spend more time in prayer and determine to experience its accomplishment in your life.

—[Warren Wiersbe \(Prayer, Praises and Promises\)](#)

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**The Bible's School of Prayer** (Habakkuk 1:1-4) - To call God and us unequal partners is a laughable understatement. And yet by inviting us to do kingdom work on earth, God has indeed set up a kind of odd-couple alliance. God delegates work to human beings so that we do history together, so to speak. Clearly, the partnership has one dominant partner—something like an alliance between Microsoft and a high school programmer. We know well what happens when human beings form unequal alliances: the dominant partner tends to throw his weight around and the subordinate mostly keeps quiet. But God, who has no reason to be threatened by us, invites a steady and honest flow of communication. I sometimes wonder why God places such a high value on honesty in our prayers, even to the extent of enduring unjust outbursts. I am startled to see how many biblical prayers seem ill-tempered. Jeremiah griped about unfairness (Jer 20:7, 8, 9, 10); Habakkuk accused God of deafness (Hab 1:2); Job conceded, "What profit do we have if we pray to Him?" (Job 21:15). The Bible teaches us to pray with blistering honesty. God wants us to come to Him with our complaints. If we march through life pretending to smile while inside we bleed, we dishonor the relationship. —[Philip Yancey](#)

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**Living Beyond The Odds** - Constant prayer was offered to God for [Peter] by the church. —Acts 12:5 (Read Acts 12:1-11) Many of us make daily decisions based on the odds. If there's a 20 percent chance of rain, we may ignore it. If there's a 90 percent chance, we'll take an umbrella. The greater the odds, the more our behavior is affected because we want to choose wisely and be successful. Acts 12:1-6 describes a situation in which Peter's odds of survival were very low. He was in prison, "bound with two chains between two soldiers" while others guarded the door (Acts 12:6). Herod had already executed James, one of Jesus' closest followers, and he had the same fate in mind for Peter (Acts 12:1-3). A gambler would not have put any money on Peter getting out of this alive. Yet God's plan for Peter included a miraculous deliverance that even those who were interceding for him found hard to believe (Acts 12:13-16). They were astonished when he showed up at their prayer meeting. God can operate outside the odds because He is all-powerful. Nothing is too hard for Him. The One who loves us and gave Himself for us is in charge of our lives. In ordinary circumstances and impossible situations, God can reveal His power. Whether we are showered with success or sustained in sorrow, He is with us.—David C. McCasland

Dear God, we're so thankful that nothing is too difficult for You. You can do amazing things!  
Help us to trust that You are always with us  
and always in control. We love You, Lord.

God is always in control behind the scenes.

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**Are You Washed?** - Let us draw near . . . having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience (Hebrews 10:22). - While visiting in an Egyptian home, Bradford Abernethy saw a servant give a pitcher of water and a rug to a boy who lived there. Three times, the lad washed his hands, feet, face, neck, ears, and arms. Then he knelt on the rug, bowed his head to the floor, and began to pray. The Scriptures teach that a right relationship to God comes from being "justified in the name of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 6:11) . The outward washing of the body referred to in the Old Testament was a symbolic act to remind God's people that when they

entered the Lord's presence their hearts were to be free from unconfessed sin. David declared, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear" (Ps. 66:18) . And in another psalm he wrote, "He who has clean hands and a pure heart . . . shall receive blessing from the LORD" (Ps. 24:4-5). It is foolish for those living in sin to expect the Lord to hear and answer their prayers. It's the prayer of a "righteous man" that is effective (James 5:16). The Word of God assures us, "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-note). A clean heart is necessary if we expect God to hear our prayers. —R W De Haan

The words of our prayers  
are not as important as the condition of our hearts.

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**Praying Hyde** - Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up. (James 4:8-10) Many years ago [J. Wilbur Chapman](#) wrote this to a friend: "I have learned some great lessons concerning prayer. At one of our missions in England the audience was exceedingly small, but I received a note saying that an American missionary was going to beseech the Lord on behalf of our work. The man was known as [Praying Hyde](#). Almost immediately the tide changed. Crowds began to pack the hall, and many accepted Christ as their Savior. Meeting Mr. Hyde later, I said, 'Brother, I want you to pray for me personally.' He came to my room, turned the key in the door, and dropped to his knees. He waited 5 minutes without a single syllable coming from his lips. I felt hot tears as they began running down my face. Although he had said nothing, I knew I was in the presence of God. Then with upturned face and with eyes streaming, he said, 'O God!' and was stilt again. When he seemed to sense that he was in full communion with the Lord, there came from the depths of his heart petitions such as I had never heard. I rose from my knees to know what real prayer was!"

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**YOU ARE SAFE ONLY ON YOUR KNEES**- Sir George Adam Smith tells how he and his guide were climbing the Weisshorn in the Swiss Alps. It was stormy and they were making their climb on the sheltered side of the peak. When they reached the summit, they were filled with the exhilaration. Sir George forgot about the fierce winds, leaped up and was nearly blown over the edge to the glacier below! The guide grabbed hold of him and exclaimed: "On your knees, sir. You are safe here only on your knees!"

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**The Right Attitude** - Grampa was going by his little granddaughter's room one night when he saw her kneeling beside her bed, head bowed and hands folded, repeating the alphabet. "What are you doing?" he asked her. She explained, "I'm saying my prayers, but I couldn't think of just what I wanted to say. So I'm just saying all the letters, and God can put them together however He thinks best."The words we say when we pray aren't nearly as important as an attitude of openness and reverence toward God. - 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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**Safe In God's Care** (Acts 27:27-44) - The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore. —Psalm 121:8 - President Franklin D. Roosevelt loved the song we call the Navy Hymn. It was sung at his funeral in Hyde Park, New York, on April 14, 1945. The words of the hymn were written in 1860 by William Whiting, who taught and directed a 16-voice boys choir. He penned them for a student who was about to set sail for America and who was apprehensive about the journey. The beautiful tune was written by John B. Dykes and first published in 1861. He named the hymn tune Melita, the Roman name for Malta, the island where Paul was shipwrecked. **The hymn is a simple prayer** based on the profound truth that the eternal God who created the universe controls all the elements of nature and can protect His own no matter how great the peril. Wind and wave are subject to His command. The first verse reads:

Eternal Father, strong to save,  
Whose arm doth bind the restless wave,  
Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep  
Its own appointed limits keep;  
O hear us when we cry to Thee  
For those in peril on the sea.

When we or loved ones take a journey to some far-off destination, or if we only travel to and from work, we can be sure of His protection and care. We need not fear shipwreck with Jesus at the helm. —David C. Egner

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**Boomerang Prayer** (Job 42:10, Matthew 5:44) - And the Lord restored Job's losses when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. (Job 42:10) In my office in Lincoln, Nebraska, I have on my desk two boomerangs from Australia. One is the genuine article, the other is a tourist version, but they both do what boomerangs are suppose to do. If you hold them the right way and throw them with that special flick of the wrist, they will fly out from your hand, circle back around and return to

you. With a boomerang, what you send out also comes back. Job experienced the same thing with prayer. Job's three friends found themselves in deep trouble with God. The Lord said to [Eliphaz the Temanite](#), "My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right" (Job 42:7). Having been on the receiving end of these misguided barbs, Job might have been tempted to rejoice that God was setting these men straight. But instead, at God's request, he prayed for them. And as he prayed for their forgiveness and restoration, God turned these prayers for blessing back onto Job and restored twice as much as Job had before. When people have hurt and offended us, we often pray that God will help them see the error of their ways. And should God choose to extract a bit of vengeance, we wouldn't be opposed to that either. But the real joy comes if we can put our pain behind us and pray for God's blessing on them. Jesus says, "Do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you" (Mt 5:44). We are to pray for their good, not for their harm. If you have been the object of someone's misunderstanding, pray for that person. Ask God to richly bless him. You will be surprised to find that the blessings may boomerang back to you as well. Praying for others is the best thing we can do for ourselves.—Woodrow Kroll

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**Prayer Evangelism** - "I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men. (1 Timothy 2:1) - Over the centuries since Jesus died for our sins and rose victorious from the grave, many methods have been used to spread the gospel. From Peter's first sermon, when 3,000 were saved, to great preaching campaigns of men like Charles Spurgeon and Billy Sunday, to friendship evangelism, many ways of influencing others to accept Jesus' free gift have been tried. In a major city in the midwest, another method has been launched: prayer evangelism. In the campaign to reach toe populace of this city, organizers have set out to pray for every individual. They have divided the city into sections, and all cooperating churches have been assigned the names of the people in those sections. Of course, it will also take other kinds of contacts, such as literature or face-to-face visits, but prayer is the major component. In 1 Timothy, Paul explained that God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Ti 2:4). And the method suggested for beginning the work of evangelization is "supplications, prayers, intercessions...for all men" (1Ti 2:1). What about your neighborhood and mine? Let's begin right now to do some prayer evangelism. —J. David Brannon

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**The City of Everywhere** - In Hugh Price Hughes' story, the "City of Everywhere," a man arrived in a city one cold morning. As he got off the train, the station was like any other station with the crowds and redcaps, except that everybody was barefooted. They wore no shoes. He noticed the cab driver was barefooted. "Pardon me," he asked the driver, "I was just wondering why you don't wear shoes. Don't you believe in shoes?"

"Sure we do," said the driver.

"Why don't you wear them?"

"Ah, that's the question," came the reply. "Why don't we wear shoes? Why don't we?"

At the hotel it was the same. The clerk, bell boys, everybody was barefooted. In the coffee shop he noticed a nice-looking fellow at a table opposite him who was also barefooted. He said, "I notice you aren't wearing any shoes. I wonder why? Don't you know about shoes?"

The man replied, "Of course I know about shoes."

"Then why don't you wear them?"

"Ah, that's the question. Why don't we? Why don't we?"

After breakfast he walked out on the street in the snow but every person he saw was barefooted. He asked another man about it, and pointed out how shoes protect the feet from cold. The man said, "We know about shoes. See that building yonder? That is a shoe factory. We are proud of that plant and every week we gather there to hear the man in charge tell about shoes and how wonderful they are."

"Then why don't you wear shoes?"

"Ah, that's the question."

Don't we believe in prayer? Don't we know what it could mean in our lives? Then why don't we pray? Ah, that's the question ... Why don't we?—[All Things are Possible Through Prayer by Charles Allen](#)

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**Starting Upstream** - (Mt 6:8) - My home sits along a creek in a canyon in the shadow of a large mountain. During the spring snowmelt and after heavy rains this stream swells and acts more like a river than a creek. People have drowned in it. One day I traced the origin of the creek to its very source, a snowfield atop the mountain. From there the melted snow begins the long journey down the mountain, joining other rivulets to take shape as the creek below my house. It occurs to me, thinking about prayer, that most of the time I get the direction wrong. I start downstream with my own concerns and bring them to God. I inform God, as if God did not already know. I plead with God, as if hoping to change God's mind and overcome divine reluctance. Instead, I should start upstream where the flow begins. When we shift direction, we realize that God already cares about our concerns—a loved one's cancer, a broken family, a rebellious teenager—more than we do. Our Father knows what we need (Matt. 6:8). Grace, like water, descends to the lowest part. Streams of mercy flow. We begin with God and ask what part we can play in His work on earth. With this new starting point for prayer, our perceptions change. We look at nature and see the signature of the grand Artist. We look at

human beings and see individuals of eternal destiny made in God's image. Thanksgiving and praise surge up to Him as a natural response. —[Philip Yancey](#)

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A woman invited several guests to dinner. At the table, she asked her daughter to pray. "I don't know what to say," the child complained. The mother encouraged her, "Just say what you hear Mommy say." The girl bowed her head and prayed, "Dear Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner!" Every child looks for models of how to act and speak; unfortunately, not every model is a good one!

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If I have had any success in life, I attribute it to the habit of giving the first two hours of each day to Bible study and prayer.—Lord Earl Cairns, Lord Chancellor of England

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**Praying Friends** (1 Thessalonians 3:6-13) Brethren, pray for us. —1 Thessalonians 5:25- I met my friend Angie for lunch after having not seen her for several months. At the end of our time together, she pulled out a piece of paper with notes from our previous get-together. It was a list of my prayer requests she had been praying for since then. She went through each one and asked if God had answered yet or if there were any updates. And then we talked about her prayer requests. How encouraging to have a praying friend! The apostle Paul had a praying relationship with the churches he served, including the one at Thessalonica. He thanked God for the faith, love, and hope of the people (1 Th 1:2-3). He longed to see them, and asked God "night and day" that he might be able to visit them again (1 Th 3:10-11). He requested that the Lord would help them "increase and abound in love to one another and to all" (1Th 3:12). He also prayed that their hearts would be blameless before God (1Th 3:13). They must have been encouraged as they read about Paul's concern and prayers for them. Paul knew too his own need for God's presence and power and pleaded, "Brethren, pray for us" (1 Th 5:25). Loving Father, thank You for wanting us to talk with You. Teach us all to be praying friends. — Anne Cetas

I need the prayers of those I love  
While traveling on life's rugged way,  
That I may true and faithful be,  
And live for Jesus every day.  
—Vaughn

The best kind of friend is a praying friend.

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**See You Next Time?** Sing to the Lord, all the earth; proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. —1 Chronicles 16:23; It was a Sunday afternoon several years ago. The whole family was gathered around the table for dinner. Our 4-year-old son Stevie led off our pre-meal prayer: "Dear heavenly Father, thank You for this nice day. Thank You that we could go to church and Sunday school today." Then, to our surprise, he said, "And we'll see You again next week." What Stevie said in his prayer is how we often view the Christian life, I'm afraid. We easily fall into a see-you-next-time attitude about God. We forget about Him as we fulfill our daily responsibilities. We go for days at a time trying to pay the bills, keep the boss happy, and give attention to each family member. But we neglect to give God the time He deserves. First Chronicles 16 gives us some facts about God's power and majesty that we can think and talk about "from day to day" (1Chr 16:23). We can "declare His glory" (1Chr 16:24) and recognize His hand of creation in the heavens (1Chr 16:26). We can talk of His honor and majesty, the strength He possesses, and the gladness He gives us (1Chr 16:27). Each day brings new reasons to pray to God, to praise His name, and to proclaim His love. Let's make our worship of Him something we do "from day to day." —Dave Branon

Worship, praise, and adoration  
Render now to Jesus' name;  
Freely give your heart's devotion,  
Constantly His love proclaim.  
—Anon.

No day is complete without worship.

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**We Just Have To Talk** (Exodus 33:1-11) Lisa and Sheryl have been friends since grade school. Even though their paths have taken them in different directions since those schoolgirl days in New Jersey, they have maintained their close friendship. Sheryl is married, settled in the Midwest, and the mother of young children. Lisa is single and involved in mission work, most recently in Russia. "Every now and then we just have to talk," says Sheryl. So they pick up the phone to catch up on what's been happening and to share their hearts. In Exodus 33:11, we read that "the Lord spoke to Moses . . . as a man speaks to his friend." Moses enjoyed something far

better than an occasional long-distance talk with the Lord. He had frequent, face-to-face conversations with Him. During those intimate talks, the Lord gave Moses instructions for leading the people of Israel. Because of what Jesus Christ has done for us, and because the Holy Spirit now lives within all followers of Christ, we too can enjoy a special friendship and closeness with God. He speaks to us through His Word and by His Spirit, and we have the privilege of talking to Him in prayer. If you are like me, as you go through your day you'll find yourself saying to God, "We just have to talk." —David C. Egner

The kindest Friend I've ever had  
Is One I cannot see,  
Yet One in whom I can confide,  
Who loves and blesses me.  
—Shuler

Prayer is meant to be an intimate conversation with God  
—our best friend.

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**When You're Unappreciated** (1 Samuel 12:16-25) -- Samuel was a Mount Everest personality who appeared when the historical landscape was monotonously flat. As God's prophet, he judged the people. Since Israel was a theocracy (ruled by God), Samuel was virtually a king. He discharged his duties with skill and dedication to both God and the people. But the people wanted a king such as the pagan nations around them had (1 Samuel 8:5). So they asked the man of God to step aside. Samuel was hurt by their rejection. He understood the scope of their disobedience (1Sa 12:17-19). The prophet could have turned his back on the new king and his rebellious people. Instead he declared, "Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you" (1Sa 12:23). Why did Samuel say that? He knew that even as doors were being slammed in his face, another door was open to him--the door of intercessory prayer. Samuel demonstrated his godliness by the way he reacted. He was still God's man, and he would still care for God's people. When we are snubbed by those we try to serve, we must resolve not to sin against the Lord by snubbing them in return. Instead, by God's grace, we can pray sincerely for those who may not value our best efforts. —Haddon W. Robinson

How deep does it wound you when others despise  
Your labor of love? Don't despair--  
It's then you must view them with Spirit-filled eyes  
And love your offenders with prayer.  
--Gustafson

Pray for those who spitefully use you.  
--Jesus (Matthew 5:44)

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**Worrier Or Warrior?** (Ephesians 3:20) - A missionary wrote a newsletter to thank his supporters for being "prayer warriors." Because of a typing error, though, he called them "prayer worriers. " For some of us, that might be a good description. In his book *Growing Your Soul*, Neil Wiseman writes, "Prayer must be more than a kind of restatement of fretting worries or a mulling over of problems. Our petitions must move beyond gloomy desperation, which deals mostly with calamity and despair." During an anxious time in my life, I became a "prayer worrier." I would beg, "Lord, please keep my neighbor from causing me problems tomorrow." Or, "Father, don't let that ornery person spread gossip about me." But then the Lord taught me to pray for people, rather than against them. I began to say, "Lord, bless and encourage my neighbor, and help him to sense Your love." Then I watched to see what God would do. The Lord's amazing answers not only helped others but also helped to cure my own anxiety! Paul was no "prayer worrier." He prayed for God's people that they might know the strength, love, and fullness of God, who is able to do far more than we can ask or even think (Ephesians 3:14-21). Such confidence made Paul a true "prayer warrior." Are your prayers like that? —Joanie Yoder

As we resolve to live for Christ  
In actions, words, and deeds,  
We'll yield our anxious hearts to Him  
And pray for others' needs.  
—Branon

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**God is Listening** - The day before [Billy Graham's](#) interview in 1982 on *The Today Show*, his director of public relations, Larry Ross, requested a private room for Graham to pray in before the interview. But when Mr. Graham arrived at the studio, his assistant informed Ross that Mr. Graham didn't need the room. He said, "Mr. Graham started praying when he got up this morning, he prayed while eating breakfast, he prayed on the way over in the car, and he'll probably be praying all the way through the interview." Ross later said, "That was a great lesson for me to learn as a young man." Prayerfulness is not an event; it is a way of being in relationship with God. This kind of intimate relationship is developed when God's people view prayerfulness as a way of life. The

Psalms encourage us to begin each day by lifting our voice to the Lord (Ps. 5:3); to fill our day with conversations with God (Ps 55:17); and in the face of accusations and slander, to give ourselves totally to prayer (Ps 109:4). We develop prayer as a way of life because we desire to be with God (Ps 42:1-4, 84:1-2,130:5-6). Prayer is our way of connecting with God in all life's circumstances. God is always listening. We can talk to Him any time throughout the day.—Marvin Williams

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**Get on Your Knees** (James 5:13-18) Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith (Hebrews 10:22) - Has your child ever rushed up to you in a moment of fear or panic, nestled in your arms and said, "Daddy (or Mommy), you'll take care of me, won't you?" Well, that's the way God wants His own to "draw near . . . in full assurance of faith." When such warm trust is displayed, the Heavenly Father loves to comfort and reassure His trembling child and give him the protection, blessing, and answers to prayer he seeks. But I hear some fatalist exclaim, "Hasn't God predestined all things? How then can our prayers have any effect?" Ah, but my friend, you are forgetting that God does more than predestine the end, He also predestines the means to that end. He has decreed that His child shall pray, and, because he does, the things that befall him will turn out for his highest good. The Lord consequently moves upon the hearts of His own to pray for that which He has already determined to grant them! In the process, faith is strengthened, and God's name glorified, as men see their petitions bear fruit. Is it any wonder then that James declares: "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16)! A band of tourists were once attempting to climb the snow-clad Matterhorn. The way was steep and perilous. On a particularly dangerous and narrow passage, where the snow and ice made the upward journey extremely hazardous, a sudden gust of wind swept down upon the party just as they were rounding a sharp curve in the mountain track. The guide, accustomed to such unexpected blasts but knowing the imminent danger, shouted at the top of his voice, "Get down on your knees! You're safe only when you're on your knees!" What a parable on the Christian life. We often find the upward path difficult and beset with trials. Storms may burst upon us suddenly, but when they do, our Guide is just saying to us, "Get on your knees!" Get down on your knees!"—[Our Daily Bread](#)

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Prayer saturates Nehemiah's autobiography (Neh 1:5,6,11, etc). He beseeched the Lord to guide him at every step. In order to pray effectively, we must grow in the discipline of prayer. If you feel like your prayer life needs to grow deeper, you might try praying through the Psalms or Paul's prayers in his letters. As you pray more biblically, you'll find that your heart is shaped to seek God and understand His will more fully. A prayer partner or group can also encourage you to have regular times of prayer.

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[James M. Gray](#) and [William Houghton](#) were two great, godly men of the Word. Dr. Houghton writes of an occasion when he and Dr. Gray were praying together. Dr. Gray, though getting up in years, was still interested in being an effective witness and expositor. He concluded his prayer by saying: "And, Lord, keep me cheerful. Keep me from becoming a cranky, old man!" You and I should pray the same prayer.—[Charles R. Swindoll, The Finishing Touch](#)

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**Walking the Talk** - A man sat through a church service and then on the way home he fussed about the sermon, he fussed about the traffic, he fussed about the heat, and he fussed about the lateness of the meal being served. Then he bowed and prayed. His son was watching him all the way through this post-church experience. Just as they were beginning to pass the food he said, "Daddy, did God hear you when we left the church and you started fussin' about the sermon and about the traffic and about the heat?" The father sort of blushed and said, "Well, yes, son, He heard me." "Well, Daddy, did God hear you when you just prayed for this food right now?" And he says, "Well, yes, son, He ... He ... He heard me." "So, well, Daddy, which one did God believe?"—[Spiros Zodhiates, Behavior of Belief - An Exposition of James](#)

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**Planned Neglect** - Daniel ... knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God. (Da 6:10-note) In her book [A Practical Guide to Prayer](#), Dorothy Haskin tells about a noted concert violinist who was asked the secret of her mastery of the instrument. The woman answered the question with two words: "Planned neglect." Then she explained, "There were many things that used to demand my time. When I went to my room after breakfast, I made my bed, straightened the room, dusted, and did whatever seemed necessary. When I finished my work, I turned to my violin practice. That system prevented me from accomplishing what I should on the violin. So I reversed things. I deliberately planned to neglect everything else until my practice period was complete. And that program of planned neglect is the secret of my success." This same principle can be helpful as we plan a daily quiet time with the Lord. Unless we discipline ourselves and make a deliberate effort, trivial things will keep us from establishing a consistent devotional life. Let's give our time with the Lord top priority by "planned neglect" of things of lesser value. He deserves first place in our lives. —R. W. De Haan

[A Practical Guide to Prayer](#)

By Dorothy Haskin

[1. PRAYING IN PUBLIC](#)

[2. THE KEY TO PRAYER](#)

[3. GOD'S WORD IN THE QUIET TIME](#)

[4. PRAYER IN THE PRIVATE TIME](#)

[5. LISTEN!](#)

[6. PRAYER FOR OTHERS](#)

[7. FAMILY PRAYERS](#)

[8. TABLE GRACE](#)

[9. PRAYER PARTNERS](#)

[10. THE SECRET OF HIS PRESENCE](#)

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**The Power of the Cross** - What is it that discourages you from witnessing? During China's Boxer Rebellion of 1900, insurgents captured a mission station, blocked all the gates but one, and in front of that one gate placed a cross flat on the ground. Then the word was passed to those inside that any who trampled the cross underfoot would be permitted their freedom and life, but that any refusing would be shot. Terribly frightened, the first seven students trampled the cross under their feet and were allowed to go free. But the eighth student, a young girl, refused to commit the sacrilegious act. Kneeling beside the cross in prayer for strength, she arose and moved carefully around the cross, and went out to face the firing squad. Strengthened by her example, every one of the remaining ninety-two students followed her to the firing squad. What do I risk in witnessing? Possibly rejection or persecution from someone. Whatever the risk may be, I must realize that nothing done for Christ is ever wasted.—[Our Daily Bread](#)

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In [Alexander Solzhenitsyn's](#) 'A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich,' Ivan endures all the horrors of a Soviet prison camp. One day he is praying with his eyes closed when a fellow prisoner notices him and says with ridicule, "Prayers won't help you get out of here any faster." Opening his eyes, Ivan answers, "I do not pray to get out of prison but to do the will of God."

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Prayer is not a stratagem for occasional use, a refuge to resort to now and then. It is rather like an established residence for the innermost self. All things have a home; the bird has a nest, the fox has a hole, the bee has a hive. A soul without prayer is a soul without a home. Weary, sobbing, the soul, after roaming through a world festered with aimlessness, falsehoods, and absurdities, seeks a moment in which to gather up its scattered life, in which to divest itself of enforced pretensions and camouflage, in which to simplify complexities, in which to call for help without being a coward. Such a home is prayer. - Abraham Joshua Heschel

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**E-Mail Prayer**(Ephesians 1:15-23) -[I] do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.—Ephesians 1:16 - Not long ago, a friend of mine was facing surgery. Two disks in his back and a detached Achilles tendon were creating a lot of pain. After assuring him of my prayers, I was struck with the idea of sending him something in writing to further encourage him. So I sent the following e-mail:

"This is what I prayed for you today. 'Living God, I thank You for Your sovereign control over life's events. On behalf of Your dear servant, I ask that You would give him deep peace. I pray for the physicians as they apply their medical skills, that You would give them excellent results. May Your healing hand touch him and bring him back into full service for You. In Jesus' name. Amen.' "

The apostle Paul wrote prayers to encourage other believers (Phil 1:9-11; Col 1:9-12; 2Th. 1:11-12). He wrote to the Ephesians: "[I] do not cease 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 to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him" (Eph 1:16-17). Do you have friends or family members who need your prayers of encouragement right now? Besides letting them know that you're praying for them, try sending a written prayer as well.—[Our Daily Bread](#)

Lord, help us be encouragers  
By praying for our friends in need;  
And give us opportunities  
To show them love in word and deed.  
—Sper

Praying for others is a privilege  
—and a responsibility.

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**Put On Hold** (1 Samuel 1:1-18) -Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. (Psalm 37:7) I'm sure you've had it happen to you. You call the appliance store and ask for the service department. "Can you hold?" a cheerful voice asks, and before you know it you're hearing music. Every so often a taped message assures you that your call will be answered. You wait and wait. You think, 'I could have driven over there and back by now!' You feel forgotten and that nobody cares. Sometimes it seems that God has put us on hold. We pray and pray about a matter of extreme importance, but nothing happens. Nothing! I'm sure that's how



Hannah felt. She was asking God for a baby. Childlessness was a curse in her day. To make it worse, her husband's other wife ridiculed her mercilessly. Hannah wanted desperately to give her husband a child. She prayed out of deep pain and bitterness. Yet year after year she did not conceive. How can we reconcile the apparent silence of God to our repeated prayers? Remember that God's wisdom surpasses our own. What we're asking for might harm us. We can't see the whole picture. Our timing is not God's timing. When God puts you "on hold," don't grumble. You can entrust your most cherished longings and desires to Him, and then patiently wait for Him to answer. -David C. Egner

When we call out to You, O Lord,  
And wait for answers to our prayer,  
Give us the patience that we need  
And help us sense Your love and care.  
-Sper

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**The Power Of Prayer** - Ephesians 6:10-18 - While crossing the Atlantic on a ship many years ago, Bible teacher and author [F. B. Meyer](#) was asked to speak to the passengers. An agnostic listened to Meyer's message about answered prayer and told a friend, "I didn't believe a word of it." Later that same day, the agnostic went to hear Meyer speak to another group of passengers. But before he went to the meeting, he put two oranges in his pocket. On his way, he passed an elderly woman who was fast asleep in her deck chair. Her arms were outstretched and her hands were wide open, so as a joke he put the two oranges in her palms. After the meeting, he saw the woman happily eating one of the pieces of fruit. "You seem to be enjoying that orange," he remarked with a smile. "Yes, sir," she replied, "My Father is very good to me." "What do you mean?" pressed the agnostic. She explained, "I have been seasick for days. I was asking God somehow to send me an orange. I fell asleep while I was praying. When I awoke, I found He had sent me not only one but two oranges!" The agnostic was amazed by the unexpected confirmation of Meyer's talk on answered prayer. Later, he put his trust in Christ. Yes, God answers prayer! —Henry G. Bosch

For answered prayer we thank You, Lord,  
We know You're always there  
To hear us when we call on You;  
We're grateful for Your care.  
--J D Branon

God always gives us what we ask or something better.

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**How is Your Prayer Altar?** Leviticus 6:13 (Morning and Evening) "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." - Leviticus 6:13 - Keep the altar of private prayer burning. This is the very life of all piety. The sanctuary and family altars borrow their fires here, therefore let this burn well. Secret devotion is the very essence, evidence, and barometer, of vital and experimental religion. Burn here the fat of your sacrifices. Let your closet seasons be, if possible, regular, frequent, and undisturbed. Effectual prayer availeth much. Have you nothing to pray for? Let us suggest the Church, the ministry, your own soul, your children, your relations, your neighbours, your country, and the cause of God and truth throughout the world. Let us examine ourselves on this important matter. Do we engage with lukewarmness in private devotion? Is the fire of devotion burning dimly in our hearts? Do the chariot wheels drag heavily? If so, let us be alarmed at this sign of decay. Let us go with weeping, and ask for the Spirit of grace and of supplications. Let us set apart special seasons for extraordinary prayer. For if this fire should be smothered beneath the ashes of a worldly conformity, it will dim the fire on the family altar, and lessen our influence both in the Church and in the world. The text will also apply to the altar of the heart. This is a golden altar indeed. God loves to see the hearts of his people glowing towards himself. Let us give to God our hearts, all blazing with love, and seek his grace, that the fire may never be quenched; for it will not burn if the Lord does not keep it burning. Many foes will attempt to extinguish it; but if the unseen hand behind the wall pour thereon the sacred oil, it will blaze higher and higher. Let us use texts of Scripture as fuel for our heart's fire, they are live coals; let us attend sermons, but above all, let us be much alone with Jesus. —C H Spurgeon

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**Prayer of an Aging Woman** - Lord, you know better than I know myself that I am growing older and will some day be old. Keep me from getting talkative, particularly from the fatal habit of thinking that I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful, but not moody; helpful, but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all, but you know, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end. Keep my mind from the recital of endless details—give me wings to come to the point. I ask for grace enough to listen to the tales of others' pains. Seal my lips on my own aches and pains—they are increasing, and my love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. Help me to endure them with patience. I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally it is possible that I may be mistaken. Keep me reasonably sweet. I do not want to be a saint—some of them are so hard to live with—but

a sour old woman is one of the crowning works of the devil.—[Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations and Quotes](#)

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**Open Invitation** - 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 - Versailles was made the capital of France by King Louis XIV in 1682 and remained the capital (except for a short time) until 1789 when it was moved back to Paris. The beautiful palace of Versailles included an opulent 241-foot-long Hall of Mirrors. When a visitor approached the king, he had to curtsy every five steps as he walked the entire distance to meet the king sitting on his dazzling silver throne! Foreign emissaries to France submitted to that humiliating ritual to court the French monarch's favor toward their country. By contrast, our God, the King of kings, invites His people to come to His throne freely. We can come to Him anytime—no advance appointments and no bowing required! How grateful we should be that our heavenly Father is so much more inviting! "Through [Christ] we . . . have access by one Spirit to the Father" (Eph. 2:18). Because of this, the writer of Hebrews urges us to "come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16). Have you responded to God's open invitation? Come in awe and gratitude, for the God of this universe is willing to hear your petitions anytime.

You need to talk with God today,  
Your heart's bowed down with care;  
Just speak the words you have to say—  
He'll always hear your prayer.  
—Hess

Access to God's throne is always open.

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When I am preoccupied with pleasing myself, I miss the power that comes from a healthy relationship with Christ. His Spirit enables me to do the will of God, to show His attitudes, and to fulfill His purpose. But I have to **stay plugged in** through prayer, reflection on God's Word, and complete reliance on His power—not my own.—Dennis De Haan

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**Wind And Worship** (Job 1:6-12) - Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. -Job 1:20 - Job's calamities were enormous. His oxen and donkeys were stolen. Fire consumed his sheep. Raiders took his camels. But that was just the beginning. A great wind destroyed the house where his sons and daughters were feasting, and they all perished. His loss seemed unbearable! But notice Job's response. He humbled himself and worshiped God (Job 1:20). On April 2, 1977, the sky north of Olivet, Michigan, grew black and ominous. Just another severe thunderstorm, thought Norm Heddon. But when pressure began building in his ears, he instinctively rushed down the basement stairs-which took about 5 seconds. Then it happened-his house exploded into thousands of pieces from a killer tornado. Minutes later when Norm emerged, he couldn't believe his eyes. All his earthly goods had been swept away, but miraculously his family was unhurt. Bowing in prayer, they thanked God for His goodness. Heddon said, "He has a hand in everything that happens to us." How can anyone worship while caught up in the fierce winds of adversity? The answer is clear: By anchoring our faith in the love and wisdom of God, we can say through our tears, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21). - Dennis J. De Haan

Thinking It Over - Do you feel abandoned by God, as Job did? Tell Him how you feel. Then ask Him to help you believe the truth about His love for you.

When you are swept off your feet,  
land on your knees.

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**Beaming a Message to Heaven** (Mt 6:5-8) "Your father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him" (Matthew 6:8). - A group of scientists are directing their thoughts and needs into the heavens, but not to the God of the Bible. They have calculated that as many as fifty million civilizations may exist somewhere in space, and they believe that some of them may have found methods to improve our lives and control the time of death. In November, 1974, these scientists, using special technology, beamed a message to a cluster of stars on the outer edge of our galaxy. But even if that signal were picked up, they estimate that it would take forty-eight thousand years for an answer to come back. To Christians, these efforts seem ridiculous and destined to failure. Yet those scientists are serious about their efforts, while we, who do have contact with "another world," sometimes act as if our prayers are not heard. Every child of God has the opportunity to get in touch, not with other creatures, but with the Creator Himself! We have immediate access through prayer to the One who stretched out all the galaxies in the heavens. He hears us the instant we pray and answers according to His will. Through the wonderful privilege of prayer, every Christian can come to One who is all-powerful, who listens in heaven, and who can and does change the affairs of people. In light of our relationship to Him, we can send our messages to heaven with renewed confidence, because we know personally our God-listener. —M. R. De Haan II

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**Fervent Prayer** - Author [A. B. Simpson](#) told about an old farmer who plowed around a large rock in his field year after year. He had broken one cultivator and two plowshares by hitting it. Each time he saw that obstacle, he grumbled about how much trouble the rock had caused. One day he decided to dig it up and be done with it. Putting a large crowbar under one side, he found to his surprise that the rock was less than a foot thick. Soon he had pried it out of the ground and was carting it away in his wagon. He smiled to think how that "big" old rock had caused him so much needless frustration. Not every trouble can be removed as easily as that stone. But prayer is an effective way to handle difficulties of all sizes. Using the leverage of prayer with our problems can keep us from becoming victims of worry. —D. J. De Haan

Fervent Prayers Dispels Anxious Cares!

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**Help!** (Psalm 46:1-11) People are supposed to call 911 for emergencies only, but many people don't understand or follow the rule. Police emergency operators in Colorado Springs have received calls from people reporting a TV set that wasn't working, asking when it was going to stop snowing, and wanting to report an identification theft while they remained anonymous. I have often wondered if many of our prayers for help sound frivolous to God. It's impossible to know, but there's one thing we can be assured of: In our times of need, the Lord not only hears our cries, He is present with us. Psalm 46 describes times of great calamity, including war and natural disasters. Yet it is a song of trust that begins and ends with the same affirmation: "God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. . . . The Lord of Heaven's Armies is here among us; the God of Israel is our fortress" (Ps 46:1, 11). The Lord is always at work accomplishing His purposes—even when the world seems to be falling apart. He tells us, "Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world" (Ps 46:10). We don't have to fear. When we call for help, we know that He hears and will come near. —David C. McCasland

God's help is only a prayer away!

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**Secular View of Prayer** - The 1993 Christmas issue of Newsweek magazine carried an article on angels, a rather surprising topic to find in a secular publication. As might be expected, though, many points were in conflict with Scripture. For instance, Professor Robert Ellswood, a specialist in unorthodox religions, made this assertion: "With angels around, people feel they don't have to bother an Almighty God in order to get help." And Andre D'Angelo, a minister in Carmel, California, suggested that God is like the CEO of a large corporation, and "an angel is like a good executive secretary." Is our heavenly Father so busy operating the cosmos that he can't be bothered with our requests for help? Not the God of the Bible who reveals Himself as the only true God -- the One who sustains the countless star clusters in all their immensity and yet notes the sparrow's fall. He invites us to talk with Him about even our trivial cares. It is true that angels serve God and help believers (Heb. 1:13-14), but we do not need their assistance to get through to our Father in heaven. We can communicate directly with Him (Heb 4:14-16). With the psalmist we too can say, "The Lord will hear when I call to Him" (Ps. 4:3). —Vernon C. Grounds

For answered prayer we thank You, Lord;  
We know You're always there  
To hear us when we call on you;  
We're grateful for Your care.  
—J. David Branon

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**Five-Minute Rule** (Psalm 102:1-17) - He shall regard the prayer of the destitute, and shall not despise their prayer. —(Ps 102:17) I read about a five-minute rule that a mother had for her children. They had to be ready for school and gather together five minutes before it was time to leave each day. They would gather around Mom, and she would pray for each one by name, asking for the Lord's blessing on their day. Then she'd give them a kiss and off they'd run. Even neighborhood kids would be included in the prayer circle if they happened to stop by. Many years later, one of the children said that she learned from this experience how crucial prayer is to her day. The writer of Psalm 102 knew the importance of prayer. This psalm is labeled, "A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed and pours out his complaint before the Lord." He cried out, "Hear my prayer, O Lord . . . in the day that I call, answer me speedily" (Ps 102:1-2). God looks down "from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven [He views] the earth" (Ps 102:19). God cares for you and wants to hear from you. Whether you follow the five-minute rule asking for blessings on the day, or need to spend more time crying out to Him in deep distress, talk to the Lord each day. Your example may have a big impact on your family or someone close to you. —A Cetas

The issue isn't how much time  
We spend with God in prayer,  
But seeking Him throughout each day  
And knowing that He's there.  
—Sper

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**Careful for What You Pray** - Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. (Romans 8:26) - The parable is told of two men who planted olive trees in their fields. Afterward one of them prayed, "Dear Lord, my trees need water. Please send rain." The showers came! He then petitioned, "They need sunshine," and God bathed them with sunlight! Later he cried, "Father, my trees need something to make them hardy. Please send a frost tonight." It came, but it killed them all. He went over to the other man's grove, and found that his olive trees were flourishing. "How can this be?" he asked. The reply came, "When I prayed, I didn't ask for rain, sunshine, or frost; I just said, 'Lord, you made these trees. You know what they need. Just send what is best!'"

Groanings which cannot be uttered are often prayers which cannot be refused.

[C H Spurgeon](#)

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**Pray without ceasing.** (1 Thessalonians 5:17) -- A soldier was brought before his commanding officer and accused of communicating with the enemy. He had been seen emerging from an area where their troops were known to patrol. The poor man summed up his defense in a few words, stating that he had slipped away to spend an hour alone in prayer. "Have you been in the habit of spending an hour in private prayer?" demanded the officer. "Yes, sir," he replied. "Then," said his commander, "never in your life have you been in more need of prayer than now. Kneel down and pray aloud so we all may hear you." Expecting the worst, the soldier dropped to his knees and poured out his heart to God. His prayer immediately revealed an intimacy with the Heavenly Father. His earnest fluency, his humble appeal for divine intervention, and his obvious trust in the One who is strong to deliver told unmistakably that he came regularly to the throne of grace. "You may go," said the officer. "No one could have prayed that way without a long apprenticeship; the fellows who never attend drill are always ill at ease for the review." For Further Study: 1Ki 8:22-30 Neh 1:4-6; Ps 145:18,19; Isaiah 55:1; Jonah 2:1,2,7; Mt 6:5-13; Mk 11:24,25; Lk 11:13; Jn 15:7,16.

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**Praying With Boldness** - Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace. —Hebrews 4:16- Have you ever found it tough to pray? That can happen when we're reluctant to tell God how we're really feeling. We might abruptly stop in mid-sentence, fearful of being disrespectful of our heavenly Father. A trip through the book of Psalms can help us pray more openly. There we can overhear David's conversations with God and realize that he was not afraid to be completely open and honest with the Lord. David cried out: "O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger" (Psalm 6:1). "Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak" (Ps 6:2). "Why do You stand afar off, O Lord?" (Ps 10:1). "Do not be silent to me" (Ps 28:1). "Plead my cause, O Lord" (Ps 35:1). "Hear my prayer, O God" (Ps 54:2). "I am restless in my complaint, and moan noisily" (Ps 55:2). Think about David's approach. He was saying to God: "Help me!" "Listen to me!" "Don't be mad at me!" "Where are You?" David boldly went to God and told Him what was on his mind. Yes, God expects us to come to Him with a clean heart, and we need to approach Him with reverence—but we don't have to be afraid to tell God what we're thinking and feeling. Next time you talk with your heavenly Father—tell it straight. He'll listen, and He'll understand.

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**Call on the King** - Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.

(Ps 50:15) - An ancient legend tells of a monarch who hired some people to make tapestries for him. Among them was a young child who was especially skilled at weaving. The king gave the silk and the patterns to the workers with instructions to ask for his help if any difficulties arose. The boy made quiet and steady progress while the others were distressed by their many failures. One day they gathered around the youngster and asked, "Why are you so happy and successful while we are always having trouble? Either our silk becomes tangled or our weaving varies from the pattern." The lad answered, "Don't you remember the words of the king when he told us to send for him whenever it was necessary? Didn't you notice how often I called for him?" he inquired. "Yes, but he's very busy, and we thought you were wrong in disturbing him so frequently" "Well," replied the boy, "I just took him at his word, and he was always happy to help me!" Jesus encourages us to call on Him. If we cast our care on Him, He will assist us before the threads of our lives become tangled. —H. G. Bosch

Prayer is the place where burdens change shoulders.

--Psalm 55:22

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**Help Needed** - 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 - During World War II, the British Isles represented the last line of resistance against the sweep of Nazi oppression in Europe. Under relentless attack and in danger of collapse, however, Britain lacked the resources to see the conflict through to victory. For that reason, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill went on BBC radio and appealed to the world: "Give us the tools, and we will finish the job." He knew that without help from the outside, they could not endure the assault they were facing. Life is like that. Often, we are inadequate for the troubles life throws at us, and we need help from outside of ourselves. As members of the body of Christ, that help can come at times from our Christian brothers and sisters (Ro 12:10-13)—and that is a wonderful thing.

Ultimately, however, we seek help from our heavenly Father. The good and great news is that our God has invited us to come confidently before Him: "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16). At such times, our greatest resource is prayer—for it brings us into the very presence of God. There we find, in His mercy and grace, the help we need.

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**Who Is Jabez?** Jabez was more honorable than his brothers. —1 Chronicles 4:9 - Chinese New Year celebrations are fun for children. When relatives and friends get together, it's the custom for adults to give children small, red envelopes containing token sums of money. Children often rip open their packets just to get the money, and their parents have to remind them that the giver is more important than the gift. Similarly, when we study the prayer of Jabez in 1 Chronicles 4:9-10, it is important to remember that the Giver, the Lord, is more important than the gift. If we focus solely on the request of Jabez, it could be easy to make the mistake of turning it into a formula for obtaining what we want from God. We don't know much about Jabez, except that his mother gave him a name that sounds like the Hebrew word for "distress" or "pain." We're also told that when he grew up, "Jabez was more honorable than his brothers." What made Jabez "more honorable"? On the basis of his prayer, we can assume that he took his relationship with God seriously. There was no magic in the words of his prayer. Rather, he knew that God is the giver of all things. Jabez was honorable, I believe, because he honored the Lord. Our prayer today should be to emulate the character of Jabez, who lived to please God. —Albert Lee

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**Praying Like Christ** (Read Job 42:10) - "I do not pray for these alone, but for those who will believe in Me through their word." (John 17:20) With friends like his, Job didn't need enemies. His three would-be comforters failed miserably in their efforts to ease his pain. Instead of bringing sympathy, they recited a creed of iron and ice that only compounded his anguish. Yet Job was able to emerge from his cave of pain and confusion in triumph. A significant step toward that victory was his willingness to pray for the very friends who had criticized and accused him. (Job 42:10) God honored his prayers, and Job had the delight of witnessing his friends' forgiveness and restoration. (Job 42:11-16) (Ed comment: Note the very last verse of this book - "And Job died, an old man and full of days." Job 42:17) Jesus also prayed for His friends (Jn 17:9-19), despite their constant failings. With the shadow of the cross falling darkly on Him, Jesus prayed for Peter even though He knew Peter would deny Him within hours (Lk. 22:32-34). Jesus prayed for you and me also (Jn 17:20-24). His work of prayer, which began before his death and resurrection, continues to this day. Although we sometimes act more like His enemies than His friends, Jesus died for us, reigns in power for us, and still prays for us (Ro 8:34). Following Christ's example, we are to pray for our friends and acquaintances -- even when they hurt us. Is there someone you can pray for today? —Haddon Robinson

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**Who's Praying?** (2 Timothy 1:1-7) I remember you in my prayers night and day. (2 Timothy 1:3) - [Jim Cymbala's](#) daughter had been running from God for a long time. Chrissy had rebelled against her family, had left home, and was living as far from God as she could. But one night, this teenager awoke with the distinct feeling that someone was praying for her. And someone was. The entire congregation of the church her father pastored was talking to God about her. During their weekly prayer meeting, a member suggested they should all pray for Chrissy. Two days later, she came home. The first question she had for her startled father was this: "Who was praying for me?" She begged forgiveness and recommitted her life to Christ. In the apostle Paul's second letter to Timothy, he told the young first-century pastor that he was praying for him night and day (2Ti 1:3). Timothy was facing some big challenges, so it must have been encouraging to know that Paul was praying specifically for him. Are there some people we know who are in bondage to sin as Chrissy was, or who are facing a challenge as Timothy was? Are we willing to spend some concentrated time praying for them? Are we confident that God will answer? Who's praying? We all should be. —Dave Brannon

Commit to pray and intercede—

The battle's strong and great's the need;

And this one truth can't be ignored:

Our only help comes from the Lord.

—Sper

To influence others for God, intercede with God for others.

Watch Jim Cymbala's message [My House Shall be Called a House of Prayer](#) in which he describes the night the weekly prayer meeting interceded for his daughter. You won't be able to keep a dry eye!

"The Bible does say, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." Preaching, music, the reading of the Word—these things are fine—but they must never override prayer as the defining mark of God's dwelling."

"Persistent calling upon the name of the Lord breaks through every stronghold of the devil, for nothing is impossible with God. For Christians in these troubled times there is simply no other way." - [Jim Cymbala](#)

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**Long Prayers and Prayers** - Mr. and Mrs. [Moody](#) often had guests in their Chicago home. One evening, after a very demanding day, Moody asked a visiting Christian to lead in family devotions. The man waxed eloquent as he expounded the symbolism in a difficult chapter of the Bible. Then he prayed at great length. When the worship was over, Mrs. Moody and the guest got up from their knees, but Moody remained bowed in prayer. The guest thought that he was praying, but Mrs. Moody soon detected that her husband was—asleep!

Prayer is a rare gift, not a popular, ready gift. Prayer is not the fruit of natural talents; it is the product of faith, of holiness, of deeply spiritual character. Men learn to pray as they learn to love. Perfection in simplicity, in humility, in faith—these form its chief ingredients. Novices in these graces are not adept in prayer. It cannot be seized upon by untrained hands; graduates in heaven's highest school of art can alone touch its finest keys, raise its sweetest, highest notes. Fine material and fine finish are requisite. Master workmen are required, for mere journeymen cannot execute the work of prayer. —[E. M. Bounds](#)

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**Ole Hallesby** - As impossible as it is for us to take a breath in the morning large enough to last us until noon, so impossible is it to pray in the morning in such a way as to last us until noon. Let your prayers ascend to Him constantly, audibly or silently, as circumstances throughout the day permit.

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**Don't Try to Blackmail God!** - "Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart..." (Luke 18:1-8) It is sometimes taught that Jesus is here encouraging what is called "prevailing prayer," which is often another way of describing an attempt to belabor God, to give him no peace, to picket the throne of heaven until we get the request we want. This is an absolutely un-Biblical and totally un-Christian attitude in prayer. Some years ago an article appeared in the newspaper concerning a man who announced that he was troubled about world conditions, particularly about moral conditions in this country, and had determined to fast and pray until God sent a great awakening, a sweeping revival to correct the moral degeneracy of the day. He announced that he would keep on even until death, if necessary, expecting God to move. The papers carried the story day after day. His strength began to fail and he grew weaker and weaker and finally was confined to his bed. Bulletins were issued each day following his condition. He was evidently a man of unusual determination, for most of us would have quit after the third day and settled for a good beefsteak, but this man did not. He went on with his fast until he actually died. The funeral was widely covered and many lauded his remarkable persistence. Was that really prayer? No, it was not! It was an attempt to blackmail God. This man was holding his own life as a pistol to the head of God and demanding all his money! He was insisting that God move on his terms and according to his time schedule. That is not prayer.... He does not say, "When the Son of man comes, will he find men praying?" No, it is "When the Son of man comes, will he find faith?" for prayer is faith expressed. True prayer is not pleading or cajoling a reluctant God, never! That is never prayer! Prayer is believing, prayer is faith, prayer is thanking instead of complaining, trust instead of trying, rejoicing, accepting, appropriating, receiving -- that is prayer. - [Ray Stedman](#)

**Related Resource:** [23 Excellent Messages on Prayer by Ray Stedman](#) - **Recommended.**

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**Answered Prayer** - In about 1949 a group of retired missionaries from China, with a few faithful praying friends, met for their regular missionary prayer meeting in Adelaide, South Australia. A great prayer burden and sense of urgency came on them as they gathered together. All felt especially burdened for Hayden Melsap, then assigned to the China Inland Mission. They unanimously decided to drop all preliminaries and go "straight to prayer." They prayed until they all felt a sense of peace and relief. A few years later, when Hayden Melsap was on deputation in Australia, the missionaries asked him if he recalled any unusual occasion at that time. To their amazement, they found that on that day and hour Hayden and at least two other missionaries were backed against a wall in a courtyard in China, with communist guns leveled at them. Just as the officer was about to issue the command to fire, the door of the courtyard opened and a higher official entered. Shocked to see what was about to happen, he shouted, "Stop!" He then stepped up, put his arm around Melsap, and led him and the others to safety. I heard this testimony from Hayden Melsap himself and also have it in writing from an Australian friend. —Wesley Duewel

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**Food for All** - [George Mueller](#), born into a German tax collector's family, was often in trouble. He learned early to steal and gamble and drink. As a teenager, he learned how to stay in expensive hotels, then sneak out without paying the bill. But at length he was caught and jailed. Prison did him little good, for upon release he continued his crime spree until, on a Saturday night in 1825, he met Jesus Christ. Mueller married and settled down in Bristol, England, growing daily in faith and developing a burden for the homeless children running wild and ragged through the streets. At a public meeting in Bristol on December 9, 1835, he presented a plan for an orphanage. Several contributions came in. Mueller rented Number 6 Wilson Street, and on April 11, 1836, the doors of the orphanage opened. Twenty-six children were immediately taken in. A second house soon opened, then a third. From the beginning, Mueller refused to ask for funds or even to speak of the ministry's financial needs. He believed in praying earnestly and trusting the Lord to provide. And the Lord did provide, though sometimes at the last moment. The best-known story involves a morning when the plates and bowls and cups were set on the tables, but there was no food or milk. The children sat waiting for breakfast while Mueller

led in prayer for their daily bread. A knock sounded at the door. It was the baker. "Mr. Mueller," he said, "I couldn't sleep last night. Somehow I felt you didn't have bread for breakfast, so I got up at 2 A.M. and baked some fresh bread." A second knock sounded. The milkman had broken down right in front of the orphanage, and he wanted to give the children his milk so he could empty his wagon and repair it. Such stories became the norm for Mueller's work. During the course of his ninety-three years, Mueller housed more than ten thousand orphans, "prayed in" millions of dollars, traveled to scores of countries preaching the Gospel, and recorded fifty thousand answers to prayer.—[Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations and Quotes](#)

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**Lost in the Jungle but Not Lost to God** - Missionary Tom Willey, twenty-seven, a graduate of Asbury College, was serving in the interior of Peru in the Amazon Basin. It had taken many treacherous days to trek into the jungle by train, car, mule, boat, and on foot, to work among the Campa Indians. He had been accepted out of curiosity if for no other reason, but he had high hopes for a harvest of souls. Tom had little difficulty adjusting to jungle life, and he plunged into his work with relish. He seemed to maintain an attitude of contented joy. One day a radiogram arrived, informing Tom that his father was gravely ill and not expected to live. Tom's father was not a Christian, and the young missionary, who had been deeply burdened for him, felt he must return home at once in the hope of speaking one more time to his dad about the Lord Jesus. Tom boarded a boat and headed upstream toward a trail out of the jungle. But once on the trail, his Indian guides became lost and Tom found himself winding around and around inside the jungle on trails leading nowhere. At every junction, hopeless decisions were made regarding the best fork to take, but the guides had lost all sense of direction. Hours passed, a night passed, then another day. A powerful anxious surge of fear turned Tom's mind into a whirling turmoil. The physical hardships of the previous months, the loneliness, the spiritual drain he had experienced—all of it fed his fears and stretched his soul to the breaking point. His father, who needed him more than ever, was dying, and Tom was hopelessly lost in the Peruvian jungles. Tom stalked back and forth like a tiger, ready to explode. The guides urged him to sit down, but he couldn't. He had lost his spiritual poise. But he hadn't forgotten how to pray. As he prayed, relief came and his mind was suddenly filled with various promises from the Scripture: "I will never leave you nor forsake you." "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Tom felt as though a warm blanket of peace were being draped around his shivering soul, the fear retreated, and he sensed that someone somewhere must have been praying for him. He was later to learn that at that precise hour, two dear praying women at Asbury had been strangely burdened to pray for "young Tom Willey. He must be in danger somewhere." Tom Willey did make it out of the Peruvian jungles, and eventually won to Christ his father on his deathbed. - [Jerry Ballard, Never Say Can't](#)

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**How John Hyde Learned to Pray** - One translation of Isaiah 62:6–7 says, "They must remind the Lord of his promises ... They must give him no rest until he restores Jerusalem." We should remind God of his promises and give him no rest until he answers. That is a passage that taught [John \("Praying"\) Hyde](#) to pray with persistence. Hyde grew up in Carthage, Illinois, in a minister's home. At McCormick Theological Seminary, he committed himself to overseas evangelism, and following graduation he went to India. His itinerant ministry took him from village to village, but his preaching produced few converts until he discovered the truth of Isaiah 62:6–7, and took these words literally. At the beginning of 1908, he prayed to win at least one soul to Christ every day. By December 31, he had recorded over four hundred converts. The following year, the Lord laid two souls per day on his heart, and his prayer was again answered. The next year he prayed for four souls daily with similar results. Once, stopping at a cottage for water, Praying Hyde pleaded with God for ten souls. He presented the Gospel to the family, and by the end of his visit all nine members of the family had been saved. But what of number ten? Suddenly a nephew who had been playing outside ran into the room and was promptly converted.—[Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations and Quotes](#)

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**Pull The Chain!** - The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry. Ps 34:15, 1Th 5:1, Ro 12:12, Eph 6:18, Col 4:2, 1Pe 4:7 A story is told of an eastern monarch who recognized how difficult it was for the common people in his realm to come to him with their requests. Sometimes it was nearly impossible for them to make their way through the guards and attendants surrounding him. So the king decided to become more accessible to his subjects. He had a bell installed next to his throne with a long, thin chain attached to it. He then ordered that the chain be let down through a window into the street below so that anyone could get his attention at any time just by ringing the bell. This is a beautiful and striking picture of God's availability to His children through prayer. Although He is surrounded by indescribable splendor and glory His ear is open to the faintest cry of the most needy of His followers on earth. We can always "pull the chain" of intercession and have an immediate audience with the King of heaven and earth. Christian, don't despair. Keep the prayer bell ringing! GOD'S HELP IS ONLY A PRAYER AWAY! —H. G. Bosch

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**The Owner of Everything** - God says ""For every beast of the forest is Mine, The cattle on a thousand hills." (Psalm 50:10) In its early days, Dallas Theological Seminary was in critical need of \$10,000 to keep the work going. During a prayer meeting, renowned Bible teacher Harry Ironside, a lecturer at the school, prayed, "Lord, you own the cattle on a thousand hills. Please sell some of those cattle to help us meet this need." Shortly after the prayer meeting, a check for \$10,000 arrived at the school, sent days earlier by a friend who had no idea of the urgent need or of Ironside's prayer. The man simply said the money came from the sale of some

**Miracle Rain** - Life is hard for the villagers who live on a hilly terrain in the Yunnan Province of China. Their main source of food is corn and rice. But in May 2012 a severe drought hit the region and the crops withered. Everyone was worried, and many superstitious practices were carried out as the people attempted to end the drought. When nothing worked, people started blaming the five Christians in the village for offending the spirits of the ancestors. These five believers gathered to pray. Before long, the sky darkened and thunder was heard. A heavy downpour started and lasted the whole afternoon and night. The crops were saved! While most of the villagers did not believe God sent the rain, others did and desired to find out more about Him and Jesus. In 1 Kings 17:1-24 and 1 Kings 18:1-46 we read of a severe drought in Israel. But in this case, we are told, it was a result of God's judgment on His people (1Ki 17:1). They had begun to worship Baal, the god of the Canaanites, believing that this deity could send the rain for their crops. Then God, through His prophet Elijah, showed that He is the one true God who determines when rain falls. Our all-powerful God desires to hear our prayers and answer our pleas. And though we do not always understand His timing or His purposes, God always responds with His best for our lives. —Poh Fang Chia

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**Enjoying God's Presence** - Genesis 28:10-16 "I Did Not Know It" -- As Jacob did in Genesis 28, I like to remind myself each morning when I awaken that God is here, "in this place," present with me (Ge 28:16). As I spend time with Him each morning, reading His Word and responding in prayer, it reinforces my sense of His presence—that He is near. Although we do not see Him, Peter reminds us that we can love Him and rejoice in His love for us with "inexpressible," glorious joy (1Pe 1:8). We take the Lord's presence with us all through the day, blending work and play with prayer. He is our teacher, our philosopher, our companion—our gentle, kind, and very best friend. God is with us wherever we go. He is in the commonplace, whether we know it or not. "Surely the Lord is in this place," Jacob said of a most unlikely spot, "and I did not know it" (Gen. 28:16). We may not realize He is close by. We may feel lonely and sad. Our day may seem bleak and dreary without a visible ray of hope—yet He is present. Amid all the clamor and din of this visible and audible world, listen carefully for God's quiet voice. Listen to Him in the Bible. Talk to Him frequently in prayer. Look for Him in your circumstances. Seek Him. He is with you wherever you go. —[Our Daily Bread](#)

Oh, how oft I wake and find  
I have been forgetting Thee!  
I am never from Thy mind;  
Thou it is that wakest me.  
—MacDonald

Our greatest privilege is to enjoy God's presence.

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**It is said that the early Christians never met without invoking God's blessing and never parted without a word of thanksgiving.** We are told also that during the Middle Ages many occurrences would summon the faithful to immediate prayer. When night erased the shadows on a sundial, when a tolling bell announced a death, or when a flight of birds signaled a change of seasons, they bowed to offer an appropriate petition. It was the custom of John Fletcher of Madeley, England, never to meet a Christian without saying, "Friend, do I meet you praying?" This unusual salutation reminded the person that his life should be an unbroken expression of prayer and fellowship with God. If someone today were to give you John Fletcher's unusual greeting, how would you respond? Is your life characterized by joyous contact with Jesus and an unwavering perseverance in prayer? —H. G. Bosch

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**Some years ago a young girl was very sick and not expected to recover.** Because of her love for Jesus, she was troubled that she had not been able to do more for Him in her short life. Her pastor suggested that she make a list of people in their little town who needed Christ and pray that they might put their faith in Him. She took his advice, made a list, and prayed often for each person. Some time later God began to stir a revival in the village. The girl heard of the people who were coming to Christ and prayed even more. As she heard reports, she checked off the names of those who had been led to the Lord. After the girl died, a prayer list with the names of 56 people was found under her pillow. All had put their faith in Christ—the last one on the night before her death. Such is the power of definite, specific, fervent prayer. Do you have a prayer list? —Henry G. Bosch

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**LOOK AT ME** (2 Chronicles 7:12-18) "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face,...then I will...forgive their sin." - 2 Chronicles 7:14 It was one of those split-second exchanges between a 16-year-old girl and her father, but it spoke volumes. While he was out of town, she had broken her curfew and stayed out too late with her boyfriend. Now she had to talk to Dad about it. Embarrassed and afraid, she sat quietly looking down at her hands in her lap while the discussion went on. She apologized and they decided on a suitable discipline. "Look at me," Dad said. She didn't want to, but she did. Instead of a hard look of displeasure, she saw tears and a look of deep love. She threw her arms around him, and they both



knew that everything would be all right between them. To keep everything right between us and our heavenly Father, we have to seek His face (Ps. 27:8). We may feel guilt, disappointment, anger, or hurt toward God. But that is when we must respond to His invitation to look at Him -- especially if fellowship has been broken. Our greatest concern should be the fear of losing a close relationship with Him. Our greatest delight should be seeing His face in the Word and through the wonderful privilege of prayer. That way we will have the assurance that everything is all right between us.—D C Egnor

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**"MOWER FAITH"** - (Genesis 24:10-28) --The fifth-grader watched her father struggling under the hot sun to cut the grass on the family's sizable yard. When he was finally done, she said to him, "Daddy, I wish we had a riding lawn mower. I'm going to buy you one." She did more than make what seemed like an impossible promise. She began praying for a riding mower for her dad. And she began doing odd jobs to earn money. Finally the girl had saved up \$50, but everyone knew that wasn't enough. Then one day she and her mom saw a riding mower that was for sale. Skeptically, they took a closer look at the sign. They couldn't believe their eyes: \$50. And the mower worked! In Genesis 24:12, 13, 14, we read the account of Abraham's servant seeking a bride for Isaac. He had the difficult task of finding a woman from a family hundreds of miles away. And she had to be willing to return with him to Canaan. He prayed specifically, did everything he could, and waited on the Lord. Two seemingly impossible requests. Two faithful believers in prayer and action. It's a formula for great results. Not all prayers are answered affirmatively, of course, but that isn't our concern. Our job is to see the need, ask God for help, and do what we can. We all need "mower" faith. —[Our Daily Bread](#)

A teenager's view of answered prayer: "There are four answers to prayer— yes, no, wait awhile, and you've got to be kidding!"

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**Prayer And Politics** (Romans 13:1-7) [Pray] for all men, for kings and all who are in authority. (1Timothy 2:1-2) -- In 1787 a convention was called in the United States to revise the Articles of Confederation. For weeks delegates reviewed ancient history and analyzed modern governments, searching for insights. But nothing suited the infant nation. Finally, a distinguished gentleman named Benjamin Franklin rose and said, "In this situation of this assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth and scarce able to distinguish it when it is presented to us, how has it happened that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our understandings?" Mr. Franklin believed there was a sovereign God who could provide guidance to those who sought it. If ever there was a time to follow that prayerful example, it is now. Paul said that governments are ordained of God (Ro 13:1), and that we are to pray for those in authority over us (1Ti 2:1-2). This prayer principle also applies to the election of our leaders. We must become informed and vote prayerfully for those who shape our laws. Because God has instructed us to do so, we can--indeed we must--unashamedly and boldly mix prayer with our politics. —Dennis J De Haan

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**William Carey's Sister** - It's been stated these days, "They just don't make missionaries like [William Carey](#)." Carey changed the history of missions and the face of India 200 years ago. Few know of Carey's sister, paralyzed and bedridden for 50 years. Although unable to speak for much of that period, with great effort she allowed herself to be propped up in bed. She wrote long encouraging letters to her brother. And she prayed for him several hours per day for 50 years!

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**Prayer Path** - In one region of Africa, the first converts to Christianity were very diligent about praying. In fact, the believers each had their own special place outside the village where they went to pray in solitude. The villagers reached these "prayer rooms" by using their own private footpaths through the brush. When grass began to grow over one of these trails, it was evident that the person to whom it belonged was not praying very much. Because these new Christians were concerned for each other's spiritual welfare, a unique custom sprang up. When ever anyone noticed an overgrown "Prayer path," he or she would go to the person and lovingly warn, "Friend, there's grass on your path!" —R W De Haan

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**Who Prays?** - Newsweek Magazine devoted its cover-story on January 6, 1992, to the subject of prayer, saying, "This week, if you believe in all the opinion surveys, more of us will pray than will go to work, or exercise, or have sexual relations. According to the recent studies at NORC, a research center, by Andrew M. Greeley, the sociologist-novelist-priest, more than three quarters (78 percent) of all Americans pray at least once a week; more than half (57 percent) report praying at least once a day. Indeed, Greeley finds that even among the 13 percent of Americans who are atheists or agnostics, nearly one in five still prays daily...."Indeed, the current edition of Books in Print lists nearly two thousand titles on prayer, meditations, and techniques for spiritual growth—more than three times the number devoted to sexual intimacy and how to achieve it." The article goes on to talk about the benefits that are experienced by couples who pray together in marriage, saying, "As some young couples have found, praying together is the tie that really binds.... Greeley's surveys show that spouses who pray together report greater marital satisfaction than those who don't, and that frequent sex coupled with frequent prayer make for the most satisfying marriages."—[Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations and Quotes](#)

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**Prayer and Pretzels** - I can imagine some of you are surprised by the title of this devotional — and I will freely admit that I used it to

get your attention. However, there is a very real relationship between prayer and pretzels! The twisted bits of salted, baked dough that go by that name were first made in northern Italy about A.D. 610. A monk who had been baking bread found he had some dough left over, so he formed it into thin, pencil-like rolls, and then twisted them into little figures representing children with their arms folded in prayer! Coating them with syrup and salt he put them in the oven. Finding them very palatable, he gave them as rewards to the youngsters who learned their catechism lessons. He called these tasty morsels "pretiola" which in Latin means "little reward." This monk who invented pretzels, and gave them to the children for knowing answers to Bible questions, was using good psychology. Explaining that the twisted dough represented them in an attitude of devotion, perhaps he hoped thereby also to remind them to "pray in" the truths of the Word they had only mentally digested. Can we not all learn a lesson from this? Let us also add much prayer to our study of the Bible, beseeching God to give us a deeper "heart understanding" of its precepts, and a greater wisdom in applying its purifying lessons to our daily lives. From now on, every time you see pretzels, I hope you are re-minded that they represent "children at prayer." Incidentally, if more people thought of their youngsters praying for them when they ate those salted goodies, they would not drink along with those snacks some of the things they do! (Enough said?)

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**A Prayer for Forgiveness** - [Lewis Smedes](#) tells an unforgettable story of unforgiveness supernaturally turned into forgiveness by the power of prayer in the life of [Corrie Ten Boom](#):

She was stuck for the war years in a concentration camp, humiliated and degraded, especially in the delousing shower where the women were ogled by the leering guards. But she made it through that hell. And eventually she felt she had, by grace, forgiven even those fiends who guarded the shower stalls. So she preached forgiveness, for individuals, for all of Europe. She preached it in Bloemendaal, in the United States, and, one Sunday, in Munich. After the sermon, greeting people, she saw a man come toward her, hand outstretched: "Ja, Fräulein, it is wonderful that Jesus forgives us all our sins, just as you say." She remembered his face; it was the leering, lecherous, mocking face of an SS guard of the shower stall. Her hand froze by her side. She could not forgive. She thought she had forgiven all. But she could not forgive when she met a guard, standing in the solid flesh in front of her. Ashamed, horrified at herself, she prayed, "**Lord, forgive me, I cannot forgive.**" And as she prayed she felt forgiven, accepted, in spite of her shabby performance as a famous forgiver. Her hand was suddenly unfrozen. The ice of hate melted. Her hand went out. She forgave as she was forgiven. [Lewis Smedes](#) - [Forgiveness: The Power to Change the Past](#) - **Beloved, if you or another believer you know are dealing with unforgiveness, this article is a MUST READ!** May God's Spirit grant all who read it the supernatural power to pray and forgive just as we have been forgiven in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

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**The aim of prayer** is not to force God's hand or make him do our will against his own, but to deepen our knowledge of him and our fellowship with him through shcontemplating his glory, confessing our dependence and need, and consciously embracing his goals. Our asking therefore must be according to God's will and in Jesus' name. The context of such asking is assured faith. In that day when Jesus teaches them, by the Spirit, plainly of the Father, there will be no question of enlisting Jesus' support in prayer, as if he were more merciful than the Father or could influence him in a way that they could not; in that day they will know inwardly that as believers they are the Father's beloved. To asked in Jesus' name is not to use a verbal spell but to base our asking on Christ's saving relationship to us through the cross; this will involve making petitions which Christ can endorse and put his name to. When God answers in Jesus' name, he gives through Jesus as our mediator and to Jesus as the one who will be glorified through what is given.—[J I Packer](#)

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**Little Bilney** - Behind [Hugh Latimer](#) (1485–1555), the "Preacher of the English Reformation," was his mentor [Thomas Bilney](#). Bilney, a quiet scholar at Cambridge University, acquired a Greek New Testament from the famous Erasmus. As he pored over it, one verse of Scripture seemed to be written in letters of light, and it led to his conversion: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners! Bilney wanted to share his experience with others, but this was Reformation truth, and the Reformation had not yet reached England. Teachers such as Luther were being fiercely attacked by English churchmen like Hugh Latimer. But as Bilney listened to young Latimer rail against the Reformation, he prayed this unusual prayer: "O God, I am but 'little Bilney,' and shall never do any great thing for Thee. But give me the soul of that man, Hugh Latimer, and what wonders he shall do in Thy most holy name." One day Bilney pulled Latimer aside. Using his own conversion verse—1 Timothy 1:15—he led the great Latimer to simple faith in Christ, and the [English Reformation](#) was born.—[Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations and Quotes](#)

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**Apple of My Eye** - "for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye." - Zechariah 2:8 (Zechariah 2:1-12) - [John \("Praying"\) Hyde](#) (1865–1912) was a missionary to India who became so far-famed for his effective and powerful praying that he is known to history as Praying Hyde. He once told of the "most salutary" lesson the Lord ever taught him about prayer. It occurred while he was praying for a national pastor in India, a man who was both having—and causing—problems. Hyde began his prayer, "O God, Thou

knowest this brother, how—" He was going to say "cold," when suddenly he was smitten in his spirit. A voice seemed to whisper sharply to him, "**He that touches him touches the apple of my eye**" (cp Zech 2:8) A great horror swept over Hyde, and he felt he had been guilty before God of "accusing the brethren." Falling to his knees, Hyde confessed his own sin, and he remembered the words of Paul, that we should think on things that are lovely and good. (Phil 4:8) "Father," cried Hyde, "show me what things are lovely and of good report in my brother's life." Like a flash, Hyde remembered the many sacrifices this pastor had made for the Lord, how he had given up all for Christ, how he had suffered deeply for Christ. He thought of the many years of difficult labor this man had invested in the kingdom and the wisdom with which he had resolved congregational conflict. Hyde remembered the man's devotion to his wife and family, and how he had provided a model to the church of godly husbanding. John Hyde spent his prayer time that day praising the Lord for this brother's faithfulness. Shortly afterward, Hyde journeyed into the plains to see this pastor, and he learned that the man had just received a great spiritual uplift, as if a personal revival had refreshed his heart like a springtime breeze. While Hyde had been praising, God had been blessing. - [Robert Morgan - From This Verse](#)

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[Stephen Olford](#) speaks of a "carry over" benefit of his [Quiet Time](#) - :My prayer list is a very interesting one. Monday-Missions. Tuesdays-Thanksgiving. Wednesday-Workers, staff, etc. Thursday-Tasks. Friday-Family. Saturday-Saints (so much of Paul's praying was for the saints). And Sunday-Sinners. On the list of sinners for this present period of my life....Now, it isn't the length of time I spend in my quiet time, though I usually take an hour, but there is a carry-over of the activity of prayer, the attitude of prayer, that marks the rest of the day. I never pick up a telephone without a prayer. I never dictate a letter to my secretary without a prayer. I never let anybody into my study or out of my study without a prayer, and as my beloved workers know, any time we get together we say, 'Let's pray.' And so, prayer is literally praying without ceasing (1Th 5:17-[note](#)). At the drop of a hat...and so I feel I live in that attitude of perpetual prayer."

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**Each Christian's prayer life**, like every good marriage, has in it common factors about which one can generalize and also uniquenesses which no other Christian's prayer life will quite match. You are you, and I am I, and we must each find our own way to God; and there is no recipe for prayer that can work for us like a handyman's do-it-yourself manual or a cookery book, where the claim is that if you follow the instructions you can't go wrong. Praying is not like carpentry or cookery; it is the active exercise of a personal relationship: a kind of friendship with the living God and his Son Jesus Christ, and the way it goes is more under divine control than under ours. Books on praying, like marriage manuals, are not to be treated with slavish superstition, as if the perfection of technique is the answer to all difficulties; their purpose, rather, is to suggest things to try. But as in other close relationships, in prayer you have to find out by trial and error what is right for you, and you learn to pray by praying. Some of us talk more, others less; some are constantly vocal, others cultivate silence before God as their way of adoration; some slip into glossolalia, others make a point of not slipping into it; yet we may all be praying as God means us to do. The only rule is: Stay within the biblical guidelines, and within those guidelines, as John Chapman put it, "Pray as you can, and don't try to pray as you can't."—[J I Packer](#)

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**Things looked bleak for the children of [George Mueller's](#) orphanage at Ashley Downs in England.** It was time for breakfast, and there was no food. A small girl whose father was a close friend of Mueller was visiting in the home. Mueller took her hand and said, "Come and see what our Father will do." In the dining room, long tables were set with empty plates and empty mugs. Not only was there no food in the kitchen, but there was no money in the home's account. Mueller prayed, "Dear Father, we thank Thee for what Thou art going to give us to eat." Immediately, they heard a knock at the door. When they opened it, there stood the local baker. "Mr. Mueller," he said, "I couldn't sleep last night. Somehow I felt you had no bread for breakfast, so I got up at 2 o'clock and baked fresh bread. Here it is." Mueller thanked him and gave praise to God. Soon, a second knock was heard. It was the milkman. His cart had broken down in front of the orphanage. He said he would like to give the children the milk so he could empty the cart and repair it.

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**More Than Wishing** - As a child, C. S. Lewis enjoyed reading the books of E. Nesbit, especially *Five Children and It*. In this book, brothers and sisters on a summer holiday discover an ancient sand fairy who grants them one wish each day. But every wish brings the children more trouble than happiness because they can't foresee the results of getting everything they ask for. The Bible tells us to make our requests known to God (Philippians 4:6). But prayer is much more than telling God what we want Him to do for us. When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He began by reminding them, "Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him" (Matthew 6:8). What we call "The Lord's Prayer" is more about living in a growing, trusting relationship with our heavenly Father than about getting what we want from Him. As we grow in faith, our prayers will become less of a wish list and more of an intimate conversation with the Lord. Toward the end of his life, C. S. Lewis wrote, "If God had granted all the silly prayers I've made in my life, where should I be now?" Prayer is placing ourselves in the presence of God to receive from Him what we really need.—David C. McCasland

We grasp but a thread of the garment of prayer;  
We reel at the thought of His infinite care;

We cannot conceive of a God who will say:

"Be careful for nothing; in everything pray." —Farrell

Our highest privilege is to talk to God;

Our highest duty is to listen to Him.

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**Morning Prayers** - My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning I will direct it to You. (Ps 5:3) - Ray Ortlund, in [The Best Half of Life](#), wrote, "I like to start out the morning covering the whole day by prayer. After a time of praise and confession, I take out my appointment book and pray through the hours. I pray for everyone I am scheduled to see. I ask that I might be helpful to them, but also open to what they may have for me. I pray for the unscheduled ones I will bump into. I've found that if I pray over my interruptions and get them squarely under God's sovereign control, they don't irritate me. I realize they are part of God's plan. So, pray over your day. Pray about every phone conversation; pray about your lunchtime. The lunch hours are important to use for God. Pray over evening; pray and think about the time you'll be with those you love the most. Pray through the day before you experience it. Then relax. Whatever comes—you've got it covered." Each day presents trying circumstances, unique challenges, and exciting opportunities. So before we begin our activities, let's turn the day over to God. Then, whatever happens, we've got it covered! —D. C. Egner

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**Pray for Felix** - [William Carey](#), who is called the father of modern missions, served the Lord in India for many years. He gradually became very concerned about the attitude of his son, Felix. The young man had promised to become a missionary, but he reneged on his vows when he was appointed ambassador to Burma by the Queen of England. Carey wrote to his friend, asking prayer for his son with these words: "Pray for Felix. He has degenerated into an ambassador of the British government when he should be serving the King of kings." (2Cor 5:10, Rev 19:16) —[Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations and Quotes](#)

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**Do You Really Believe In Prayer?** - The story is told of a man who got a permit to open the first tavern in a small town. The members of a local church were strongly opposed to the bar, so they began to pray that God would intervene. A few days before the tavern was scheduled to open, lightning hit the structure and it burned to the ground. The people of the church were surprised but pleased—until they received notice that the would-be tavern owner was suing them. He contended that their prayers were responsible for the burning of the building. They denied the charge. At the conclusion of the preliminary hearing, the judge wryly remarked, "At this point I don't know what my decision will be, but it seems that the tavern owner believes in the power of prayer and these church people don't." Lord, thank You for answering our prayers even when our faith is weak. Increase our faith and help us to pray more expectantly! —H V Lugt

Prayer without expectancy may be unbelief in disguise.

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**Time Out** (Acts 11:19-26; 13:1-3) - Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. —Acts 13:3 [Elli Bulli restaurant](#), 2 hours north of Barcelona, is so popular that customers must reserve a table 6 months in advance. But noted Spanish chef [Ferran Adrià](#) decided to close the doors of his award-winning restaurant for 2 years so he and his staff could have time to think, plan, and innovate. Adrià told Hemispheres Magazine, "If we are winning all the prizes, why change? Working 15 hours a day leaves us very little time to create." In the midst of great success, they took time out for what is most important to them. The first-century church in Antioch experienced a time of exciting growth when "a great number believed and turned to the Lord" (Acts 11:21). As a result, Barnabas and Saul came to teach the new believers (Acts 11:25-26). But along with the hard work, they took time to seek the Lord through prayer and fasting (Acts 13:2-3). Through this, God revealed His plan for taking the gospel into Asia. Few people can take 2 years off to think and plan. But all of us can build time into our schedule to seek the Lord earnestly through prayer. As we open our hearts and minds to God, He will be faithful to reveal the steps of life and service that honor Him. —David C. McCasland

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**Silent Prayer** - A friend of mine took his small son with him to town one day to run some errands. When lunchtime arrived, the two of them went to a familiar diner for a sandwich. The father sat down on one of the stools at the counter and lifted the boy up to the seat beside him. They ordered lunch, and when the waiter brought the food, the father said, "Son, we'll just have a silent prayer." Dad got through praying first and waited for the boy to finish his prayer, but he just sat with his head bowed for an unusually long time. When he finally looked up, his father asked him, "What in the world were you praying about all that time?" With the innocence and honesty of a child, he replied, "How do I know? It was a silent prayer. A lot of our praying is like that, whether silent or aloud. We don't say anything to the Lord. We call words to mind, but they are repetitious or insincere. What the Lord needs to hear from us is earnest, heartfelt prayer—prompted by the Holy Spirit and offered in the name of the Lord Jesus. The result, according to Paul, is "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding," that "will guard [our] hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:7). We need to take prayer seriously. Closing our eyes, bowing our heads, and repeating nice-sounding words is insufficient. Our requests

must be in line with God's Word, and they must come from sincere hearts. —P. R. Van Gorder—[Our Daily Bread](#)

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**Our Audience in Prayer** - A man was praying one day in a church in England. His English was terrible and broken. He was doing a horrible job destroying the king's English. A lady who was hearing his prayers was just beside herself as this man spoke in this manner. After he said "amen" she said, "Young man, that was the worst grammar and articulation I have ever heard in my life. I am disgusted that you would talk like that." He turned, looked at the woman, and said, "But lady, I wasn't talking to you." Prayer is communication with God. —[Tony Evan](#)

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**"Fried Chicken" Prayers** - I remember when I was a boy and my mother would fry chicken. When it was my turn to pray, I'd pray with my eyes open. I'd pray to God for that thigh that I had my eyes on. Sometime during the middle of the prayer, I'd unfold my hands and let one of them slip onto the table near the chicken so that I'd be halfway to my goal when the prayer was over. I wasn't really thinking about God. I was thinking about chicken. I just had to get rid of God to get to the chicken. Sometimes we just use prayer as a way for us to get rid of God so that we can get to the real thing.—[Tony Evans](#)

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**Danger of Long Prayers** - [William Grenfell](#) was born in England in 1865 and educated at Oxford. While completing his medical training, he stumbled one night into a revival campaign conducted by [D L Moody](#). A man was praying, and his prayer stretched so long that Grenfell, in boredom, started to leave. But Moody suddenly rose and interrupted the prayer, inviting the audience to sing a song "while our brother finishes his prayer." Grenfell stayed, and shortly after was soundly converted to Christ. He later became one of the most noted missionary physicians in modern history, laboring for forty-two years among the fishing villages on the coasts of Labrador and Newfoundland. How did he meet his wife? Once while aboard a ship he met a beautiful lady—a total stranger. He fell violently in love with her and immediately proposed. She protested that he did not even know her name, but the doctor informed her that he knew what it would soon be. His prediction came true, and he and [Anne MacClanahan](#) were married on November 18, 1909, in Chicago, devoting themselves to working side by side in the cause of Christ.

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**Vague Prayer** - There was a lady who needed a new car. Her two favorite colors were green and blue, so she prayed and asked God to give her a green and blue car. She went car-hunting and found the car she wanted—perfect green but no blue. The lady was unsure if it was the will of God for her to buy that car, because she asked for a green and blue car. After explaining her dilemma to the salesman, he asked if he could show her the hood. He lifted up the hood and the motor had been painted blue! Some of us will never know if we've heard from God, because we pray vaguely. (Matt. 7:7–11; Eph. 6:18; James 5:13; 1 John 5:14–15) —[Tony Evans](#)

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**Loud Prayers** - A little boy knelt at his bed and said his bedtime prayers. "Lord, please bless Mommy, and Daddy, and Auntie, and Uncle. Lord, give us a good day today. And please give me a bicycle for CHRISTMAAAAAAS!" The boy's mother heard him yelling and wondered at his behavior. She walked into the room and said, "Son, son, you don't have to scream. God can hear you." The boy looked up with big eyes and said, "Mama, I know God can hear me, but Grandma can't hear very well and she's got the money for the bike."—[Tony Evans](#)

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### **I Didn't Have Time to Pray**

**(Matthew 7:7)**

I got up early one morning,  
And rushed right into the day;  
I had so much to accomplish,  
That I didn't have time to pray.

Problems just tumbled about me,  
And heavier came each task.  
Why doesn't God help me? I wondered.  
He answered, "You didn't **ask**."

I wanted to see joy and beauty,  
But the day toiled on, gray and bleak.  
I wondered why God didn't show me.  
He said, "But you didn't **seek**."

I tried to come into God's presence;  
I used all my keys at the lock.

But God gently and lovingly chided,  
"My child, you didn't **knock**."

I woke up early this morning,  
And paused before entering the day.  
I had so much to accomplish  
That I had to take time to pray!

**-Anonymous**

How different was the attitude of Martin Luther who wrote "I am so busy now that if I did not spend two or three hours each day in prayer, I would not get through the day." Woe! Are you as convicted as I am?

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**What's In A Name?** - The question is, "What's in a name?" If I say Bill Gates, what are you going to think of? Computers. If I say Serena Williams, what are you going to think of? Tennis. If I say Tiger Woods, what are you going to think of? Golf. These names are tied to something. When I say Tiger Woods, it's not just any name. It a NAME! Because he represents a whole industry. He represents a hundred million dollars. Tiger Woods's name is substantive. Now, let's say you like the name Tiger and you like the name Woods, so you name your kid Tiger Woods. Or let's say your name is Williams and you like the name Serena, so you name your kid Serena Williams. Better yet, let's say you like Bill and you like Gates, so you name your kid Bill Gates. Well, your kid may have the nomenclature and they may have the words, but they don't have what it represents. The problem for many Christians is that we use Jesus' name powerlessly. We tag on His name without accessing the power that comes with it.—[Tony Evans](#)

Rodney Stortz adds "Do you sometimes send messages to people in prayer? A person in one of my staff meetings corrected my staff devotional in his prayer."

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**The Prayer of Faith** - I once spent the night in a crumbling hotel in Porto Alegre, Brazil. A friend and I ascended to our room, high in the building, in a tiny, creaking elevator. From our window I saw slums spreading out far beneath me, and I felt uneasy. That evening I prayed, "Lord, please save me from any danger of fire. You can see we're at the top of a dilapidated hotel, which is nothing but a firetrap. There isn't a fire station near, and I can't see any fire escapes outside the building. Lord, you know that this building would go up in flames in a second, and at this very moment it is probably full of people falling asleep with Marlboros in their mouths ..." By the time I finished praying, I was a nervous wreck, and I hardly slept a wink all night. The next morning, as I evaluated my evening, I realized that my bedtime prayer had focused on my negative feelings rather than on God's assurances and promises, and learned an important truth: Unless we plead in faith, our prayers can do more harm than good.—[Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations and Quotes](#)

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**Your Prayer "ID"** - WHEN you go before God, you need to show an ID. When you go to the airport, and they say, "Show me your ID," it's because they want you to verify that you are who you say you are. You need an ID in order to go through security and to go back to the gate area. The ID grants you access because it shows you are authorized to go into a secured area. The Father always authorizes the Son and the Son always authorizes the children of God who carry His ID with His name. We must pray based on the authority of the name of Jesus Christ.—[Tony Evans](#)

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**Access in Prayer** - GOD is like 7-Eleven used to be. 7-Eleven used to be open 24/7. If you ran out of milk, you could run up to 7-Eleven. If you ran out of bread, you could go to 7-Eleven. The idea would be that when everyone else is closed, a convenience store would be open to meet your needs. When the normal suppliers had gone home to go to bed, you could always go to the convenience store. They were going to be open 24/7. The reason why we've lost sight God as our provider is we've gotten too used to the Wal-Marts in our lives. We've gotten too used to the big chains. We've gotten too used to the big boys. But the goodness of God is that He is the convenient one. He's there when everybody else shuts down. He's open when everybody else has closed down or run out. He's got more than enough and He'll be available, whether you show up or not. He is your convenience center and He is there to meet your needs. We can go to Him in prayer at anytime. —[Tony Evans](#)

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**Pray like a Sheepdog** - The concept of prayer is closely related to a sheepdog. The sheepdog, who helps the shepherd or farmer to round up the sheep, is always trained to come to his master's feet. Sheepdogs are some of the most trained dogs in the world. They learn to round up sheep and keep them in the fold, box them in, and run and corner them too. Then the dogs come right back to the master's feet. A sheepdog would always pray; that is, he would always find himself at the master's feet ready for the next instruction. That's prayer. Prayer is that abiding relationship where believers stay at the master's feet. (Jn 15:7) —[Tony Evans](#)

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**Our Attorney in Prayer** - A power of attorney is a legal right to sign on someone else's behalf. That's exactly what happens when

you pray. When Christians pray “Our Father ...” the Holy Spirit delivers our prayer to the Father. But before God responds, He looks over to Jesus and asks Him if He is signing the note. Jesus is our power of attorney. He is the one who signs off on prayers. (Jn 16:24)—[Tony Evans](#)

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**Prayer and the Bank of Heaven** - IF I put a million dollars in your physical bank account, you are a guaranteed millionaire. But if you don't know how to write a check, that which is guaranteed cannot be enjoyed. Too many of us who've got bank accounts full of God's blessing are forgetting to sign our checks. We forget to draw from that spiritual reservoir, or we don't understand how to draw from that spiritual reservoir to live the successful Christian life. (James 4:2-3)—[Tony Evans](#)

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**Spare Tire Prayers!** - ALL OF us have spare tires in our car—just in case there's a flat or a slow leak of air. Most of the time, we don't even think about it until something goes wrong. But when something goes wrong, we go back to the trunk and we get out the spare to get us out of a bad situation. For most of us, prayer is like that. It's a spare tire. It's just in case. It's easy to forget about it until you really need it to get you out of a jam; it's something you are glad to have when you're caught in a dilemma you can't fix. (Isaiah 29:13, Mt 15:8, Mk 7:6)—[Tony Evans](#)

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**Addicted to Prayer** - "But I give myself to prayer." Psalm 109:4

Addicted to prayer. What a blessed addiction that is. It is an addiction largely unknown amongst preachers and people today. This perverted age has brought about a prayerless church and the reverse is also true, a prayerless church has brought about a perverted age.

Where are the men and the women of prayer? We hear of people saying they have been called to preach, evangelise and reach the lost but how many testify that they are yielding themselves to the ministry of prayer. No wonder the whitened harvests are so bleached. No wonder the whole world has not yet heard the gospel in their own tongue.

Shame on us in giving ourselves to every other activity but prayer.

When we are lied about let us give ourselves to prayer.

When we are sinned against let us give ourselves to prayer.

When the storm rages let us give ourselves to prayer.

When the battle is fiercest let us give ourselves to prayer.

When the devil is furious let us give ourselves to prayer.

When our brethren are against us let us give ourselves to prayer.

When others apostatise let us give ourselves to prayer.

When revival tarries let us give ourselves to prayer.

When the need is beyond us let us give ourselves to prayer.

When the souls are perishing let us give ourselves to prayer.

When the heavens are as brass let us give ourselves to prayer.

When all seems lost let us give ourselves to prayer.

But I give myself to prayer. If we don't have the giving of prayer we will never have the receiving of prayer.

Decide to pray. Determine to pray. Delight to pray. Give yourself to it with all your mind and strength and heart. When others stop you keep at it. When others weary you renew your strength. When others give up, you give yourself to prayer.

What air is to the bird, its element, (the bird is in the air and the air is in the bird) so must prayer be our element.

As water is to the fish, its element, (the fish is in the water and the water is in the fish) so you must immerse yourself in prayer.

There can be no discharge from this war of prayer

—[Ian Paisley](#)

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## **1 Thessalonians 5:1-18 Who Has Time To Pray?**

Pray without ceasing. —1 Thessalonians 5:17

Do you feel guilty because you aren't able to spend long periods of time each day in prayer? Perhaps you have a regular but brief time when you read the Bible and pray, but you lack a sense of God's presence in your life. You feel you aren't communicating enough with your heavenly Father.

That's a problem that plagues individuals whose lives are incessantly busy. Here is some helpful advice for 20th-century disciples from the 17th-century French writer François Fénelon. “Learn,” he counsels, “to make good use of chance moments: When waiting for someone, when going from place to place, or when in society where to be a good listener is all that is required—at such times it is easy to lift the heart to God and thereby gain fresh strength for further duties . . . . One moment will suffice to place yourself in God's presence to love and worship Him, to offer all you are doing or bearing, and to still all your heart's emotions at His feet.”

We can train ourselves to maintain an awareness of the Lord's presence with us throughout the day and to talk with Him as we are able. That's how we can fulfill the Savior's directive to "abide in Me" (Jn. 15:4), and obey the apostle's command to "pray without ceasing" (1 Th. 5:17). -- [Vernon C. Grounds](#)

There is no time of night or day  
When God can't hear us as we pray;  
There is no time, there is no place,  
When we can't draw upon His grace. —DJD

To make the most of your time, take time to pray.

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**PRAYER AT ALL TIMES** (James 5:13-18). - What James preached he practised, for he himself prayed much. All the way through this Epistle the writer has insisted on the necessity and extreme value of prayer.

- I. Pray when Afflicted (James 5:13). When a man is suffering he is tempted to forego prayer. This temptation must be resisted.
- II. Pray when Sick (James 5:14, 15). The afflicted one must pray, but the sick one should call for others to "pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord." Strange, that believing men and women forget to pray when sick! What a gracious promise of answer to such prayers is given here.
- III. Pray when Faulty (James 5:16). Here we are urged to confess to each other our faults, but not our sins. The latter should be confessed to God only. What should confession lead to? To prayer for each other.
- IV. Pray when Merry (James 5:13). To sing Psalms means to pray through sacred song, for the best prayer book in the world is the Book of Psalms.
- V. Pray when Thriving. M. reads: "Is anyone thriving? let him sing praise." Singing and praying are signs of spiritual health.

—James Smith

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**Praying in the Spirit** - 1 Corinthians 14:1-25 - I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with my understanding.—1 Cor 14:15  
- What does it mean to pray "in the Spirit"? Here again, there is a good deal of misunderstanding among Christians as to the true meaning of this phrase. There are times when one feels deeply affected emotionally as one prays, but this is not the meaning of the phrase "praying in the Spirit." It has no relationship to the emotions that we feel in prayer. I am not saying that feelings are unimportant in prayer; I am simply saying that I do not believe this is what Paul had in mind when he used the phrase "praying in the Spirit." The "spirit" spoken of here is not the human spirit but the Holy Spirit. Some believe that "praying in the Spirit" takes place when we pray in other tongues, and although it can include that, I believe it is much more than that. Prayer that is "in the Spirit" is prayer that is prompted and guided by the Spirit. One commentator puts it this way: "It means that the Holy Spirit directs the prayer, creates the prayer within us, and empowers us to offer it and to pray it." [Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones](#) calls praying in the Spirit "the secret of true prayer" and goes on to say: "If we do not pray in the Spirit, we do not really pray." I would hesitate to make such a sweeping statement myself, but I would go so far as to say that if we do not know what it means to pray in the Spirit, our prayers will have little impact upon Satan and his forces.—[Selwyn Hughes](#) (**See Topic: Praying in the Spirit**)

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**Prayer, Work and Praise** - (Ezra 8:21-35) "We fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer." - (Ezra 8:23) - A 12-year-old Haitian girl's feet were so deformed that she was actually walking on her ankles. She asked some missionaries if they could help her, but the girl's father, who looked to a voodoo priest for advice, refused to let the doctors operate. So the missionaries began to pray fervently that God would intervene. After 2 days, the father returned with his daughter and gave them permission for the surgery. Just before the operation, the youngster pointed to her heart and said, "I'm not afraid, because I put Jesus right here." The operation was successful, and all who knew about this situation are praising the Lord for His answer to prayer. We see a similar order of events in Ezra 8. The Israelites had to transport a large quantity of gold and silver to Jerusalem. This made them vulnerable to raids by outlaw gangs along the way. So the people fasted and prayed until they received assurance of God's protection. Then, after taking every precaution, they set out on their journey. Arriving safely in Jerusalem, they offered sacrifices of thanksgiving to the Lord. Prayer, work, and praise -- it's a God-honoring combination. —H V Lugt

Don't surrender faith and courage,  
Neither quit the place of prayer;  
For the God of earth and heaven  
Always meets His children there.  
- Anon.

Pray as if everything depends on God;  
Work as if everything depends on you



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**When Robert Louis Stevenson was a boy he once remarked to his mother, “Momma, you can’t be good without praying.”** “How do you know, Robert?” she asked. “Because I’ve tried!” he answered. This brings to mind a story about another little fellow—one who had been sent to his room because he had been bad. A short time later he came out and said to his mother, “I’ve been thinking about what I did and I said a prayer.” “That’s fine,” she said, “if you ask God to make you good, He will help you.” “Oh, I didn’t ask Him to help me be good,” replied the boy. “I asked Him to help you put up with me.” —[Our Daily Bread](#)

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**A Bold Entrance** - Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace. (Hebrews 4:16) (Read Hebrews 4:14-16) — One morning, Scott Long and his wife had just awakened and were lying in bed when suddenly a young fellow entered their bedroom. He walked around the bed to Scott’s side. If the trespasser had been a total stranger, his entrance would’ve been criminal intrusion. If he had been a friend, his entrance would’ve been just plain obnoxious. But it was their toddler son who had entered their bedroom, jumped on the bed, and boldly said, “I want in the middle.” Scott was struck with the beauty of a child’s security in knowing he is wanted. We are welcome in our heavenly Father’s presence as well. Hebrews 4:16 tells us we can “come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” We can approach Him confidently about anything—our needs and our desires—knowing that He cares for us (1 Peter 5:7). Writer [Phillips Brooks](#) said,

“If man is man and God is God, to live without prayer is not merely an awful thing; it is an infinitely foolish thing.”

Let’s not be foolish and ignore the help we can find in prayer to our Father. Instead, let’s approach Him with the boldness of a child who knows he is loved and wanted by his father. —[Our Daily Bread](#)

When we approach the Lord in prayer,  
We can come boldly to His throne;  
His children come expectantly,  
For grace and mercy will be shown.  
—Sper

Pray as a child talks to his father.

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**SAYING PRAYERS** - Lord, teach us to pray Luke 11:1 - For two and one-half years I served as student-pastor in a little church on the outskirts of a small town. None of the businessmen of the village attended, for most of them were members of another very large denomination which claimed the majority of the people in that community. They were friendly to me, however, and gave our church a sizable discount each time we made a purchase. Usually the businessman would say, "I want to give this item to you at my cost; I only ask that you say a prayer for me." I believe they said this sincerely because they truly thought it would help if I would do this for them. I told them frankly that I didn't "say prayers" in the routine, perfunctory way they sup-posed, but that I would remember them when we brought our petitions before the Lord. No, prayer is not just repeating some memorized phrases de-signed to produce magical results. Prayer is talking to God! If I am really to communicate with Him who is perfect in holiness, I must search my soul, examine my motives, and confess my sins. In fact, God often permits afflictions and crushing disappointments to enter the lives of His children in order that they might be driven to real intercession! By nature we are spiritually lazy; consequently, a life of ease and prosperity has a tendency to draw us away from God so that we begin "saying prayers" rather than really praying. "Saying prayers" will accomplish very little; but heartfelt petitions will keep you close to the Lord, make your life glow with spiritual splendor, and draw your mind away from all that is wicked and carnal. In fact, you cannot be an effective Christian without real prayer, for God has chosen to do His work in this way. Let us ask the Lord every day to keep us from "saying prayers." With the disciples of old, we must approach Him re-questing, "Lord, teach us to pray!" It will probably cost us some-thing, but it will be worth it!

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**Awakened to Pray** - His nightmares began each day when he awoke. James Stegalls was nineteen. He was in Vietnam. Though he carried a small Gideon New Testament in his shirt pocket, he couldn't bring himself to read it. His buddies were cut down around him, terror was building within him, and God seemed far away. His twentieth birthday passed, then his twenty-first. At last, he felt he couldn't go on. On February 26, 1968, he prayed for it all to end, and his heart told him he would die before dusk. Sure enough, his base came under attack that day and Jim heard a rocket coming straight toward him. Three seconds to live, he told himself, then two, then ...A friend shoved him into a grease pit, and he waited for the rocket to explode, but there was only a surreal silence. The fuse malfunctioned. For five hours James knelt in that pit, and finally his quivering hand reached into his shirt pocket and took out his Testament. Beginning with Matthew, he continued through the first 18 chapters. "When I read Matthew 18:19–20, " he said, "I somehow knew things would be all right." Long after Jim returned home, as he visited his wife's grandmother, Mrs. Harris, she told him a night years before when she had awakened in terror. Knowing Jim was in Vietnam, she had sensed he was in trouble. She began praying for God to spare his life. Unable to kneel because of arthritis, she lay prone on the floor, praying and reading her

Bible all night. Just before dawn she read Matthew 18:19–20: If two of you agree down here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. For where two or three gather together because they are mine, I am there among them. She immediately called her Sunday school teacher, who got out of bed and went to Mrs. Harris' house where together they claimed the Lord's promise as they prayed for Jim until reassured by God's peace. Having told Jim the story, Mrs. Harris opened her Bible to show him where she had marked the passage. In the margin were the words: Jim, February 26, 1968. —Jim L. Stegall, "Hardly a Coincidence"

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**Eric Liddell's Secret** - [Eric Liddell](#), the Flying Scotsman, was an Olympic national hero who gave himself as a missionary to China. He was imprisoned at the beginning of the War in a Japanese internment camp, but his attitude kept all around him refreshed. He glided from person to person and from group to group, giving comfort and care, sharing the Scriptures, and leading in worship. He spoke of the fragrance of a God-enfolded life. Some in the camp wanted to know his secret. One of his fellow internees came up with her own answer about it: "What was his secret? Once I asked him, but I really knew already, for my husband was in his dormitory and shared the secret with him. Every morning about 6 A.M., with curtains tightly drawn to keep in the shining of our peanut-oil lamp, lest the prowling sentries would think someone was trying to escape, he used to climb out of his top bunk, past the sleeping forms of his dormitory mates. Then, at the small Chinese table, the two men would sit close together with the light just enough to illumine their Bibles and notebooks. Silently they read, prayed, and thought about the day's duties, noted what should be done. Eric was a man of prayer ..." —[The Flying Scotsman](#)

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**Weight of Prayer** - Shortly after World War II, a woman entered a grocery store and asked for enough food for a Christmas dinner for her children. When the owner inquired how much she could afford, she answered, "My husband was killed in the war. Truthfully, I have nothing to offer but a little prayer." The man, an unbeliever, was unmoved by the woman's need, and said sarcastically, "Write your prayer on a piece of paper and you can have its weight in groceries." To his surprise, she plucked a folded note out of her pocket and handed it to him. "I already did that during the night while I was watching over my sick child," was her immediate reply. Without even reading it, he put it on one side of his old-fashioned scales. "We'll see how much food this is worth," he muttered. To his dismay, nothing happened when he put a loaf of bread on the other side. But he was even more upset when he added other items and still nothing happened. Finally he blurted out, "Well, that's all it will hold anyway. Here's a bag. You'll have to put these things in yourself. I'm busy!" With a tearful "Thank you," the lady went happily on her way. The grocer later discovered that the scale was out of order. As the years passed, he often wondered if that was just a coincidence. Why did the woman have the prayer already written before he asked for it? Why did she come at exactly the time the mechanism was broken? Whenever he looks at the slip of paper that bears her petition, he is amazed, for it reads, "Please, dear Lord, give us this day !" —[Our Daily Bread](#)

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**Fervency in Prayer** - It is not the arithmetic of our prayers, how many they are: nor the rhetoric of our prayers, how eloquent they are; nor the geometry of our prayers, how long they be; nor the music of our prayers, how sweet our voice may be; nor the logic of our prayers, how argumentative they may be; nor the method of our prayers, how orderly they may be—which God cares for. Fervency of spirit is that which availeth much. - William Lee

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**Prayer Before Meals and After Meals** - Missionary [Henry Martyn](#) (1781–1812) had a habit of praying both before and after meals. One acquaintance later wrote of his first impressions of Martyn. "He seems to be a mild and benevolent enthusiast—a sort of character with which I am always half in love. We had the novelty of grace before and after dinner, all the company standing." Another acquaintance wrote a letter introducing him to the British ambassador in Persia, saying, "... I am satisfied that if ever you see him, you will be pleased with him. **He will give you grace before and after dinner**, and admonish such of your party as take the Lord's name in vain, but his good sense and great learning will delight you, whilst his constant cheerfulness will add to the hilarity of your party." - [Constance E. Padwick, Henry Martyn](#)

[Constance E. Padwick](#) wrote this about Henry Martyn's appearance:

His features were not regular, but the expression was so luminous, so intellectual, so affectionate, so beaming with Divine charity, that no one could have looked at his features and thought of their shape or form—the outbeaming of his soul would absorb the attention of every observer.

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**A Plea For Prayer** - Brethren, pray for us. —2 Thessalonians 3:1 (2 Thessalonians 3:1-5) - A missionary recently visited the Bible study I was attending. She described what it had been like to pack up her household, part with friends, and relocate to a distant country. When she and her family arrived, they were greeted with a flourishing drug-trade and hazardous roadways. The language barrier brought on bouts of loneliness. They contracted four different stomach viruses. And her oldest daughter narrowly escaped death after falling through a railing on an unsafe stairwell. They needed prayer. The apostle Paul experienced danger and hardship as a missionary. He was imprisoned, shipwrecked, and beaten. It's no surprise that his letters contained pleas for prayer. He asked

the believers in Thessalonica to pray for success in spreading the gospel—that God’s Word would “run swiftly and be glorified” (2Th. 3:1) and that God would deliver him from “unreasonable and wicked men” (2Th. 3:2). Paul knew he would need to “open [his] mouth boldly” and declare the gospel (Eph. 6:19), which was yet another prayer request. Do you know people who need supernatural help as they spread the good news of Christ? Remember Paul’s appeal, “Brethren, pray for us” (2 Thess. 3:1), and intercede for them before the throne of our powerful God.—Jennifer Benson Schuldt

Commit to pray and intercede—

The battle’s strong and great’s the need;

And this one truth can’t be ignored:

Our only help comes from the Lord.

—Sper

Intercede for others in prayer; God’s throne is always accessible.

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**Where Do I Start?** (Luke 11:1-10) - Several years ago, I was driving down the freeway when my car died. I pulled over to the side of the road, got out of the car, and opened the hood. As I looked at the engine I thought, A lot of good this does me. I know nothing about cars. I don’t even know where to start! That’s how we might sometimes feel about prayer: Where do I start? That’s what the disciples wanted to know when they asked Jesus, “Teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1). The best place to look for instruction is in the example and teaching of Jesus. Two questions you may have are: Where should we pray? Jesus prayed in the temple, in the wilderness (Luke 4), in quiet places (Matt. 14:22-23), in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22), and on the cross (Luke 23:34,46). He prayed alone and with others. Look at His life, follow His example, and pray wherever you are. What should we pray? In the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus taught us to ask that God’s name be honored and that His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Ask Him for your daily provisions, for forgiveness of sin, and for deliverance from temptation and evil (Luke 11:2-4).

So if you’re looking for a good place to start, follow the example of the Lord’s Prayer. — by Anne Cetas

The Lord has shown us we can pray

Wherever we may be;

And when we say, “Your will be done,”

His work on earth we’ll see. —Sper

If Jesus needed to pray, how can we do less!

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**Midnight Melodies** - (Psalm 42:1-11) God my Maker . . . gives songs in the night. --Job 35:10 - For most of his adult life, German composer Ludwig van Beethoven lived in fear of deafness. You can imagine how he felt when his fear became a reality. His hearing gradually faded to the point where he could communicate only by means of writing. To everyone’s amazement, it was after Beethoven lost his hearing that he wrote some of his greatest masterpieces. Shut out from the distractions of the world, new melodies and harmonies flooded in upon him as fast as his pen could write. His deafness had become a blessing. So too, children of God often find new joy in their night of sorrow and unexpected grace in their time of need. When God shuts us away from the things of this world, we may expect to hear more perfectly the matchless harmonies of heaven. Even if all were shrouded in darkness, by His grace we would find that we could still rejoice in the God of our salvation. We need not despair, for He is “a very present help in trouble” (Ps. 46:1). The psalmist also wrote, “In the night His song shall be with me” (Ps 42:8). It is our Maker who “gives songs in the night” (Job 35:10). If we wait on Him for the music, we’ll find there is never a song so sweet as His “midnight melodies.”—Henry G. Bosch

When the clouds of affliction have gathered

And hidden each star from my sight,

I know if I turn to my Father,

Sweetest songs He will give in the night.

—Montgomery

When you turn your care into prayer,

God turns midnight into music.

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**You Can Always Pray** - The young mother called out to the missionary, “Come quick! My baby is going to die.” Gale Fields was in Irian Jaya helping her husband Phil translate the Bible into Orya, a tribal language. But they also provided medical help whenever possible. Gale looked at the malaria-stricken child and realized she didn’t have the right medicine to help the infant. “I’m sorry,” she told the mother, “I don’t have any medicine for babies this small.” Gale paused, then said, “I could pray for her though.” “Yes, anything to help my baby,” answered the mother. Gale prayed for the baby and then went home feeling helpless. After a little while,

she again heard the mother cry out, "Gale, come quick and see my baby!" Expecting the worst, Gale went to the baby's side. This time, though, she noticed improvement. The dangerous fever was gone. Later, Gale would say, "No wonder the Orya Christians learned to pray. They know God answers." The early Christians prayed for Peter to be released from prison and then were "astonished" when God answered them (Acts 12:16). We respond that way too, but we shouldn't be surprised when God answers our prayers. Remember, His power is great and His resources are endless.—Dave Branon

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**Preaching Themes: Prayer** - Who hasn't found it difficult to find the time to pray on a regular basis? There is always time to pray when the chips are down, but on a regular basis? That can be more difficult. Well, never fear! Now you can [outsource](#) your prayer life. For \$3.50 per month at InformationAgePrayer.com you can have the Lord's Prayer recited for you daily. Catholics can purchase a "Complete Rosary Package" for nearly \$50. We have the opportunity to converse with the sovereign Lord of the universe and we outsource it to a computer? I would say something is lacking in our faith.—Jim L. Wilson and Rodger Russell

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**The Power of Prayer in Conversion** - Andrew Klavan was born Jewish. How he became a Christian is a simple testimony of the power of prayer. Having deserted Judaism for atheism as a young man, he was merrily sailing along in a world of nonbelief. He was reading an adventure novel when one of the main characters said a prayer before going to sleep. Andrew realized he had never tried to pray. In his words, "So I said a little prayer and it went off in me like a bomb. There are really no words to describe it. I have always thought it was a tribute to the generosity of God that even such a prideful, arrogant little prayer in some sense would be answered." That one simple prayer began a habit of praying, and eventually he accepted Christ. —Jim L. Wilson and Rodger Russell

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**Praying in the Wrong Direction!** - What happens when you pray facing the wrong direction? Muslims are supposed to pray facing the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. So what if you have been praying for years facing the wrong direction? The highest Islamic council in Indonesia announced that all mosques in the country are oriented improperly. "It has been decided that actually the mosques are facing Somalia or Kenya, so we are now suggesting people shift the direction slightly to the northwest," said cleric Cholil Ridwan. Fortunately, God is more concerned with the position of the heart than the position of the person praying. He is more concerned with spiritual attitude than physical direction.—Jim L. Wilson and Rodger Russell

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**Leaving a Message for God** (John 15:7; 1 John 5:14–15) In 2009 a Dutch artist set up a local telephone number in the Netherlands and urged people to call and leave a message for God. Johan van der Dong said he set up a phone number with voicemail to give people an opportunity to pause and contemplate life. Callers who use the number will hear "Hi, you are speaking to God. I'm not in right now, so leave a message after the beep." Van der Dong said, "Like praying, leaving a voicemail message is a way to organize your thoughts." He added, "It's a perfect combination for some contemplation." I think I'd rather just talk to God personally. I've never had to leave a message for him.—Jim L. Wilson and Jim Sandell

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**Waiting** - Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer. —Romans 12:12 - Day after day for years Harry shared with the Lord his concern for his son-in-law John who had turned away from God. But then Harry died. A few months later, John turned back to God. When his mother-in-law Marsha told him that Harry had been praying for him every day, John replied, "I waited too long." But Marsha joyfully shared: "The Lord is still answering the prayers Harry prayed during his earthly life." Harry's story is an encouragement to us who pray and wait. He continued "steadfastly in prayer" and waited patiently (Ro 12:12). The author of Psalm 130 experienced waiting in prayer. He said, "I wait for the Lord, my soul waits" (Ps 130:5). He found hope in God because he knew that "with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is abundant redemption" (Ps 130:7).....What a privilege we have to fellowship with God in prayer and to wait for the answer in the fullness of His time. —Anne Cetas

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**The 100-Year "Prayer Chain"** - In 1722, [Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf](#) ([note](#)), troubled by the suffering of Christian exiles from Bohemia and Moravia, allowed them to establish a community on his estate in Germany. The center became known as [Herrnhut](#), ([founding of Herrnhut](#)) meaning "Under the Lord's Watch." It grew quickly, and so did its appreciation for the power of prayer ([see Life at Herrnhut](#)). On August 27, 1727, twenty-four men and twenty-four women covenanted to spend an hour each day in scheduled prayer, praying in sequence around the clock. Soon others joined the prayer chain. More signed on, then others still. Days passed, then months. Unceasing prayer rose to God twenty-four-hours a day as someone—at least one—was engaged in intercessory prayer each hour of every day. The intercessors met weekly for encouragement and to read letters and messages from their brothers in different places, giving them specific needs to pray about. A decade passed, the prayer chain continuing nonstop. Then another decade. It was a prayer meeting that lasted over one hundred years. Undoubtedly this prayer chain helped birth Protestant missions. Six months into it, Zinzendorf, twenty-seven, suggested the possibility of attempting to reach others for Christ in the West Indies, Greenland, Turkey, and Lapland. Twenty-six Moravians stepped forward the next day to volunteer. The first missionaries, [Leonard Dober](#) and [David Nitschmann](#) ([note](#)), were commissioned during an unforgettable service on August 18, 1732, during which one hundred hymns were sung. The two men reached the West Indies in December of that year, beginning the

“Golden Decade” of Moravian Missions, 1732–1742. During the first two years, twenty-two missionaries perished and two more were imprisoned, but others took their places. In all, seventy Moravian missionaries flowed from the six hundred inhabitants of Herrnhut, a feat unparalleled in missionary history. By the time William Carey became the “Father of Modern Missions” over three hundred Moravian missionaries had already gone to the ends of the earth. And that’s not all. The Moravian fervor sparked the conversions of John and Charles Wesley and indirectly ignited the Great Awakening that swept through Europe and America, sweeping thousands into the kingdom. The prayer meeting lasted one hundred years. The results will last for eternity. —[Robert Morgan "On This Day"](#)

#### Related Resources:

- [Moravian Slaves](#)
- [The History of the Moravian Church](#)
- [Foreign Missions and Their Influence](#)
- [The Moravian Missionary Machine - \(Video - 1:06:35\)](#)
- [Part 1 - Reaching the Slaves - The Moravians - David Nitschmann & Leonard Dober \(Video -14:28 minutes\)](#)
- [Part 2 - Reaching the Slaves - The Moravians - David Nitschmann & Leonard Dober \(Video - 10:25 minutes\)](#)

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**Why Pray?** (Luke 11:1-13) One of the great paradoxes of the Christian faith is that God wants us to talk to Him about everything that is going on in our lives, even though He already knows everything. So why pray? If you’ve ever wrestled with that question, perhaps the thoughts of the 19th-century preacher [R. A. Torrey](#) can help. Among the reasons he gave for prayer are these:

- Because there is a devil, and prayer is a God-appointed way to resist Him (Eph. 6:12,13,18).
- Because prayer is God’s way for us to obtain what we need from Him (Lk. 11:3-13; Jas. 4:2).
- Because prayer is the means God has appointed for us to find “grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).
- Because prayer with thanksgiving is God’s way for us to obtain freedom from anxiety and to receive “the peace of God” (Phil. 4:6, 7).

Besides these reasons, it’s enough to read the command in 1Thessalonians 5:17, “Pray without ceasing,” and realize that God wants us to talk with Him. Yes, He is all-knowing, but He also desires our fellowship. When we seek God’s face in prayer, we strengthen our relationship with Him. That’s the most important reason to pray. —J D Brannon

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**The Bifocals of Faith** - Perhaps it was his Scottish accent. Perhaps his playful smile. Perhaps the simplicity of his preaching, or maybe it was his prayers with their pungent twists of boldness. For whatever reason, [Peter Marshall](#) is remembered as one of the most beloved Senate Chaplains in American history. Marshall immigrated to the United States, arriving at Ellis Island in 1927, only 19 years before being named Senate Chaplain. He pastored in Georgia, then at Washington’s New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. On January 5, 1947 he was named Senate Chaplain, and his prayers immediately touched the nation. Here is his “Bifocals of Faith” prayer, offered before the United States Senate on November 24, 1947:

God of our fathers and our God, give us the faith to believe in the ultimate triumph of righteousness, no matter how dark and uncertain are the skies of today. We pray for the bifocals of faith—that see the despair and the need of the hour but also see, further on, the patience of our God working out his plan in the world he has made. So help thy servants to interpret for our time the meaning of the motto inscribed on our coins. Make our faith honest by helping us this day to do one thing because thou hast said, “Do it,” or to abstain because thou hast said, “Thou shalt not.” How can we say we believe in thee, or even want to believe in thee, when we do not anything thou dost tell us? May our faith be seen in our works. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Just over a year later [Peter Marshall](#), 46 years old, was rushed to the hospital with severe pain in his chest and arms. A massive heart attack took his life, and the entire nation mourned his death. But his prayers, sermons, and life have been immortalized in Christian literature through the efforts of his wife and biographer, [Catherine Marshall](#). —[Robert Morgan "On This Day"](#)

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**Ora et Labora** - A group of frightened children huddled around their mother’s bed in a dark little room in Germany. Among them was a bewildered four-year-old boy about to become an orphan. As he listened, his sinking mother whispered, “My dear children, I have a great treasure for you.” “What is it, Mother?” asked an older sister. The woman pointed to the Bible. “Seek it in the Bible; there you will find great treasure. I have watered every page with my tears.” With that she died. The family was broken up, and little [Bartholomew Ziegenbalg](#) went to live with sympathetic friends in Halle. He never forgot his mother’s words, and at age 12, he claimed Christ as his Savior. At 18 he graduated from the university in Halle with honors. Lutheranism in Germany had been rekindled by a revival known as Pietism, and King Ferdinand of Denmark had been stirred. He appealed for missionaries for the Danish possession of Tranquebar on the southern tip of India. Ziegenbalg heard the call and presented himself. Scarcely anyone saw him off at the dock, and the trip to India was long—seven months, twenty days. He arrived in India on July 9, 1706, and was

promptly imprisoned. Ziegenbalg, however, had a motto: **Ora et Labora—Pray and Work!** He would not be denied. Even in prison, he labored at learning the Tamil language, and as soon as he gained freedom he began sharing Christ. Within a year he baptized five slaves in the first Protestant baptismal service ever held in India, and soon the first Protestant church for nationals in India was dedicated. By 1711 Ziegenbalg completed the translation of the New Testament into [Tamil](#), along with Luther's catechism, a Danish liturgy, and some German hymns. His health failed after 13 years, and he died at [Tranquebar](#) in 1719 at age 35, leaving 350 converts to mourn his death and continue his work. If [William Carey](#) is the "Father of Modern Missions" perhaps Ziegenbalg should be called its Grandfather, for he served faithfully in India nearly a generation before the Moravian missionaries left Herrnhut and nearly 100 years before Carey.—[Robert Morgan "On This Day"](#)

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**Unbelieving Prayer** - The story is told about a church in a small town which seemed to have everything going its way. There were no gambling casinos, no liquor stores, and no "beer joints" in the entire area. After several years, however, a night club was built right on Main Street. The congregation was very much disturbed and held several all-night prayer meetings in which some members specifically asked God to burn the tavern down. Well, a few days later, during a tremendous thunderstorm, lightning did strike the drinking establishment and fire completely demolished it. The owner, knowing how the church had prayed, sued them for damages. His lawyer claimed that it was their prayers which caused the loss. The church, however, hired their own lawyer and fought the charges. After many hearings and much deliberation, the judge declared: "It is the opinion of this court that wherever the guilt may lie, the tavern owner is the one who really believes in prayer, while the church members do not!" Doesn't this suggest how faithless we often are? Even those in the early church were guilty of such unbelieving prayer. Acts 12 tells us that Peter, having escaped from prison, went to the house of Mary the mother of John where many Christians were gathered together praying for his release. He knocked, and Rhoda went to the door; but, hearing his voice, she was so thrilled that, with-out opening it, she ran to the "prayer meeting crowd" and told them that Peter was outside. "Thou art mad!" they said. As she insisted that it was really Peter, they concluded, "It is his angel." As the apostle continued knocking, they finally opened the door. Seeing him, they "were astonished." How often we are like that: surprised at the way God answers prayer. When we pray, let us be confident that God "is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3: 20).

God answers prayer; shouldst thou complain?  
Be not afraid, thou canst not ask in vain.  
He only waits thy faith in Him to prove,  
Doubt not His power e'en mountains to remove!  
—Anon.

Have faith to believe that where prayer focuses, power falls!

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**Never Give Up!** - One day [George Mueller](#) began praying for five of his friends. After many months, one of them came to the Lord. Ten years later, two others were converted. It took 25 years before the fourth man was saved. Mueller persevered in prayer until his death for the fifth friend, and throughout those 52 years he never gave up hoping that he would accept Christ! His faith was rewarded, for soon after Mueller's funeral the last one was saved.— [Our Daily Bread](#)

Another Version from [Kent Hughes](#) - I am reminded of the story of George Müller who founded many orphanages in the last century. Early in his life Müller made the acquaintance of three men, and he began to pray for their salvation. Müller lived a long time, but when he died, none of those men had yet trusted Christ. It is recorded in his diary that he prayed for these men daily during all those years. But that is not the end! The glorious fact is that all three of those men did meet Christ—two of them in their seventies and one in his eighties! Müller sowed, but someone else reaped. Whether we find ourselves sowing or reaping, our lives are to be permeated with a sense of urgency. Jesus' harvest mentality was part of the secret of his life. We also are meant to be harvesting!

**Related Resources:**

[Mark Cahill's 14 chapter audio book - "One Thing You Can't Do In Heaven"](#)

[My Personal Testimony - My Father Prayed for my salvation for 20 years!](#)

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**It's Too Soon to Quit Praying!** - The following powerful story is from Ron Mehl's book [Surprise Endings](#) which speaks of how we can become discouraged when persistent prayers just don't seem (emphasis on the word "seem") to be answered. The following true account took place just after World War II:

Roger Simms, hitchhiking his way home, would never forget the date—May 7. His heavy suitcase made Roger tired. He was anxious to take off his army uniform once and for all. Flashing the hitchhiking sign to the on-coming car, he lost hope when he saw it was a black, sleek new Cadillac. To his surprise the car stopped. The passenger door opened. He ran toward the car, tossed his suitcase in the back, and thanked the handsome, well-dressed man as he slid in the front seat.

"Going home for keeps?"

"Sure am," Roger responded.

"Well, you're in luck if you're going to Chicago."

"Not quite that far. Do you live in Chicago?"

"I have a business there. My name is Hanover."

After talking about many things, Roger, a Christian, felt a compulsion to witness to this fiftyish, apparently successful businessman about Christ. But he kept putting it off, till he realized he was just thirty minutes from his home. It was now or never. So, Roger cleared his throat, "Mr. Hanover, I would like to talk to you about something very important." He then proceeded to explain the way of salvation, ultimately asking Mr. Hanover if he would like to receive Christ as his Savior. To Roger's astonishment the Cadillac pulled over to the side of the road. Roger thought he was going to be ejected from the car. But the businessman bowed his head and received Christ, then thanked Roger, "This is the greatest thing that has ever happened to me."

Five years went by, Roger married, had a two-year-old boy, and a business of his own. Packing his suitcase for a business trip to Chicago, he found the small, white business card Hanover had given him five years before.

In Chicago he looked up Hanover Enterprises. A receptionist told him it was impossible to see Mr. Hanover, but he could see Mrs. Hanover. A little confused as to what was going on, he was ushered into a lovely office and found himself facing a keen-eyed woman in her fifties. She extended her hand, "You knew my husband?"

Roger told her how her husband had given him a ride when hitchhiking home after the war.

"Can you tell me when that was?"

"It was May 7, five years ago, the day I was discharged from the army."

"Anything special about that day?"

Roger hesitated. Should he mention his witness? Since he had come so far, he might as well take the plunge. "Mrs. Hanover, I explained the gospel. He pulled over to the side of the road and wept against the steering wheel. He gave his life to Christ that day."

Explosive sobs shook her body. Getting a grip on herself, she sobbed, "I had prayed for my husband's salvation for years. I believed God would save him."

"And," said Roger, "Where is your husband, Mrs. Hanover?"

"He's dead," she wept, struggling with words. "He was in a car crash after he let you out of the car. He never got home. You see—I thought God had not kept His promise." Sobbing uncontrollably, she added, "I stopped living for God five years ago because I thought He had not kept His word!"

Have you been praying for years, even decades, for someone to receive Jesus as Savior and yet there is no answer to your prayers? I have and this can be somewhat discouraging, but stories like this should encourage us that as long as they have breath in their lungs it's **TOO SOON TO QUIT!** (See also [My Personal Testimony - My Father Prayed for my salvation for 20 years](#))

Beloved professor [Dr. Howard Hendricks](#) once walked into the classroom at Dallas Theological Seminary in tears and said...

"Gentlemen, I want to tell you something. My seventy-five year old father received Jesus Christ as his Savior. That might not be meaningful to you unless I tell you that for forty years, I have prayed for his salvation. And after forty years, God finally said yes."

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**No Audience** - One winter night composer Johann Sebastian Bach was scheduled to debut a new composition. He arrived at the church expecting it to be full. Instead, he learned that no one had come. Without missing a beat, Bach told his musicians that they would still perform as planned. They took their places, Bach raised his baton, and soon the empty church was filled with magnificent music. Beloved, we may sometimes feel like we are praying and the Lord is not listening. When that happens, pray like Bach played and rest assured it will be "beautiful music" to our Master's Ear!

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**Reaching God's Ear** - C. Samuel Storms poses some relevant questions in his book [Reaching God's Ear](#) that we can use to evaluate our prayer lives.

- Do we repeat a request because we think that the quality of a prayer is dependent on the quantity of words?
- Do we repeat a request because we think that God is ignorant and needs to be informed, or if not ignorant at least he is unconcerned and therefore needs to be aroused?
- Do we repeat our prayers because we believe that God is unwilling to answer and we must prevail upon him, somehow transforming a hard-hearted God into a compassionate and loving one?
- Do we repeat a petition because we think that God will be swayed in his decision by our putting on a show of zeal and piety, as if God cannot see through the thin veil of hypocrisy? [Reaching God's Ear \(Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1988\), p. 145.](#)

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**Equal Access** - 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 (Read: Psalm 145:14-21) - Pastor Stuart Silvester told me of a conversation he had with an acquaintance who frequently flew his small private plane in and out of Toronto International Airport. He asked the pilot if he ever encountered problems taking off and landing a small craft at an airport that was dominated by so many large jets. His friend responded, "My plane may be small, but I have the same rights, the same privileges, and the same access to that airport as anyone else—even the jumbo jets!" Pastor Silvester then made this spiritual application: "It's the same with prayer, with the believer's approach to the throne of grace. No matter who we are or how small we are in comparison with others or how low our station in life, we take a back seat to no one. No one is given priority treatment." In a world that offers preferential treatment to the wealthy, the famous, and the influential, it's encouraging to know that every child of God has equal access to the Father in heaven. The psalmist said, "The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth" (Psalm 145:18). With that assurance, we can "come boldly to the throne of grace" in prayer, knowing that our loving God will never turn us away.

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**Relationship Between Prayer to God and Divine Deliverance** - Prayer is indeed a mystery, but it is stressed over and over again in the New Testament as a vital prerequisite for the release and experience of God's power. It is true that it is God who delivers, and that God stands in no need of human prayers before He can act on behalf of His afflicted servants. Yet there is the manward as well as the Godward aspect of such deliverance, and the manward side is summed up in the duty of Christians to intercede in prayer for their fellow-believers who are enduring affliction.... In prayer, human impotence casts itself at the feet of divine omnipotence. Thus the duty of prayer is not a modification of God's power, but a glorification of it.—[Philip Hughes - Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#)

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**How to Know God's Leading** - We must be ready to do God's will when He reveals it to us. Can you pray, "Not my will, but Yours be done"? (cp Mt 6:10) It is necessary if you really want to know God's leading. Preface your prayers with the words, "If it be Your will," and then pray in faith, believing that the Lord hears and will answer (see Mark 11:24; Jas. 1:6-7). After we know the will of God, we need to be taught to do His will. Then, too, we must pray for courage and strength to do what He would have us do.—[Henrietta Mears - God's Plan: Finding Yourself in His Grand Design](#)

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**Praying or Doing?** - The story has been told of a rich man who spent hours praying that the Lord would answer the needs of a destitute family. A friend of the rich man was visiting him one day when one of the children of the poor family walked by the house. The rich man called his friend to the window. "See that little fellow?" the rich man said. "His family is so poor they never have enough food to go around. I have been praying that the Lord will supply their needs. Would you like to join me?" "No," his friend answered. "I think I'll just take some food over to them." That's a little like our praying that the Lord will convert unbelievers when we are not willing to let Him lead our lives. Perhaps He wants to these people to enter into His kingdom through the instrumentality of our lives. We must always remember to ask the Lord if there is any way in which He wants us to bring about the answer to our prayers for those in need. (cp James 2:15,16, 1Jn 3:16-18)—[Henrietta Mears - God's Plan: Finding Yourself in His Grand Design](#)

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**Compromise Commended** - The devil often comes to us as an angel of light and suggests that we compromise just a little with what we know is right. He suggests that we are too tired to get up and read our Bible in the morning. He hints that we are too sleepy to pray before we go to bed. He tells us not to bow our head in the restaurant to ask the Lord's blessing on our food. "After all," the devil says, "you may be laughed at. The others won't understand. God knows that you are thankful; ask the blessing with your eyes open so no one will know." The devil tells us not to be so sold out to Christ as to live for Him at work, at school and around home. He says people will think that we are fanatics. "Don't talk about the Lord," he suggests. "Don't give to the Lord's work." And so on and on the temptations go. Satan suggests compromise instead of an out-and-out stand for the Lord Jesus. —[Henrietta Mears - God's Plan: Finding Yourself in His Grand Design](#)

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**Real Confession** - "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9-note). Don't pray in an indefinite way. Name it before God. Is it pride, lack of trust, anger, love of pleasure more than God? Well, whatever it is, lay it out before God and tell Him what it is. Call it by name. Then claim God's promise. "He is faithful and just" not only to "forgive us our sins," but also to "purify us from all unrighteousness." A human parent can forgive our misbehaviors, but only God can cleanse us from sin.—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**The Prayer of Faith** - Prayer is a golden key that, kept bright by constant use, will unlock the treasures of earth and heaven. James gives us a series of short phrases of advice. If anyone is in trouble, he should pray. If anyone is merry, he should sing. If anyone is sick, he should send for the elders of the church and let them anoint him with oil and pray for him (James 5:13-14). The Bible says, "And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven" (James 5:15). If anyone has wronged another, he should confess his fault to that one (James 5:16). The prayer of faith demands confession of sin, and a will surrendered to God. Elijah's mighty prayer that opened and closed the heavens is an example to us, for



"the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**Wrong Motives** - People (often) fail to pray, or if they do it is with a wrong motive, to spend what they get upon themselves instead of having their lives glorify God (James 4:1-3). God promises to answer prayer, but He will not give to those who would consume it on their own pleasures. It is common to see worldly minded Christians praying for purely selfish reasons. Often you hear people say, "I don't believe in prayer. I prayed for a new car, and God didn't give it to me," or "My husband was sick and I prayed that God would heal him, and he died." In either case, the answer might easily have led the person farther away from God. The car would have been driven to the beach and not to church. The family circle restored could make the wife find her joy in her husband rather than in her Lord.—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**When We Lack Wisdom** - Pray for wisdom to behave wisely in time of trial. When you are wronged and insulted, ask God how you shall act. "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5). What a sad lack! What a mess such a lack can lead us into. Does James say, "If you lack wisdom, sit down and think or study"? No, he says the wisdom we need is from above.....James begins and ends with prayer (James 1:5-8; James 5:13-18). **Prayer is one of the easiest subjects to talk upon, but one of the hardest to practice** Find all you can about this subject in this Epistle (James). What about his practice? Tradition tells us that on his death they discovered that his knees were worn hard as a camel's through constant habit of prayer.—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**Eyes Up, Feet Down** - The church at Thessalonica was carried away with the expectation of Christ's glorious return (2Th 2:1). Who can help but be thrilled when thinking about His triumphant coming? But we must keep our feet on the ground. We must work while we wait, and pray as we watch, for there is much to do while Christ tarries.....The hope of Christ's coming stimulates without exciting; sobers without depressing. It is a balancing doctrine.—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**Praying as Paul Prayed** - "We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers" (1Th 1:2). Do we follow up our new converts as Paul did? Teacher, do you? Paul's converts were in more than a score of different cities, yet he carried them "all" in his heart and kept in touch with them. Do you have a prayer list? Do you pray for others by name? Do you "make mention" of your friends before God? If you find it difficult to speak to others about Christ, try speaking to Christ about others, and soon you will be speaking to others about Him. All of us can do this, even the most timid.—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**How to Handle Worry** - D. L. Moody says of Philippians 4:6: "Be careful for nothing; Be prayerful for everything; Be thankful for anything!" Yes, the way to be anxious about nothing is to be prayerful about everything. The prayer of faith must be a prayer of thanksgiving because faith knows how much it owes to God. Put your prayers into God's hands and go off and leave them there. Do not worry about them. Give them completely as the farmer gives the wheat to the soil after the soil has been properly plowed. If you do this, then the peace of God will stand guard over your heart and mind.—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**Prison Prayer** - Although in prison, Paul could pray for his friends. "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy" (Phil. 1:3-4). Paul lived to intercede for others. So should every true Sunday School teacher, Christian friend, father, mother, brother or sister remember others in their prayers without ceasing. Have you a prayer list? Do you talk with the Lord about your friends? "Making request with joy"? Why can we rejoice in prayer? What is your answer?—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**Life Changing Prayer** - Dr. Keller ([Frank A. Keller](#), medical evangelist and educator; in 1924 he had already spent twenty-seven years in China), on loan from the China Inland Mission to the Hunan Bible Institute, tells of a barber who was marvelously converted. He had been an opium addict and a moral degenerate. In desperation, he came to the missionaries, and prayer was answered for him. His appetite for opium left and he became a living witness for Christ.—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**"What's" and "That's" in Paul's Prayers** - Ephesians 1:18-19 - "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might." - Each believer should know the three "whats" in this prayer. Do you know the answers? **What** is the hope of His calling? **What** are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints? Think of Christ's inheritance in us. He has suns and stars, but He wants sons and saints. **What** is the exceeding greatness of His power? What the Church needs today is power. She is shorn of her real strength....Paul prays again and his prayer is recorded in Ephesians 3:13-21. The first prayer recorded in Ephesians 1:18-19 gave us

three "whats." This prayer gives us four "thats" and is steeped in the love of Christ. **That** they should be strengthened by His Spirit. **That** they might have Christ dwelling in their hearts. **That** they might understand what is the breadth, length, depth and height of the love of Christ. **That** they might be filled with the fullness of God.—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**When God Answers "No"** - Purpose of Testing - Many wonder why God does not remove "thorns" from the flesh when we pray to Him. We must learn that God always answers prayer, but sometimes the answer is no. He knows it will be better for us to bear the thorn than be without it. "Thorns" in the flesh have made many to lean on Christ. Sometimes a "thorn" is a warning to keep us from sin and failure. God proved to Paul that no matter what his weakness was, His strength was sufficient. A minister one day buried his only child. He went into his study the next day to prepare his message for Sunday, but he could not. His grief was too great. Through his tears, which would insist upon coursing down his cheeks, his eyes fell on these words: "My grace is sufficient." It seemed to read this way: "My grace IS sufficient." He wrote it that way on a card and hung it in front of his desk. He learned to know a God who is always present.—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**Average or Extraordinary?** - "When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise" (2 Cor. 10:12). We all have a tendency to take a wrong standard for measuring character. We compare ourselves among ourselves. We conclude we are as good as the average. But average Christians are not what the Bible requires. Let us pray Wesley's ([John Wesley](#), 1703-1791, British, founder of the Methodists) prayer, "Lord, make me an extraordinary Christian."—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**The Birth of Modern Missions** - We see Paul and Barnabas, the first foreign missionaries, starting westward from Antioch (Acts 13:2-3). The greatest enterprise in the world is foreign missions, and this is the very start of this great movement. The whole idea began just the way it should, at a prayer meeting....Lydia was converted in a prayer meeting (Acts 16:14), but it took an earthquake to arouse the next convert—a jailer (Acts 16:26). The jailer's question is one of the most important questions in all the world (Acts 16:30).—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**Have You Prayed About It?** - If the Son of God needed to pray before He undertook His work, how much more should we pray. Perhaps if we lack success in life, it is because we fail at this point. We have not because we ask not (see James 4:2)...Luke speaks more of the prayers of our Lord than any other Gospel writer. Prayer is the expression of human dependence on God. Why is there so much working and activity in the Church and yet so little result in positive conversions to God? Why so much running hither and thither and so few brought to Christ? The answer is simple: There is not enough private prayer. **The cause of Christ does not need less working, but more praying.**—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**Proper Prayer Posture** - Because Scripture discloses several postures for prayer, two or three times a year I intentionally plan the morning prayer to include bodily movement. We may begin by standing with our hands raised to the Lord in adoration. Then we may kneel for confession. We may sit with our hands on our knees, palms up in a receptive posture. Our prayer may close with us holding hands around the sanctuary praying the words of the Lord's Prayer. Specific postures add meaning to our prayers. Holding hands demonstrates unity. Kneeling is the appropriate bodily position in the presence of the King, and it reflects a submissive heart and will. —[David Wiersbe - The Dynamics of Pastoral Care](#)

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**The Best Prayer Posture** - One man said, "The best way to pray is on our knees." Another said, "No, we should pray while standing upright in God's presence with our hands lifted to heaven." Another said, "We should clasp our hands, and pray reverently with bowed head." But an old farmer had the last word. He said, "A few years ago, I tripped over my own feet and fell headfirst in the well. There I was with my head pointing down and both heels sticking up. And it was then and there—in that position—that I prayed the best prayer I've ever prayed."

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**Prayer-a-Phrasing** - This is a habit that I call "Prayer-a-phrasing" Scripture. In very practical terms, just how can you do this? I'll give you four different suggestions. You will probably not want to try all of them at once, but perhaps one or two of them will work for you.

**First**, you might want to keep a prayer journal in which you actually write out a prayer from Scripture each day for someone you love. This is my general practice. Each day I take a different passage of Scripture and write out a prayer to the Lord for someone based on that passage.

**Second**, you might just want to use the margin of your Bible for the same thing. For example, suppose you get up in the morning, pour yourself a cup of coffee, and go out to the patio for your morning devotions. In your reading you come to Psalm 1 or Ephesians 1 or Philippians 1. You quietly read that passage aloud, converted it to a prayer for your husband or wife or child or friend. Underline the passage and note in the margin: July 7—Manford. Or: July 7—Rosemarie. In the course of a year, how many prayers you could

formulate from the words of Scripture!

Here's a **third** suggestion. Memorize a passage, and spend a week or two praying that section of Scripture into the lives of everyone you know. Right now, I'm working on memorizing the first seven verses of Ephesians 5. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children; and live a life of love.... Every morning for a month on my way to work, I could pray through that passage for someone different. Memorized Scripture is the finest fodder for prayer the Christian can ever discover.

And a final suggestion. You can expand this habit to the hymnbook. Many Christians through the years have kept their hymnbooks and their Bibles side-by-side for use in their daily devotions. I remember once I was very worried about someone—a Christian I loved who had drifted away from the Lord. I took that old hymn “Revive Us Again” and made it into a prayer for this person. Whenever I would begin to worry about him, I would sing Lord, revive him again. Fill his heart with your love. May his soul be rekindled with fire from above.

So there are many ways of doing it. But the important thing is to begin and cultivate this habit. It is perhaps the most powerful spiritual discipline that God offers his children.

Several years ago, as some of you know, my wife and I took in a troubled young man with a long history of drug and alcohol abuse. We loved him dearly, but after six months of apparent progress, he relapsed. The next six months were a nightmare, but he finally consented to let us enroll him in a long-term drug rehabilitation program. He entered just before his birthday and I told him that for his birthday I would pray for him for an hour. When the time came, I wondered for a moment how I could pray so long for one person. Waiting until the evening, I rose after everyone was in bed, went to the living room, and knelt by the sofa. With an open Bible before me, I started in Genesis and thumbed through page after page. Before me were well-worn chapters, underlined verses, highlighted passages. One-by-one I converted them into prayers for my young friend. I have seldom prayed with such a feeling of authority and power, and the hour passed quickly. Meanwhile in the rehabilitation center, Mark turned the corner. I can almost date the moment when the change occurred in his life to the very evening when I was on my knees with my Bible open before me. So if you are worried about someone today, or about yourself... If you are finding your stomach knotting, your head pounding, and your teeth clenched, remember this. **The best remedy for a knotted stomach or a pounding head is the bent knee** Ruth Graham once said, *“God loves to be reminded of his promises. He never rebukes us for asking too much!”* - Rob Morgan

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**Powerful Motivation for Purity** - There is an indisputable, invisible correlation between the purity of your life and the power and effectiveness of your prayers. I've found this to be a powerful motivation for purity. I have a need in my life that can only be met through answered prayer. I have something in my life which only God can accomplish. And there have been times when I have resisted some temptation or another on the sheer basis that I could not afford to have my prayers weakened and derailed. I was reading the other day about something Ruth Bell Graham wrote. It was when one of her sons, Franklin, was away from the Lord. He was heading off on a very dangerous trip to the Middle East. She was gravely concerned, and after he drove away she went to her desk. She had determined to spend some time praying for him, using the great prayer that Jesus had offered for His disciples in John 17. She was going to adapt that prayer for her son. As she prayed through the chapter she came to verse 19, which brought her up short: “For their sakes I sanctify myself.” (John 17:19) She said, “That was our Lord Himself praying. I could not miss it. I could not bypass it.” She prayed, “Lord, You take care of them. I need to settle some things in my own life with you.” And then she wrote this: “It is unrealistic to ask the Lord to do in someone else's life that which we are unwilling for Him to do in ours.” We have never stood in greater need of prayer. In our lives, and in the life of our nation and of our world, we need to have power with God and man. We need to be able to draw down from heaven a revival for our generation. We need to move heaven and earth through the power of prayer. But is it possible that we are so weakened and compromised in our own lives, that our prayers are pathetic and powerless? Perhaps we need to say, “For their sakes I sanctify myself.” - From Rob Morgan's sermon on Psalm 66:1-20 (esp Ps 66:18) Praying on the Wrong Frequency

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**Prayer for Escape** - In the days of the [Scottish Covenanters](#), John Dick, a lawyer's son, graduated from Edinburgh University intending to become a minister of the Gospel. He didn't make it, for he was among the Presbyterians deemed outlaws during the reign of King Charles II. He lived a fugitive's life till betrayed by a poor woman who later lost her mind over the incident. John was brought before the Committee of Public Affairs on August 29, 1683, found guilty of treason, and sentenced to die by hanging. The Canongate tollbooth contained two large upper cells, and John, tossed into one of them, found there two dozen other religious prisoners. The men joined hearts in prayer, asking God's help as they planned a mass escape. News seeped out, and Presbyterians all over Edinburgh prayed for a successful breakout. On the appointed night, the men begin sawing painstakingly through the iron bars of their glassless window. The first bar was cut about nine o'clock, but to the horror of all, before any of them could catch it, it fell down into the narrow street near the sentry. They held their breath and watched and prayed, but no alarm sounded. They continued their furtive work; then one by one, the men dropped from the window and disappeared into the night. The next morning, confusion erupted through official Edinburgh. Police, city fathers, guards and sentries were questioned; but none of the prisoners was ever recaptured. - From sermon by Rob Morgan on Genesis 22:1-5: Preview of Christ

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A Scottish woman lay dying and called for her pastor. The pastor read Scripture and prayed with the woman, and they shared

communion. As the pastor stood to leave, her final words to him were, "Please don't turn me into a sermon illustration." Some congregations know about counseling issues their pastor is confronting because those issues motivate or illustrate the Sunday sermon.—[David Wiersbe - The Dynamics of Pastoral Care](#)

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**The Spirit of Othniel** - "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, so that he became Israel's judge and went to war" (Judges 3:10). First he prayed, then went out to battle. When we see an army bow in prayer, as the [Swiss at Morat](#), the [Scots at Bannockburn](#) and General MacArthur's troops in the Philippines, we have faith in their spirit and courage for they are feeling their dependence on God! —[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**Samuel, A Man of Prayer** - Throughout Samuel's long and useful life he was God's man. He was preeminently a man of prayer. This first book that bears his name is a marvelous study in the place and power of prayer, illustrated from life. He was a child of prayer (1 Samuel 3:1-19); he brought victory to his people through prayer (1 Samuel 7:5-10); when the nation wanted a king, Samuel prayed unto the Lord (1 Samuel 8:6); intercessory prayer was the keynote of his life (1 Samuel 12:19-23).—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**How to Handle Difficult Circumstances** - Habakkuk, in all his difficulties, went to God in prayer and waited patiently for His answer (Habakkuk 2:1). He went onto the watchtower and listened to God. G. Campbell Morgan says that when Habakkuk looked at his circumstances he was perplexed (Habakkuk 1:3), but when he waited for God and listened to Him, he sang (Habakkuk 3:18-19). —[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**Key Verse in Psalms** - [Henrietta Mears](#) feels that "Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness" (Psalm 29:2)....is the key verse to the book of Psalms. The door into the temple of praise and prayer is open. Go in with the psalmist to rest and pray. It is a real privilege to go apart during the rush of earthly things.....The Psalms are for the closet of prayer.—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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Ezra and Nehemiah contain a long prayer of humiliation and confession in the ninth chapter. Both end with the purification of the people.

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**Unanswered Prayer** - I heard about a little girl who was angry with her mother. Early one night, her mom put her to bed and told her to say her prayers before she went to sleep. The little girl got down on her knees and prayed for her brother, sister, daddy, aunts, uncles, and everybody—"Amen." Then she looked up at her mother and said, "I guess you noticed you weren't in it." That is not the kind of prayer that gets answered. Is there unconfessed sin in your life right now? It may be big; it may be small. But if so, don't be surprised if God is not hearing your prayer. He loves the prayers of His obedient followers. - Adrian Rogers

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**Give Him No Rest** - Isaiah 62:6-7 - "On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen; All day and all night they will never keep silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest for yourselves; And give Him no rest until He establishes And makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth." - Here Isaiah is telling people to pray for Jerusalem. He says, "You who call on the Lord...." Is that you? Do you call on the Lord? Do you pray? If so, how should we then pray? He goes on to say: Give yourselves no rest. Pray with vigor and consistency and persistence and perseverance. And look at this next phrase: **and give him no rest**. Give whom no rest? Give the Lord no rest until he answers your prayer and establishes Jerusalem as the praise of the earth. How should we pray when God burdens us for something in particular? How should we pray when we need revival in our nation and in our own hearts? How should we pray when a loved one is troubled? How should we pray for those things that only God can provide? **We should give ourselves no rest and we should give the Lord no rest until he answers our prayers and fulfills his promises**. This is the passage that transformed the prayer habits of missionary John Hyde of India who later became known as "[Praying](#)" Hyde. John Hyde grew up in Carthage, Illinois, in a minister's home. At McCormick Theological Seminary, he committed himself to overseas evangelism, and, following graduation, he went to India. His itinerant ministry took him from village to village, but his preaching produced few converts until he discovered the truth of Isaiah 62:6-9, and took these words literally. At the beginning of 1908, he prayed to win at least one soul to Christ every day. By December 31, he had recorded over 400 converts. The following year, the Lord laid two souls per day on his heart, and his prayer was again answered. The next year he prayed for four souls daily with similar results. Once, stopping at a cottage for water, Praying Hyde pleaded with God for ten souls. He presented the Gospel to the family, and by the end of his visit all nine members of the family had been saved. But what of number ten? Suddenly a nephew who had been playing outside ran into the room and was promptly converted. Hyde's great missionary work flowed from his prayer life like water from a fountain, and he finally wore himself out in prayer, staying on his knees, night after night, year after year, reminding God of his promises and giving the Lord no rest. Christians in India still speak of his lasting impact. - From a sermon by Rob Morgan

**Recipe for Revival** - "The Lord continued to appear at Shiloh" (1 Samuel 3:21). God revisited Shiloh! For Shiloh had been left. Read Judges 21:19-21. The place of worship had been turned into a place of feasting and dancing. Shiloh was the location of the house of God from the days of Joshua to Samuel. David moved it to Jerusalem. The Ark was removed by the Philistines in Samuel's childhood and from then on Shiloh ceased to be of great importance (1 Samuel 4:3, 11).

What brought about this timely revival? Three things:

- A praying mother, 1 Samuel 1:1-28
- A chastened people, 1 Samuel 2:1-36
- A faithful prophet, 1 Samuel 3:1-21

We need a praying band of Christians, a people brought to a sense of their need, and a consecrated preacher to bring about revival. Under the Philistine rule, Israel had no definite center of worship. Samuel grew into manhood and assumed the leadership for which he had been born. The first hopeful sign after Israel's long rebellion and defeat was that they had a sense of need. They began to want God. They "lamented after Jehovah." —[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**Keep Watching and Praying** - (Mt 26:41) - Look over the steps in David's fall. You will find the steps downward in rapid succession. First, he was idle (2 Samuel 11:1-2). It was the time for a king to go to war, but he was not there. He remained in Jerusalem in the place of temptation. At evening time he arose from his bed and walked on the roof of his house. He was in that idle, listless mood that opens one to temptation. He saw the beautiful Bathsheba and he wanted her. His first sin was in the fact that he saw. Don't look on evil. Ask God to keep your eyes. Refuse the admission of sin into your mind. If David had nipped the temptation in the bud he would have saved himself a world of agony and awful sin. Instead of driving it out of his mind, he cherished it. Next, "David sent someone to find out about her" (2 Samuel 11:3). He makes inquiry about this woman and then he took her (2 Samuel 11:4). He brings her to his house. He forgets what is due to the faithful soldier whose wife she is. But the next step is far worse—his sin against Uriah, one of the bravest of his soldiers. He must get rid of him. He makes Joab his confidant in sin, his partner in murder. This sin was the more terrible because it was committed by the head of the nation. This man had been signally favored by God. He was no longer a young man. He had passed through many experiences. Then, too, the excellent service of Uriah entitled him to rewards, not death. Why do you suppose this tragic story is given in the Bible? **It bears the character of a beacon, warning the mariner against some of the most perilous rocks that are to be found in the sea of life. Never neglect watching and praying. An hour's sleep left Samson at the mercy of Delilah. Don't fool with one sin even in thought. The door may be opened to a dangerous brood. It doesn't take a whole box of matches to start a fire. One will do it!** (Nu 32:23) —[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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**Begin With Prayer** - When the young Princess Victoria learned early one morning that she had become [Queen of England](#), the first thing she did was to ask the Archbishop of Canterbury to pray for her. The Archbishop and Lord Chamberlain knelt down together and prayed that grace, strength and wisdom might be given to her throughout her reign. Governing is a serious business. Solomon realized its seriousness as a young man, and began his reign with prayer. God appeared to Solomon in a dream early in his reign and asked him to make a choice of anything that he might wish. The young king's wise choice revealed his feeling of inability to do all that was put upon him. What was his request of the Lord? God gave him the wisdom for which he asked. What is God's promise to us (James 1:5)? "Ask for whatever you want me to give you" (1 Kings 3:5). This is the high privilege of each one of us. Each of our lives tell what we have asked for. What is your choice?—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

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A comment by Robert A. Cook, president of The King's College in New York, renewed my appreciation for the privilege of prayer. Speaking at the Moody Bible Institute, Cook said that the day before, he had been at a gathering in Washington and had talked with Vice President George Bush. Two hours later he spoke briefly with President Ronald Reagan. Then smiling broadly, Cook told us, "But that's nothing! Today I talked with God!" —[Our Daily Bread](#)

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**Facing Danger With Prayer** (2 Kings 19:1-19) O Lord our God, I pray, save us . . . that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the Lord God. —2 Kings 19:19 -- Trouble lay ahead for King Hezekiah of Judah. He had just received a menacing letter from Assyria's King Sennacherib. This marauding monarch had conquered many cities, and Jerusalem was next on his list. In his letter, Sennacherib mocked the God of Israel and threatened to destroy the holy city. We read in 2 Kings 19 that Hezekiah went immediately up to the temple and spread the letter before the Lord. He acknowledged Him as the One who created all things (2Ki 19:15). He told Him that Sennacherib had reproached the living God (2Ki 19:16). Finally, He pleaded with God to deliver Judah so that all the nations of the world would know that He alone is God (2Ki 19:19). Hezekiah's actions said, in effect, "Look, God! Read

this! I need your help. Your honor is at stake!" What an example of faith in a real God who is present and aware of our needs! Like Hezekiah, we at times face imminent danger from someone who wants to harm us. Or it may be some other kind of menacing situation. No matter what we ultimately do, our first response should be to tell God of the danger and praise Him for His greatness. Then we can trust Him for the kind of help that brings Him glory. Facing danger? God honors Hezekiah-style prayers. —J D Brannon

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**Monica's Prayers** - He was born in 354 in a North African town set among the woods near the Mediterranean. His father was a pagan, but his mother, Monica, was of devout Christian stock. Augustine was an undisciplined child, idle and truant despite frequent beatings. He loved sports and pranks and soon discovered a host of adolescent pleasures. When he was 15 his father saw him in the public baths and realized his son was a man. He was. He later wished that "the high tides of my youth had spent their foam upon the shore of marriage." Augustine was also brilliant, and he soon moved to Carthage to further both his studies and his fun. Monica warned him against fornication, but "I ran headlong with blindness." At about 18 he found himself the father of a son. At the same time he joined a cult. Years passed, and Monica, praying ceaselessly, heard that Augustine was planning to leave Africa for Rome. She begged him not to go. When he refused, she determined to go with him. Using deception, he left her praying in a chapel and sailed without her; but she took a later boat and intercepted him. They traveled to Milan where she persuaded him to listen to the great Bishop Ambrose. The bishop's razor-sharp sermons penetrated Augustine's head, if not yet his heart. Monica continued praying, confiding her struggles to Ambrose. He told her not to worry: "It isn't possible for the son of such prayers to be lost." One day as Augustine sat in a friend's garden he heard a child singing, "Take up and read!" He opened the Bible near him and read from Romans 13: Don't go to wild parties or get drunk or be vulgar or indecent. ... Let the Lord Jesus Christ be as near to you as the clothes you wear. By the time he finished the sentence, he later said, he was converted. On the eve of Easter, April 24, 387, Augustine and his son Adeodatus were baptized by Ambrose as Monica watched. Her lifetime of prayer was answered, and a church father was born.—[Robert Morgan "On This Day"](#)

**Related Resource:** [Augustine's Conversion](#)

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**How to Lift the Fog** - The promise of today's text (1 John 3:13–24) carries two important conditions—"if our heart condemn us not" (1Jn 3:21), and if "we keep His commandments" (1Jn 3:22). In other words, when we are in the center of God's will and have a clear conscience, the resources of heaven are at our disposal. The following incident vividly illustrates this truth:

The captain of an ocean steamer tells that on one occasion his ship was engulfed in a dense fog off the coast of Newfoundland. It was Wednesday evening and the captain had been on the bridge for 24 hours when he was startled by someone tapping on his shoulder. He turned and saw one of his passengers—[George Mueller](#).

"Captain," said Mueller, "I must be in Quebec on Saturday afternoon."

"That's impossible!" replied the captain. "I'm helpless!"

Mueller suggested, "Let's go down to the chart room and pray."

The captain thought he had a lunatic on board. "Do you know how dense the fog is?" he asked.

"No," came the reply, "my eye is not on the density of the fog, but on the living God who controls every circumstance of my life." Once in the chart room, Mueller got down on his knees and prayed, "O Lord, if it is consistent with Thy will, please remove this fog in 5 minutes. Thou knowest the engagement Thou didst make for me in Quebec for Saturday. I believe it is Thy will." Within a matter of minutes the fog lifted. —[Our Daily Bread](#)

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**The Squeaky Wheel** - "The squeaky wheel gets the oil" is a popular proverb. As a child I rode my bicycle for long distances between home and school, and the squeaky sounds of the wheels drew my attention to the need to lubricate them. In Luke 18, the widow's persistent request to the judge for justice against her adversary made her sound like a "squeaky wheel" until she got the result she needed. Luke explains that Jesus told this story to teach us the need to pray continually and not to give up, even if it appears that the answer to our prayer is delayed (Lk 18:1-5). — Lawrence Darmani

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**Lost Prayers** - Psalm 86:1-17 - The headline read: UNANSWERED PRAYERS: LETTERS TO GOD FOUND DUMPED IN OCEAN. The letters, three hundred in all and sent to a New Jersey minister, had been tossed in the ocean, most of them unopened. The minister was long dead. How the letters came to be floating in the surf off the New Jersey shore is a mystery. The letters were addressed to the minister because he had promised to pray. Some of the letters asked for frivolous things; others were written by anguished spouses, children, or widows. They poured out their hearts to God, asking for help with relatives who were abusing drugs and alcohol, or spouses who were cheating on them. One asked God for a husband and father to love her child. The reporter concluded that all were "unanswered prayers." Not so! If those letter-writers cried out to God, He heard each one of them. Not one honest prayer is lost to His ears. "You know what I long for, Lord," David wrote in the midst of a deep personal crisis, "you hear my every sigh" (Ps 38:9). David understood that we can cast all our cares on the Lord, even if no one else prays for us. He confidently concluded, "I will call to you whenever I'm in trouble, and you will answer me" (Ps 86:7). —Dave H Roper

Jesus hears our faintest cry.

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**The Only Way To Help** - "Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church." (Acts 12:5) - I looked at my watch. To my dismay, it was 1:45 in the afternoon. I had promised my daughter Lisa, who was playing the piano in a competition for college scholarships at 1:30, that I would pray for her. I got busy, though, and forgot all about it. By 1:45 I knew she had already finished. I sat at my desk with a feeling of lingering emptiness. I felt as if I had failed her. I knew that the only possible way I could have assisted Lisa during her competition was to ask God to calm her and help her recall the music she had practiced so long and hard to master. As I contemplated this situation, I was reminded of how important prayer is as a link with those we cannot reach. By talking to the Lord about a friend or loved one's needs, we have a unique opportunity to make a difference in their lives—even though we can't be with them in person. What an amazing concept! No matter what the circumstances of our friends or family members who are away from us, prayer is always an effective way we can support them and be of help. It worked for the people who prayed for Peter (Acts 12:1-25), and it can work for us. —J. David Brannon

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**Prayer, Unanswered** - The following was an unpublished poem of hymn-writer Fanny Crosby, recently discovered by Donald Hustad. The manuscript carried several notations, including the initials "M. S." and the name "H. P. Main." There is also a question, "Is this O.K.?" signed by "I.A.S."—Ira Allan Sankey—and the further notes "O.K." and "This is fine." At the upper right the paper is embossed with the name "HAMILTON." The poem is entitled, "For What His Love Denies."

God does not give me all I ask,  
Nor answer as I pray;  
But, O, my cup is brimming o'er  
With blessings day by day.  
How oft the joy I thought withheld  
Delights my longing eyes,  
And so I thank Him from my heart  
For what His love denies.

Sometimes I miss a treasured link  
In friendship's hallowed chain,  
And yet His smile is my reward  
For every throb of pain.  
I look beyond, where purer joys  
Delight my longing eyes;  
And so I thank Him from my heart  
For what His love denies.

How tenderly He leadeth me  
When earthly hopes are dim;  
And when I falter by the way,  
He bids me lean on Him.  
He lifts my soul above the clouds  
Where friendship never dies;  
And so I thank Him from my heart  
For what His love denies.  
—Fanny Crosby, Jan. 6, 1899

From [Fanny Crosby Speaks Again](#), ed. Dr. Donald P. Hustad

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**The Prayer of Jabez** - 1 Chronicles 4:9, 10.

1. It was a prayer to GOD.
2. It was the prayer of an HONOURABLE MAN.
3. It was an EARNEST prayer. "Oh, that thou wouldest!"
4. It was a prayer for DEFINITE BLESSING. "Bless me indeed."
5. It was a prayer for ENLARGED POSSESSIONS. "Enlarge my coast."
6. It was a prayer for POWER AND GUIDANCE. "That thine hand might be with me."
7. It was a prayer for PROTECTION FROM EVIL. "Keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me."

8. It was a prayer that was ANSWERED. "God granted him that which he requested."

—James Smith

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**Access to God** - Technology is a blessing in so many ways. Need a bit of information about a health problem? All you have to do is access the Internet where you instantaneously get a list of options to guide your search. Need to contact a friend? Just send a text, email, or Facebook post. But technology can also be frustrating at times. The other day I needed to access some information in my bank account and was asked a list of security questions. Unable to recall the exact answers, I was blocked from my own account. Or think of the times when an important conversation is cut off because of a dead cellphone battery, with no way to reconnect until you find a plug to recharge it. All of this makes me delighted with the reality that when I need to access God in prayer, there are no security questions and no batteries required. I love the assurance that John gives when he says, "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (1 John 5:14). God is always accessible, for He never slumbers nor sleeps! (Ps. 121:4). And thanks to His love for us, He is waiting and ready to listen. —[Joe Stowell](#)

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**Unanswered Prayer** - The sacrifice of the wicked is detestable to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is His delight. Proverbs 15:8 - Sometimes prayer is not answered because we are not praying to God as a Father. We have never been saved. Sometimes prayer is not answered because we are not praying in the will of God. We're saying, "My kingdom come. My will be done." Sometimes prayer is not answered because we have unconfessed, unrepented sin in our lives. And sometimes prayer is not answered because we just don't pray. Change these things about your praying, and you'll see a big difference. —[Adrian Rogers](#) (See Topic: [Praying in the Spirit](#))

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**Flowery Prayers** - Don't babble like the idolaters, since they imagine they'll be heard for their many words.- Matthew 6:7 - You do not have to be an amateur Shakespeare in order to pray. You do not have to pray in old English or convoluted terms or poetic meter. You can just talk to God out of your heart, the way a child talks to his father. Suppose when our children were at home, my daughter had come to me and said, "Hail, thou eminent pastor. I welcome thee home from thy sojourn. Wouldest thou grant to thy child that I may tread to the apothecary and procure some cosmetics to adorn my face?" How absurd! We just speak to God out of our hearts—not disrespectfully, but with reverent familiarity.

[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Prayer - The world's greatest wireless connection:**

**Monthly price - \$0**

**Value - Priceless!**

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**Purpose of Prayer** - "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10) - Prayer has one purpose and one purpose only. Its goal is that God's will be done. Prayer is not an exercise where we bend God's will and try to make it fit ours. Too many people have the notion that prayer is how we make impassioned appeals in the hopes of talking God into doing something for us, even if it is something He would not ordinarily want to do. But this is not true. Prayer is seeking the will of God and following it. Prayer is the way of getting God's will done on earth.....When some people hear that the purpose of prayer is the will of God, they may say, "I knew there must be some catch to it. I don't want God's will if I don't get what I want." If you're thinking that way, let me tell you that God wants for you what you would want for yourself if you had enough sense to want it. God's will is best for you. God loves you so much, and He gives all good things to those who walk uprightly in Him. Successful prayer is finding the will of God and getting in on it. You are not hemmed in by the will of God; rather, you are freed up by it. —[Adrian Rogers](#)

It is the Holy Spirit within us who helps us to pray. We pray to the Father, through the Son, and in the Spirit. If we surrender to the Spirit of God and abide in Christ, then His Word abides in us. Therefore, we can pray for whatever we will. That's because strangely and wonderfully, the things we now desire are the same things He desires, because we now have the mind of Christ operating within us. As we pray, we are thinking the thoughts of Christ after Him—loving what He loves, hating what He hates. Our prayer begins to line up in agreement with His will.—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Selective Praying** - God doesn't listen to sinners, but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He listens to him.-John 9:31 - I heard about a little girl who was angry with her mother. Early one night, her mom put her to bed and told her to say her prayers before she went to sleep. The little girl got down on her knees and prayed for her brother, sister, daddy, aunts, uncles, and everybody—"Amen." Then she looked up at her mother and said, "I guess you noticed you weren't in it." That is not the kind of prayer that gets answered. Is there unconfessed sin in your life right now? It may be big; it may be small. But if so, don't be surprised if God is not hearing your prayer. He loves the prayers of His obedient followers.—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**The Right Motive** - A Sunday school teacher asked a little girl if she said her prayers every night. "No, not every night," declared the child. "Cause some nights I don't want anything!" (James 4:2-3)

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**Urgent Impression** - Archibald Gracie relished his swim on April 14, 1912. The ship's pool was a "six-foot tank of salt water, heated to a refreshing temperature. In no swimming bath had I ever enjoyed such pleasure before." But his account went on to say, "How near it was to being my last plunge. Before dawn of another day I would be swimming for my life in mid-ocean in a temperature of 28 degrees!" After his swim that Sunday night aboard ship, Colonel Archibald Gracie retired to his cabin and fell asleep, only to be awakened by "a sudden shock and noise." Dressing quickly, he ascended to the deck and learned the ship had collided with an iceberg. During the same moments in New York, his wife's sleep was also disturbed. Seized by sudden anxiety, she sank to her knees holding her prayerbook, "which by chance opened to the prayer 'For Those At Sea.' " She prayed earnestly until about 5 A.M. when the burden lifted. She rested quietly until eight when her sister "came softly to the door, newspaper in hand, to gently break the tragic news that the Titanic had sunk." What had happened meantime to her husband? I was in a whirlpool, swirling round and round, as I still tried to cling to the railing as the ship plunged to the depths below. Down, down, I went: it seemed a great distance ... (Ascending back to the surface) I could see no Titanic. She had entirely disappeared beneath the surface of the ocean without a sign of any wave. A thin light-gray smoky vapor hung like a pall a few feet above the sea. There arose the most horrible sounds ever heard by mortal man, the agonizing cries of death from over a thousand throats ... Col. Archibald Gracie later wrote: I know of no recorded instance of Providential deliverance, he wrote, more directly attributable to ... prayer.—[Archibald Gracie, Titanic: A Survivor's Story](#)

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During a visit with our daughter's family, my husband went into the bedroom to pray. Our curious 3-year-old granddaughter followed him and came out saying, "Papa's in there praying, and there isn't any food!" - Norma Goodrich

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**Go Through Your "Congressman"** - Pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.- Matthew 6:6 - Some people think you have to pray through a priest or a saint. They illustrate this by using the example of talking to the president. They say you would not go directly to the president; you would go through your senator or congressman, who would go to the president for you. They surmise from this scenario that you can't go directly to God but must approach Him by way of a go-between. Well, I'm not going to my congressman if the president is my daddy. You can go directly to God your Father if you are born again by faith in the Lord Jesus.—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**A Mother's Prayer** - Before her death, Morrow Coffey Graham wrote a little book about her experiences as the mother of the man who would preach the Gospel to more people than any other in history.

My husband and I established a family altar the day we were married and we carried that through. In the breakfast room I always kept a Scripture calendar with a verse for the day. Each morning we read that, too, and prayed to the Lord. As we gathered at the breakfast table, everyone would bow his head and fold his hands as my husband asked the blessing. Often as I packed the children's school lunches, I could hear my husband talking to the children. He helped them memorize literally hundreds of Bible verses. I looked forward to our evenings together as a family. Everyone gathered in the family room. We did this right after the dinner dishes were put away. It was the most important thing in our life, this time of Bible reading and prayer. I know that today Billy recalls those instructional periods as among the most important in his life, helping him to become saturated with the Bible. Since my children have married and gone their separate ways, and since my husband's death, I have found myself with more time to devote to prayer. I pray without ceasing for Billy Frank.

In the early days of Billy's ministry, his mother accompanied him on a trip. Seeing his busy schedule, the throngs of people, and the stresses he encountered, she grew alarmed. But the Lord gave her Jeremiah 23:23, and it became her theme-verse in praying for him: " 'Am I a God near at hand,' says the Lord, 'And not a God afar off?' " I knew God had a long arm; He was wholly trustworthy. I have always had great confidence in the Lord's watchcare over Billy, and I have not feared, therefore, for his life.

—[They Call Me Mother Graham \(online - see page 28\)](#)

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**Presumptuous Sins** - Keep Your servant from willful sins; do not let them rule over me.-Psalm 19:13- Don't you get tired of coming back to God with the same old sins to confess, begging for mercy for this one repetitive transgression? Why do you keep having to do this? It's probably because you have understood the phrase "Forgive us our debts" but not the phrase "Do not bring us into temptation." The first part is the pardon of the Lord's Prayer. The second is the protection of it. The reason we have to come back to God so many times asking forgiveness is that we have not put on His protection that would keep us from falling so repeatedly.

**Leaning on Jesus in Prayer** - Whatever you ask in My name, I will do it so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.—John 14:13 While we know from His Word that certain things are the will of God, in other matters we must seek His will in prayer. Should you move to another city to take that new job? Should you sell your home? Which college should you go to? Who should you marry? But if we seek the will of God in all matters, we will come to know the will of God. How? Jesus said, "If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you" (John 15:7). When we lean upon Jesus moment by moment, He will show us what to pray and how to pray—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**My Life, My Plant** - They were filled and their heart was exalted; therefore they forgot Me. --Hosea 13:6 (Hosea 11:1-12) Guests probably wonder why I keep a scraggly fern in my living room. I've gotten so used to its unsightliness that I seldom think to explain. The plant symbolizes a friendship that has become fragile, and I keep it in a prominent place as a reminder to pray for my friend, which I do whenever I water it. Its dried leaves make it obvious that I don't water it often enough, which also means that I don't pray often enough for my friend. My fern is drying up because I don't water it until it wilts, and I carry that attitude along with me into my spiritual life. As long as my life is not in crisis, I figure that prayer can wait a while. But I'm wrong. When God's blessings make me think I don't need Him, I am more needy than ever. The book of Hosea summarizes God's relationship with His chosen nation in words that parallel my own spiritual experience. God blesses, I grow; God satisfies, I take credit; God withholds His blessing, I realize my neediness; God reveals my sin, I repent; God forgives, I renew my devotion. I've learned from my plant that I must pray even when I don't see the need. I need God just as much when I'm being blessed as when I am in crisis. —Julie Ackerman Link

It's easy to forget to talk to God  
When everything is going our own way;  
But that's the time we really need Him most,  
Lest we depart from Him and go astray.  
—Hess

There is never a day when you don't need to pray

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**Giving in the Spirit** - He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will He pay him again. (Proverbs 19:17) - When the British preacher [C H Spurgeon](#) went to Bristol for the purpose of ministering there, he hoped to collect 300 [pounds](#) to support his work with homeless children in London. At the end of the week of meetings, many people had been blessed, and his financial goal had been reached. That night as he bowed in prayer, Spurgeon seemed to hear a voice saying, "Give that money to [George Mueller](#)." "Oh no, Lord," answered the minister, "I need it for my own dear orphans." Yet he couldn't shake the idea that God wanted him to part with it. Only when he said, "Yes, Lord, I will," could he find rest. Early the next morning he made his way to Mueller's orphanage and found that great man of prayer on his knees. The famous preacher placed his hand on his shoulder and said, "George, God has told me to give you this 300 pounds I've collected." "My dear brother," said Mueller, "I've just been asking Him for exactly that amount." The two servants of the Lord then wept and rejoiced together. When Spurgeon returned to London, he found a letter on his desk containing 300 [guineas](#). "There," he cried with joy, "the Lord has returned my 300 pounds with 300 [shillings](#) interest!"

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**God's Four Answers** - In talking with people who are concerned because God doesn't seem to be answering their prayers, Pastor [Bill Hybels](#) uses a little outline he borrowed from a pastor friend of his:

- If the request is wrong, God says: No
- If the timing is wrong, God says: Slow
- If you are wrong, God says: Grow
- But if the request is right, the timing is right, and you are right, God says: Go!

[Bill Hybels, Too Busy Not To Pray](#)

**Bill Hybels** - My dad was a very busy man who traveled all over the world. In order to get him at work, you had to go through a switchboard unless you knew the private number that rang a phone right on his desk. He gave the number to a few select business partners, but all of his children had it. We knew we could call him any time on that direct line. I have the same thing. The church has provided me with a private line. It rings right on my desk. A few board members and elders have it for emergency purposes. My kids have that number. To maximize time, I have a car phone. Only a few people have that number, but my kids have it. They can call me any time, for anything. You know what? No voices sound sweeter to me than my kids' voices. When one of them says, "Hi, Dad," it won't matter what I'm juggling, because they are an absolute priority. No one's voice sounds sweeter to God than your voice. "Hello,

Father." There's nothing going on in the cosmos that would keep Him from directing His full attention to your conversation or your request.

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**Humility** - Andrew Carnegie was once discussing the matter of God and prayer. Carnegie asked his friend, "Why should I pray? Tell me, why do I need it? Name one thing that God could give me that I don't already have." His friend replied, "He might give you humility." - R. Earl Allen, *Jesus Loves Me*.

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**The Will of God** - When You open Your hand, they are satisfied with good things.- Psalm 104:28 -When some people hear that the purpose of prayer is the will of God, they may say, "I knew there must be some catch to it. I don't want God's will if I don't get what I want." If you're thinking that way, let me tell you that God wants for you what you would want for yourself if you had enough sense to want it. God's will is best for you. God loves you so much, and He gives all good things to those who walk uprightly in Him. Successful prayer is finding the will of God and getting in on it. You are not hemmed in by the will of God; rather, you are freed up by it.—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Eight Fold Pattern of Prayer** - [F B Meyer](#) (1847-1929) was one of the most famous preachers in England in the twentieth century. He kept an incredible preaching schedule at conferences, both in England and in the United States, wrote dozens of books, traveled all over the world, served as president of almost every organization he was ever associated with, and pastored large churches throughout his ministry including churches in York, Leicester, and London.

At the center of his life—and that which gave spiritual power to him—was an eight-fold pattern of prayer which he recommended to others and which he practiced himself.

1. Approach to God with reverence
2. Adoration
3. Confession
4. The child's uplook into the Father's face
5. Communion
6. Forecast of future hours, reception of grace sufficient for the coming day
7. Pleading of promises for objects and especially guidance
8. Intercessions, not only for dear ones but for missionaries, wanderers, those stricken, those fallen, and for the speedy advent of the Kingdom of our Lord

[W. Y. Fullerton, [No Ordinary Man: F. B. Meyer](#). Belfast: Ambassador, 1993, p. 165]

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**Catch as Catch Can** - Bill Watkins, founder of Watkins Motor Lines in Lakeland, Florida, was stewing one evening over a particularly tough problem in his trucking business. His sister asked him if he had prayed about the matter.

"Yes, of course" he responded, "Whenever I can find time."

"You mean 'catch as catch can,' don't you?" she asked.

Feeling the insinuation of her statement, he responded quickly: "The Lord can hear me just as well when I'm running."

Her reply: "Yes, but can *you* hear him?"

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**One Thing Missing from Church** - [Pastor Jim Cymbala](#) of the [Brooklyn Tabernacle](#) says the key to building a church that honors God—prayer—is the one thing most often missing in the church today. He writes: "Am I the only one who gets embarrassed when religious leaders in America talk about having prayer in public schools? We don't have even that much prayer in many churches! Out of humility, you would think we would keep quiet on that particular subject until we practice what we preach in our own congregations." - Jim Cymbala, [Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire](#). Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997, p. 72

**Related Resource:** Jim Cymbala's sermon at the praise gathering - [My House Shall be Called a House of Prayer](#)

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In [Screwtape Letters](#), [C. S. Lewis](#) reveals one of Satan's ploys concerning prayer. Lewis calls it the "heads I win, tails you lose" argument. He explains, "If the thing he prays for doesn't happen, then that is one more proof that petitionary prayers don't work; if it does happen, he will, of course, be able to see some of the physical causes which led up to it, and 'therefore it would have happened anyway,' and thus a granted prayer becomes just as good a proof as a denied one that prayers are ineffective."

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**Three Levels of Prayer** - One of the most famous missionaries in Christian history was [J. Hudson Taylor](#) (1832-1905), English missionary to China, who founded the China Inland Mission. Taylor said that through his experience he learned of three levels of praying:

- First: "O, God, let me do your work."
- Second: "O, God, let me help you do your work."
- Third: "O, God, do your work through me."

[Bruce Mclver, Riding the Wind of God](#)

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**Are You Dabbling in Prayer?** - In a discussion of the disciples' request to Jesus, "Jesus teach us to pray" (Lk 11:1), David Read writes: "Have you ever thought how odd it was for men who have been taught to pray at their mother's knee, who had learned and repeated the prayers of the synagogue, who almost certainly prayed three times a day without fail, to say to Jesus, 'Teach us to pray'? It makes us feel that prayer as Christ knew it and practiced it and taught it must be something vaster than we know, a spiritual ingredient of life that we have hardly begun to explore. So instead of thinking that we've really tried it and found it useless, we might well ask if we've done more than dabble with it up to now." - David H. C. Read, *Overheard*.

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As British preacher [David Martyn Lloyd-Jones](#) (1899-1981) lay dying, one of his last messages to his family was: "Don't pray for healing. Don't try to hold me back from the glory."

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"For prayer is, first and foremost, not seeking to impose our will on God, but seeking to get our wills in line with his." - David H. C. Read. *Holy Common Sense*.

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**Pray and Work** - Famous evangelist [Dwight L Moody](#) (1837-1899) was traveling down the Mississippi on a river boat at the height of his career when the boat caught on fire. Moody joined the bucket brigade as they passed the water up to the point of the fire. One of the passengers, paralyzed by his fear, shouted at Moody: "Don't waste your time carrying water; get down on your knees and pray." Moody responded, "I can pray a lot more enthusiastically if I carry the water and pray at the same time." Prayer was never meant to be a substitute for action; rather, prayer was meant to be a stimulus to action. - [R. Earl Allen, Jesus Loves Me](#)

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**God's Answers** - God answers prayer, but not always in the same way.

"If the request is wrong, God says, 'No.'

If the timing is wrong, God says, 'Slow.'

If you are wrong, God says, 'Grow.'

But if the request is right,

The timing is right,

And you are right,

God says, 'Go.'"

- [Minette Drumwright, The Life that Prays](#)

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From the gravestone of an English actor, Robert Donat, we find this unique insight into the value of un-answered prayer.

I asked God for strength that I might achieve;  
I was made weak—that I might learn humbly to obey.

I asked for health that I might do greater things;  
I was given infirmity—That I might do better things.

I asked for riches that I might be happy;  
I was given poverty—That I might be wise.

I asked for power; that I might have praise of men;  
I was given weakness—That I might feel the need of God.

I asked for all things that I might enjoy life;  
I was given life—That I might enjoy all things.

I got nothing that I asked for—But everything I had hoped for.  
Almost despite myself  
My unspoken prayers were answered.  
I am, among all men, most richly blessed.  
R. L. Middleton, [The Goodness of God](#). Nashville: Broadman

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**Room for Prayer** - Room 1: the room in which we affirm the presence of God. Room 2: the room in which we praise, thank, and adore God. Room 3: The room of confession, forgiveness and unloading. Room 4: the room set aside for affirmation and reception. Room 5: the place for purified desire and sincere petition. Room 6: The room of intercession for others. Room 7: The big room at the top of the house set aside for meditation. - Leslie D. Weatherhead in [A Private House of Prayer](#).

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**God's Silence** - When I pray and there is a silence from God, I still pray through my sin checklist. Sometimes God's silences are due to sin in my life. If there is unconfessed sin in my life, I confess it and make it right. If, after that, there is still a silence with God, I get ready for a new experience with God that I have never known before. Sometimes God is silent as He prepares to bring you into a deeper understanding of Himself. Whenever a silence comes, continue doing the last thing God told you and watch and wait for a fresh encounter with Him. - [Henry T. Blackaby and Claude V. King, [Experiencing God](#).

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**Stimulating Prayer in Your Church** - Glen Martin and Gary McIntosh in [The Issachar Factor](#), suggest several steps for increasing prayer in the church.

1. Encourage significant staff and leadership prayer
2. Organize prayer partners
3. Integrate prayer into your small groups
4. Include prayer as an agenda item
5. Conduct prayer seminars
6. Hold leadership prayer retreats
7. Offer early morning prayer times
8. Develop prayer opportunities in Sunday School
9. Encourage leadership to study prayer

[Glen Martin & Gary McIntosh, [The Issachar Factor](#). Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993, pp. 31-34]

"If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." - 2Chronicles 7:13-14

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**Spirit Led Prayer** - If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done.- John 15:7 - It is the Holy Spirit within us who helps us to pray. We pray to the Father, through the Son, and in the Spirit. If we surrender to the Spirit of God and abide in Christ, then His Word abides in us. Therefore, we can pray for whatever we will (cp 1Jn 5:14, 15). That's because strangely and wonderfully, the things we now desire are the same things He desires, because we now have the mind of Christ operating within us (cp Ps 37:4). As we pray, we are thinking the thoughts of Christ after Him—loving what He loves, hating what He hates. Our prayer begins to line up in agreement with His will.—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Prayer Failure** - If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer. Matthew 21:22. Many Christians would confess that the major failure in their life is not learning to pray well. That's because there is no sin in life that proper prayer could not help you avoid. There is no need in life that proper prayer could not supply. Nothing lies outside the reach of prayer except that which lies outside the will of God. What fools we are if we do not learn to pray! So there is not a more important subject in all the world for a Christian—not only to learn how to pray, but how to pray with power. Prayer can do anything God can do, and God can do anything! —[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Pray with Praise** - Give the Lord the glory due His name; worship the Lord in the splendor of His holiness.- Psalm 29:2 Notice that the Lord's Prayer both begins and ends with praise. "Our Father in heaven, Your name be honored as holy," and, "Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever." All powerful prayer is packed with praise. Why? Because praise is an expression of faith. Prayer is faith turned inside out. Faith is what causes our prayers to be answered. When we pray in the will of God with clean

hearts, we can expect God to answer us. And if we have difficulty with our praying, it may be because we are not praising Him enough.—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**The Secret of the Bent Knee** - Have you ever watched a bird sleeping on its perch and never falling off? How does it manage to do this? The secret is the tendons of the bird's legs. They are so constructed that when the leg is bent at the knee, the claws contract and grip like a steel trap. The claws refuse to let go until the knees are unbent again. The bended knee gives the bird the ability to hold on to his perch so tightly. From sleeping birds we can learn the secret of holding things which are most precious to us—honest, purity, thoughtfulness, honor, character. That secret is the knee bent in prayer, seeking to get a firmer grip on those values which make life worth living. When we hold firmly to God in prayer, we can rest assured he will hold tightly to us. See: Deuteronomy 4:29-31; Psalms 34:4-11; 105:3-5 - 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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**Pray to Begin the Day** - The Lord is faithful; He will strengthen and guard you from the evil one.- 2 Thessalonians 3:3 - Many of us jump out of bed in the morning feeling pretty good. We do not sense any real need for prayer. The sun is shining brightly. We have our breakfast, drink our coffee, and sail out of the house into the day. But at some point the unexpected happens. We have a head-on collision with Satan, and we fall. He knows how to ensnare us. We pray, "God, I'm so sorry! Please forgive me." However, this is not a prayer to be prayed at the end of the day but at the beginning. This prayer is not the latch that closes the door at night. It is the key that opens the door in the morning.—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**He Prayed for You** - I pray not only for these, but also for those who believe in Me through their message.-John 17:20 You may say, "Sure, Peter was prayed for, and James and Matthew and the rest of them. But Jesus never prayed for me like that." Friend, I ask you to read again the verse from Jesus' high priestly prayer that appears at the top of this page—the same prayer in which He prayed that His disciples would be kept safe eternally in the arms of their heavenly Father. Just write your name down, because He might as well have put your name there. His prayer for your security is a prayer that transcends the centuries with a delayed detonation. Jesus has prayed for you to live with Him forever. —[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Listening Prayer** - Samuel responded, "Speak, for Your servant is listening." -1 Samuel 3:10. -Do you have a quiet time? If God speaks with a quiet voice, you need to have a quiet time and place to hear it. If you're around a lot of furor and hubbub and noise, and somebody is whispering, you're not going to hear it. That's the reason why you need to have a quiet time, so that you can pray, "Lord, what is it You really want me to do?" Our prayer needs to be listening as well as talking. Have you had a conversation with someone who does all the talking? Sometimes our prayer is, "Listen, Lord, Your servant is speaking," not "Speak, Lord, Your servant is listening."—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail.- Luke 22:32 - Did the Lord Jesus ever pray a prayer that was not answered? Of course not! That's because He always prayed to do the will of the Father. He always prayed in faith. Sin never inhibited His prayer. Every prayer that He prayed was answered. So just as He prayed for the apostle Peter, whom Jesus said the devil had asked to "sift like wheat" (Luke 22:31), Jesus prays that the Father would keep you. This was the same Peter who cursed and denied Christ yet went on to become the flaming apostle of Pentecost. That's because Jesus prayed for him, just as He prays for you—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Fulton Street Revival** - The mood of America was grim during the mid-1850's. The country was teetering on the brink of civil war, torn by angry voices and impassioned opinions. A depression had halted railroad construction and factory output. Banks were failing; unemployment soared. Spiritual lethargy permeated the land. In New York City [Jeremiah C. Lanphier](#) ([Revival Born in a Prayer Meeting](#)), a layman, accepted the call of the North Reformed Dutch Church to a full-time program of evangelism. He visited door-to-door, placed posters, and prayed. But the work languished and Lanphier grew discouraged. As autumn fell over the city, Lanphier decided to try noontime prayer meetings, thinking that businessmen might attend during their lunch hours. He announced the first one for September 23, 1857, at the Old Dutch Church on Fulton Street. When the hour came, Lanphier found himself alone. He sat and waited. Finally, one man showed up, then a few others. But the next week, 20 came. The third week, 40. Someone suggested the meetings occur daily, and within months the building was overflowing. The revival spread to other cities. Offices and stores closed for prayer at noon. Newspapers spread the story, even telegraph companies set aside certain hours during which businessmen could wire one another with news of the revival. In all these cities, prayer services began at noon and ended at one. People could come and go as they pleased. The service opened with a hymn, followed by the sharing of testimonies and prayer requests. A time limit of five minutes per speaker was enforced by a small bell, when anyone exceeded the limit. Virtually no great preachers or famous Christians were used. It was primarily a lay movement, led by the gentle moving of God's Spirit. The revival—sometimes called "[The Third Great Awakening](#)"—lasted nearly two years, and between 500,000 and 1,000,000 people were said to have been converted. Out of it came the largest outlay of money for philanthropic and Christian causes America had yet experienced.—[Robert Morgan "On This Day"](#)

## Addendum:

"The Fulton Street prayer meetings, held during the noon hour for the past 103 years, have been shut down." This simple item reported in the New York Times (circa 1960) doubtless went unnoticed by most readers. Many would wonder if there is any real significance in the discontinuance of a single prayer meeting. God's children seem to have lost their confidence in the power of prayer.

## Related Resource:

- [The Layman's Prayer Revival](#)
- [Revival Born of a Prayer Meeting](#)

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**How to Pray** - Therefore, you should pray like this.- Matthew 6:9 - In Matthew 6, our Lord showed us how to pray. Notice that He didn't say, "Pray this prayer." He said, "Pray like this." This is not a prayer to be repeated mindlessly. Suppose we got together and you said to me, "Okay, say a conversation." That would be silly. Like conversation, prayer is not merely repeating words. It is talking with God. I confess there may be times when the words of this prayer fit my need perfectly. I may then want to repeat word-for-word what our Lord taught us. But I am not just mouthing words. I am praying out of my heart, using His words.—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Praying for "Daily Bread"** - Give us today our daily bread.- Matthew 6:11 - This verse does not imply that all we can ask for is bread. We have many needs. That's the reason I was careful to point out to you that this is not a prayer to be mechanically repeated. It is a model prayer. If you need bread, ask God for bread. If you need a job, ask God for a job. If you need a house, ask God for a house. Let the Holy Spirit show you what you need to ask for, then pray in the Spirit that your needs will be met. God wants to meet your needs, but you cheat yourself by failing to pray. "You do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:2).—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Prayer That Gets to Heaven** - No one knows the concerns of God except the Spirit of God.-1 Corinthians 2:11. One of the sweetest lessons I ever learned about prayer is this: the prayer that gets to heaven is the prayer that starts in heaven. Our job is just to close the circuit. God lays something on our hearts to pray for, we pray for it, and it goes right back to heaven. Prayer is the Holy Spirit finding a desire in the heart of the Father, putting that desire into our hearts, then sending it back to heaven in the power of the cross. "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." We are to seek the will of God in all of our prayer, because that is the whole reason for doing it.—[Adrian Rogers](#)

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**Spare Tire Prayer** - Some Christians seem to look upon God as a kind of spare tire. A spare tire is forgotten for months at a time until suddenly we have a flat on the road. Then we want the spare tire to be in good condition, ready for use. Just so, many forget God during all the times when things go well, then in an emergency they want God to be on hand, immediately ready to hear and answer their cry of distress. Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?

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**Is It Time To Pray?** - When people face trials, they often turn to prayer only as a last resort. I knew a man who was fighting a valiant battle with cancer. As people observed the gradual effect on his body and lifestyle, one person said, "Well, they've tried everything else. I guess it's time to begin praying." Another man was going through an extremely difficult time at work. It was a crisis of major proportions that had ominous implications for him and for the future of his company. He just couldn't resolve it. Finally he said, "I've tried everything I know to get through this situation and nothing has worked. It's time to start praying." In both of these instances, prayer was seen as a last-ditch effort to resolve the problem. Only after all other options were eliminated did the person decide to pray. It was a desperate "grasping at straws." Instead of prayer being a last resort, it should be one of the first things we do. The Lord answers prayer, and He wants us to come to Him continually with all of our needs (1Thessalonians 5:17). The Bible tells us to "be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer . . . let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6). So don't wait. It's always time to pray. —David C. Egner

Any hour when helping others  
Or when bearing heavy care  
Is the time to call our Father—  
It's the proper time for prayer.  
—Zimmerman

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**Pressuring God** - Under General George Patton's command in World War II, the Third Army had been driving back the Nazis until

fog and rain forced the troops to stop. Patton telephoned a chaplain to ask, "Do you have a good prayer for weather?" Immediately the chaplain complied with the general's request. He wrote a prayer, which Patton ordered to be printed and distributed to the 250,000 soldiers under his command, directing them to pray for clear weather. The Scriptures teach us that God wants us to bring our requests to Him, and we can be confident that He cares and will answer (Philippians 4:6;1John 5:14,15). But He is never obligated to answer in the way we want or just because many people are praying. When the Son of God was agonizing in Gethsemane, He made His request in humble submission to His Father by saying, "Your will be done" (Matthew 26:42). That Gethsemane principle ought to govern all our praying. The Father's will is always infused with infinite love and wisdom. So instead of trying to pressure God because we think He's obligated to us, we as trustful children gladly commit to Him our desires. Whatever He grants will prove in the end to be the best of blessings. —Vernon C Grounds

So lift up your heart to the heavens;  
There's a loving and kind Father there  
Who offers release and comfort and peace  
In the silent communion of prayer.  
—Anon.

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**Holy Fools** (Genesis 12:1-5) - If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes. —(Mark 9:23) - When God spoke to Abram, he obeyed at once, departing for an unknown land based only on a promise. Childless, he trusted God to make of him "a great nation" (Gen. 12:2). God often does His work through "holy fools"—dreamers who strike out in ridiculous faith. Yet I tend to approach my decisions with calculation and restraint. My church in Chicago once scheduled an all-night vigil of prayer during a major crisis. At length we discussed the practicality of the event before finally putting it on the calendar. The poorest members of the congregation, a group of senior citizens from a housing project, responded the most enthusiastically. I wondered how many of their prayers had gone unanswered over the years, yet they showed a childlike trust in the power of prayer. "How long do you want to stay—an hour or two?" we asked, thinking of van shuttles. "Oh, we'll stay all night," they replied. One woman in her 90s explained, "We can pray. We got time, and we got faith. Some of us don't sleep much anyway. We can pray all night if needs be." And so they did. Meanwhile, a bunch of yuppies in a downtown church learned an important lesson: Faith often appears where least expected and falters where it ought to thrive. — [Philip Yancey](#)

Faith looks across the storm—it does not doubt  
Or stop to look at clouds and things without.  
Faith does not question why when all His ways  
Are hard to understand, but trusts and prays.  
—Anon.

Prayer is the voice of faith.

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**Pray Or Act?** - Having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. —Acts 13:3 - A missionary comes to your church and says that he needs some short-term help. Do you pray or do you act? The youth pastor says your church needs some new musical instruments for the youth ministry. Do you pray or do you act? A mission needs help in a soup kitchen. Do you pray or do you act? Prayer is one of the most powerful tools we have at our disposal. It allows us to speak to the Lord and to petition Him directly for guidance and help. But sometimes we can be the answer to our own prayer. Those are the times when we should pray and act. Maybe that missionary's request can be answered by your willingness to go. Perhaps you can donate a musical instrument. Are you the person God is leading to help in that soup kitchen? In the first century, the good news of Christ was spread by people going out and taking action. That's why their story is told in a book called The Acts of the Apostles, not The Prayers of the Apostles. We should never downplay prayer, for it is something God commanded us to do. But let's realize that sometimes we need to back up our prayers with action. —Dave Brannon

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In his book FOLK PSALMS OF FAITH, Ray Stedman tells of an experience H. A. Ironside had in a crowded restaurant. Just as Ironside was about to begin his meal, a man approached and asked if he could join him. Ironside invited him to have a seat. Then, as was his custom, Ironside bowed his head in prayer. When he opened his eyes, the other man asked, "Do you have a headache?" Ironside replied, "No, I don't." The other man asked, "Well, is there something wrong with your food?" Ironside replied, "No, I was simply thanking God as I always do before I eat." The man said, "Oh, you're one of those, are you? Well, I want you to know I never give thanks. I earn my money by the sweat of my brow and I don't have to give thanks to anybody when I eat. I just start right in!" Ironside said, "Yes, you're just like my dog. That's what he does too!" (Ray Stedman, Folk Psalms of Faith)

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**Fifty Thousand Answers to Prayer** - [George Mueller](#), born into a German tax collector's family, was often in trouble. He learned early to steal and gamble and drink. As a teenager he learned how to stay in expensive hotels, then sneak out without paying the



bill. But at length he was caught and jailed. Prison did him little good, for upon release he continued his crime spree until, on a Saturday night in 1825, he met Jesus Christ. Mueller married and settled down in Bristol, England, growing daily in faith and developing a burden for the homeless children running wild and ragged through the streets. At a public meeting in Bristol on December 9, 1835, he presented a plan for an orphanage. Several contributions came in. Mueller rented Number 6 Wilson Street, and on April 11, 1836 the doors of the orphanage opened. Twenty-six children were immediately taken in. A second house soon opened, then a third. From the beginning Mueller refused to ask for funds or even to speak of the ministry's financial needs. He believed in praying earnestly and trusting the Lord to provide. And the Lord did provide, though sometimes at the last moment. The best-known story involves a morning when the plates and bowls and cups were set on the tables, but there was no food or milk. The children sat waiting for breakfast while Mueller led in prayer for their daily bread. A knock sounded at the door. It was the baker. "Mr. Mueller," he said, "I couldn't sleep last night. Somehow I felt you didn't have bread for breakfast, so I got up at 2 A.M. and baked some fresh bread." A second knock sounded. The milkman had broken down right in front of the orphanage, and he wanted to give the children his milk so he could empty his wagon and repair it. Such stories became the norm for Mueller's work. During the course of his 93 years, Mueller housed more than 10,000 orphans, "prayed in" millions of dollars, traveled to scores of countries preaching the gospel, and recorded 50,000 answers to prayer.—[Robert Morgan "On This Day"](#)

#### Related Resource:

- [George Mueller's Strategy for Showing God](#)
- [Biography Resources on George Mueller's Incredible Life and Faith and Prayer](#)
- [Answers to Prayer by George Mueller](#)

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In a sermon at Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles, Gary Wilburn said: "In 1636, amid the darkness of the Thirty Years' War, a German pastor, Martin Rinkart, is said to have buried five thousand of his parishioners in one year, and average of fifteen a day. His parish was ravaged by war, death, and economic disaster. In the heart of that darkness, with the cries of fear outside his window, he sat down and wrote this table grace for his children:

'Now thank we all our God  
With heart and hands and voices  
Who wondrous things had done  
In whom His world rejoices.

Who, from our mother's arms,  
Hath led us on our way  
With countless gifts of love  
And still is ours today

Here was a man who knew thanksgiving comes from love of God, not from outward circumstances. (Don Maddox)

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**Moody's Barroom Meeting** - "Effectual, fervent prayer....availeth much." (James 5:16) - The power of prayer is most effectively illustrated in the following story concerning [D.L. Moody \(full biography\)](#). Entering a tavern in order to ask the bartender if his two little girls might attend his Sunday school, he was told that an infidel club met there every Thursday night, and that the owner of the bar was in no mood to offend them. The tactful soul winner refused to retreat, but looking into the face of the father he pleaded with him earnestly in behalf of his youngsters. Finally the man's heart was touched and he said, "I'll tell you what I'll do, parson; if you'll come down here Thursday night and meet the boys in a joint discussion, and you win, you shall have the children; but if not, it is all off." "Agreed," said Moody. Immediately he looked up a crippled newsboy who really knew how to pray and said to him, "Tommy, I need you next Thursday night." When the hour of the meeting arrived, Tommy and the evangelist entered the saloon. It was full of men sitting on whiskey barrels, beer kegs, and even on the counter — all eagerly awaiting the coming debate. Moody began by saying, "Gentlemen, it is our custom to open our meetings with prayer. Tommy, jump up on that barrel and pray!" Tommy turned his little face toward Heaven, and how he did beseech the Lord for the souls of all present. As the tears began to roll down the little fellow's cheeks, the more tenderhearted of the men beat a retreat. Finally even the hardened sinners, subdued by the pathos and spiritual power of the occasion, also slowly retired until there was no one left except the bartender, Moody, and the praying boy. "That will do, Tommy," exclaimed the evangelist. "Now," he said, turning to the father, "I claim your children for my Sunday school!" "They shall come, but it is a queer way to fight," said the bartender. "It's the way I win many a battle," replied Moody. He had instructed the boy not to cease until he had prayed all the men out of the tavern! Such a combination of faith and fervent prayer "availeth much!"

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**Say "Mercy!"** - You may have played the game when you were a child. You interlace your fingers with someone else's and try to bend the other's hands back until one or the other cries "Mercy!" The winner is the one who gets the other person to

surrender. Sometimes we try to play "Mercy" with God when we pray. We have a request that we desperately want answered in a certain way, so we try to "bend His fingers back" and get Him to give in. When it seems we aren't winning, we try a little harder to convince Him by begging or bargaining. We may even give up grudgingly and say, "Lord, You always win! That's not fair!" God does want honesty of heart. But occasionally in our honesty a demanding spirit comes out. Deep down we know that prayer is not meant to be a contest with God that we try to win. In our wiser moments, we make our requests known to our Lord, surrender them to Him, rely on His grace, and wait for His answers (Philippians 4:6-7). Author Hannah Whitall Smith said, "Be glad and eager to throw yourself unreservedly into His loving arms, and to hand over the reins of government to Him." Instead of praying with grudging resignation, "Lord, You always win," surrender to Him. Say "Mercy!"—Anne Cetas

In Jesus' name we voice our prayers—

The Bible tells us to;

But may we never use that name

To tell God what to do.

—D. De Haan

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**Long Distance Prayer** - Eighteen-year-old [J. Hudson Taylor](#) wandered into his father's library and read a gospel tract. He couldn't shake off its message. Finally, falling to his knees, he accepted Christ as his Savior. Later, his mother, who had been away, returned home. When Hudson told her the good news, she said, "I already know. Ten days ago, the very date on which you tell me you read that tract, I spent the entire afternoon in prayer for you until the Lord assured me that my wayward son had been brought into the fold."—[Our Daily Bread](#)

**Here's another variation of this same story** - On a day I shall never forget, recalled Hudson Taylor, the famous missionary to China, when I was about fifteen years of age, because my mother was absent from home, I had a holiday, and in the afternoon looked through my father's library to find some book with which to while away the hours. I turned over a basket of pamphlets, and selected from among them a Gospel tract which looked interesting. I sat down to read the little book in an utterly unconcerned state of mind. Little did I know at the time what was going on in the heart of my mother, eighty miles away. She rose from dinner with an intense yearning for the conversion of her boy, and she went to her room and turned the key in the door, resolved not to leave until her prayers were answered. Hour after hour did she plead for me, until at length she was constrained to praise God for that which His Spirit taught her had been accomplished. In the meantime I had taken up this little tract, and while reading was struck with the sentence, "The finished work of Christ." The thought passed through my mind, "Why does the author use this expression?" Immediately the words "It is finished" came to mind. What was finished? I replied, "A full and perfect atonement for sin: Christ died for our sins." As light flashed into my soul by the Spirit, that there was nothing to be done but to fall down on one's knees, and accepting this Savior and His salvation, to praise Him forever. When mother came home a fortnight later, I was the first to meet her at the door to tell her I had glad news. I can almost feel her arms around my neck, as she said, "I know, my boy; I have been rejoicing for a fortnight." You will agree with me that it would be strange indeed if I were not a believer in the power of prayer.

[J. Hudson Taylor](#) (1832-1905) was a missionary to China and later founder of the [China Inland Mission \(now OMF\)](#) which, at his death, included 205 mission stations with over 800 missionaries, and 125,000 Chinese Christians. He spent 51 years in China. The webmaster of this web site [preceptaustin](#) is fruit of Hudson Taylor's ministry. I came to Christ almost 80 years after Taylor died, so how did he impact my conversion? [Miss A W Johnson](#) was a missionary in the China Inland Mission and returned to America where God's Spirit used her as His tool to begin [Bible Study Fellowship](#). I came to Christ in the study of the Minor Prophets in Bible Study Fellowship, some 80 years after Hudson Taylor died. His legacy will echo down the "halls of eternity." Will mine? Will yours (under grace of course, not law!)? (See [My Personal Testimony](#))

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**The Giving List** - "I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel." - Psalm 16:7 - By now, most of the Christmas presents have been lovingly purchased and carefully wrapped. Some have been mailed to friends and family who live far away. But it all started with a list. You wanted to get the right gifts, so you carefully wrote a list, making sure to match each person with the right present. It is a giving list -- based solely on the desire to give to those you love. It's good that we do that, because it's easy for us to fall into the trap of making lists of what we want to receive rather than what we can give. Unfortunately, this happens all too often in our prayer life. There are so many times when we need God's help that we tend to make a prayer list that is like a child's list of stuff he wants for Christmas. To avoid being one-sided in our praying, perhaps it would be helpful to keep two kinds of prayer lists: the "needs" list in which we bring our problems to the Lord, and the "giving" list in which we offer our praise to the Lord. Psalm 16 includes items for which we can praise God under all circumstances: His protection (vv. 1, 8), His goodness (Ps 16:2), His care (Ps 16:5-6), His counsel (Ps 16:7). In prayer, as in all of life, we need a giving list. And first on the list is praise to God.—J. David Branon

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**Have You Prayed?** - Several years ago I moved to England, but I have traveled back to the USA many times, often staying with the

same families. One family lived in a farmhouse where a tiny upstairs room always awaited me. I will never forget one visit when, as usual, I lugged my suitcase up the familiar stairs. This time, however, a secret burden on my heart felt heavier than my luggage. As I neared the top of the steps, I saw an old plaque that I had forgotten. It read: **Have You Prayed About It?** Panting physically and spiritually, I had to admit, "No, I haven't!" So I slipped to my knees and finally talked to God about the problem. Instead of being anxious for nothing, I had become anxious about everything. Instead of praying about everything, I had prayed about nothing. But now, through prayer, my heavy load of worry became God's, and His lightweight gift of peace became mine. In his book *Tyranny of the Urgent*, Charles Hummel writes that if we are prayerless, "we are saying, with our actions if not our lips, that we do not need God." The deciding factor on how we carry our burdens lies in our answer to the question on that old-fashioned plaque: Have you prayed about it? —J E Yoder

Give Him each perplexing problem,  
All your needs to Him make known;  
Bring to Him your daily burdens--  
Never carry them alone!  
—Adams

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Preacher: "Do you say your prayers at night, little boy?"

Jimmy: "Yes, sir."

Preacher: "Do you say your prayers in the morning, too?"

Jimmy: "No, sir. I ain't scared in the daytime."

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### **Some Facts about Prayer, for Men** - Luke 18:1

INTRODUCTION: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." So said the Lord of men and of salvation. Then—

#### I. PRAYER IS A REAL THING

It is something of intrinsic value. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is" (Heb. 11:6). A man once confessed that, "Before I was converted I prayed to nobody. Now I pray to God."

#### II. PRAYER IS A SIMPLE THING

Any child can pray. It is the offering up of our desires unto God. It is asking because we feel our need, and believe that we can receive. There is no mystery in this.

#### III. PRAYER IS A DESIRABLE THING

"Men ought to pray." They ought to pray, just as they ought to work and eat. Men ought to deal fairly with God, as they ought to deal fairly with their fellowmen. It is their duty and privilege.

#### IV. PRAYER IS A MANLY THING

"Men ought to pray." Man is the only animal that can naturally look up. Some men live the brutish life by never looking up. Life up your face to God, and maintain your dignity as a man.

#### V. PRAYER IS A CONSTANT THING

"Men ought always to pray." He ought to keep on praying, just as he keeps on desiring. Men ought to exercise their bodies daily to be healthy and strong; so ought they to exercise their souls toward God. Continue in work if you wish to grow rich in the world's goods. Continue in prayer if you would grow rich in faith and grace.

#### VI. PRAYER IS A TESTING THING

"And not to faint." It is easy to grow weary in this well doing. Ye shall reap if ye faint not. Praying always and not fainting is the evidence of strong faith. The trial of your faith is precious.

#### VII. PRAYER IS A PROFITABLE THING

"Ask and ye shall receive." Our Lord would never have said that "Men ought always to pray" if He did not mean always to give. As a proof of this, see the little parable in Luke 18:2-7.

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**Simplicity in Prayer** - Harry A. Ironside - "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds

through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7) We need to realize that our GOD takes a Fatherly interest in every detail of our lives and bids us bring everything to Him in prayer. Nothing is too small for His concern and nothing is too great for His power. Years ago, the Free Kirk of Scotland was holding a synodical meeting in the granite city of Aberdeen and worshippers were flocking in from all nearby towns to participate in the services. An aged man was wending his way to the city on foot, when he was overtaken by a young theological student; the two walked on in company. Despite the difference in their ages, they had much in common, and so they enjoyed chatting together as they jogged on toward their intended goal. At noontime they turned aside to a crassy copse and sat down to eat the lunch which each had brought with him, first giving GOD thanks for His gracious provision. Afterwards the aged pilgrim suggested that they pray together before continuing their journey. The young theologian was a bit embarrassed, but agreed, intimating that the elder man should pray first, which he did. Addressing GOD as His FATHER in all simplicity, he poured out his heart in thanksgiving, then uttered three specific requests: he reminded the LORD that he was very hard of hearing and if he did not get a seat well up to the front in the kirk he would get little out of the sermon that evening, so he asked that a seat be kept for him near enough to the pulpit so he could get the benefit of the message; secondly, he told the LORD that his shoes were badly worn and not fit for city streets; he pleaded for a new pair though he had not the "siller" to purchase them; last of all, he asked for a place to stay for the night, as he knew no one in Aberdeen and did not know where to look for accommodations. By the time the student's eyes were wide open as he looked upon the old man with mingled disgust and amazement, thinking it the height of impertinence to burden Deity with such trivialities. When his turn came to pray, he delivered himself of an eloquent, carefully composed discourse, which in turn amazed his older companion, who saw in it nothing that indicated a making known of his needs to GOD the FATHER. Proceeding on their way, they reached the kirk just as the people were crossing in; it was soon evident that there was no longer even standing room left. The student thought, "Now we shall see what becomes of his presumptuous prayers. He'll see that GOD has more to do than to use His time saving a seat for a poor, old, country man." However, someone came out and the old man was just able to squeeze inside the door, where he stood with his hand up to his ear trying to hear what was going on. Just then, it happened that a young lady in a front pew turned and saw him. She called a sexton and said, "My father told me to hold our pew for him until time for the sermon; then, if he did not get there, to give it to someone else. Evidently, he has been detained. Will you please go back and bring up that old man who has his hand to his ear and is standing just inside the door." In a few moments, petition number one was fully answered. Now, in Scotland, some folks always kneel for prayer, as the minister leads; others reverently rise to their feet. The old man was the kneeling kind and the young woman always stood. As she looked down, she could not help observing the worn soles on the feet of the kneeling worshipper. Her father was a shoe-dealer! At the close of the service, she delicately approached the subject of the need of a better pair of shoes, and asked if she might take him to her father's store, though closed for the night, and present him with a pair. Needless to say, her offer was accepted as graciously as it was made. So petition number two was answered. At the store the lady inquired where he was to stay for the night. In all simplicity he answered, "I dinna ken yet. My FATHER has a room for me, but He has no' told me whar it is." Puzzled for a moment, she exclaimed, "O, you mean your FATHER -- GOD! Well, I believe we have that room for you. We were saving our guestroom for the Rev. Dr. Blank, but a telegram came this morning saying he could not come, so now you must just come home with me and be our guest." And so the third petition was granted. The next day the student inquired as to the outcome of the prayer and was astonished to find that GOD had heard and answered each particular plea. He is never too busy to heed the cries of His needy people. What we all require is more confidence in His love and more earnestness and directness in prayer.—[Illustrations of Bible Truth](#)

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**A Cry for Strength** - In the day when I cried, thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul. Psalm 138:3 - Answered prayer is a great boon to the believer, for it bolsters his faith immeasurably to know that the Lord has heard his pleading cry for help and grace. The Psalmist had enjoyed such a thrilling experience for he exaltingly testified, "In the day when I cried, thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me . . . in my soul!" A young man, a student at the Missionary Training Institute, was much discouraged. Bound by carnal appetites and sick at heart because of his many spiritual failures, he decided to forfeit his lunch hour and to spend the time in supplication and prayer. Climbing the mountain behind the main dormitory and kneeling at a natural-rock altar, he lifted his heart heavenward and cried out in desperation of soul, "What can I do to find deliverance?" Bending his head downward and opening his eyes a little, he observed through a blur of tears a spider web in the grass directly in front of him. At that moment a tiny fly settled down and entangled one foot in the gossamer snare. A violent struggle ensued. The more the fly attempted to escape, the more enmeshed he became. At last the weary creature attracted the attention of the spider, who rushed out and proceeded to wrap strand after strand of sticky thread about his victim — preserving him alive but helpless. That little insect for all his excited activity could not free himself. However, the young man put down his little finger, and with the slightest effort freed the struggling captive. Through that experience God spoke to his heart. He saw that the Lord's little finger was worth more than all his vain struggles, and that if he would only trust Him, he would be set free from the habits and difficulties that bound him. Rising from his knees with joy, he was strengthened in his soul by the realization that it was God's power alone which could supply his want. Encouraged and relieved, he went on to new victories of grace!

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**DEW BATH.**—Some of the London people would go out into the fields early on the morning of May 1, and bathe their faces with the dew upon the grass, under the impression that it would render them beautiful. Whether this made them beautiful or not is

immaterial, but surely it is true that to bathe one's face every morning in the dew of Heaven by prayer and communion is the sure way to beauty of life.

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**Prayers That God Will Not Answer** - Bobby Grubbs - Proverbs 28:9 "He who turns away his ear from listening to the law, Even his prayer is an abomination."

INTRODUCTION: This could well be called "Praying That God Will Not Hear." Many people pray and wonder just why they haven't heard from God. There are various reasons why God does not hear some prayers. We hear messages on "How to get your prayers answered." I feel that we should discuss this phase of praying also. The following is a list of prayers that God will not answer.

I. PRAYERS OF DOUBT ARE UNANSWERABLE—James 1:6, 7

Faith is an imperative for answered prayer and doubt is in direct opposition to faith. Hebrews 11:6. Matthew 17:14-21 gives an example. Read Mt 17:20 and you will see why prayer wasn't answered for the disciples.

II. PRAYERS OF SELF-DESIRES ARE UNANSWERABLE—James 4:3.

Two people can pray the same prayer and one get an answer and the other not get an answer. Why? Because one may have been selfish and one for the glory of God.

III. PRAYERS OF OPPOSITION TO GOD'S PEOPLE ARE UNANSWERABLE—Numbers 22:6-12

Saul could have prayed all day against David and God wouldn't have heard.

IV. PRAYERS OF HEARERS AND NOT DOERS ARE UNANSWERABLE—James 1:22

Col. 3:17. If you fail to do the will of God, He is not obligated to hear you.

V. PRAYERS OF GRUDGE-HOLDERS ARE UNANSWERABLE—Mt. 5:23, 24

People say, "I can forgive, but I can't forget" then they haven't forgiven truly.

VI. PRAYERS OF PEOPLE WITH UNCONFESSED SIN ARE UNANSWERABLE—Psalm 66:18

Don't pray until you have confessed and forsaken your sin if you want an answer.

VII. PRAYERS OF A BITTER FAMILY ARE UNANSWERABLE—1 Peter 3:7

If husband and wife are in bitterness against one another, they will not have prayers answered.

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**What Happens When You Pray?** John 11:41-44

**HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?**

We should pray in Jesus' Name.

John 14:14 "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it."

Prayer isn't real unless it is offered in Jesus Name.

He said. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

A prayer that leaves Jesus' Name out dishonors Christ and displeases God.

We should pray in a forgiving spirit.

Mark 11:25 "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."

We should pray in faith—believing.

Matthew 21:22 "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

**WHEN SHOULD WE PRAY?**

1 Thessalonians 5:17 "Pray without ceasing."

Luke 18:1 "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

We should pray when everything is going alright.

This is a dangerous time for a Christian—he is likely to forget God.

We should pray when sorrow and trouble come.

We should pray when we don't feel like praying.

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU PRAY?

You get a better understanding of God, the Bible, and life.

Your faith is increased.

Prayer changes people.

CONCLUSION: Keep on praying. Keep on asking, seeking, knocking. God is in the prayer-answering business.

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**Links in the Chain** - Edward Kimball was determined to win his Sunday school class to Christ. A teenager named [Dwight Moody](#) tended to fall asleep on Sundays, but Kimball, undeterred, set out to reach him at work. His heart was pounding as he entered the store where the young man worked. "I put my hand on his shoulder, and as I leaned over I placed my foot upon a shoebox. I asked him to come to Christ." But Kimball left thinking he had botched the job. Moody, however, left the store that day a new person and eventually became the most prominent evangelist in America. On June 17, 1873, Moody arrived in Liverpool, England, for a series of crusades. The meetings went poorly at first, but then the dam burst and blessings began flowing. Moody visited a Baptist chapel pastored by a scholarly man named [F B Meyer](#), who at first disdained the American's unlettered preaching. But Meyer was soon transfixed and transformed by Moody's message. At Moody's invitation, Meyer toured America. At Northfield Bible Conference, he challenged the crowds saying, "If you are not willing to give up everything for Christ, are you willing to be made willing?" That remark changed the life of a struggling young minister named [J. Wilber Chapman](#). Chapman proceeded to become a powerful traveling evangelist in the early 1900s, and he recruited a converted baseball player named [Billy Sunday](#). Under Chapman's eye, Sunday became one of the most spectacular evangelists in American history. His campaign in Charlotte, North Carolina, produced a group of converts who continued praying for another such visitation of the Spirit. In 1934 they invited evangelist [Mordecai Ham](#) to conduct a citywide crusade. On October 8th Ham, discouraged, wrote a prayer to God on the stationery of his Charlotte hotel: "Lord, give us a Pentecost here. ... Pour out thy Spirit tomorrow. ... " His prayer was answered beyond his dreams when a Central High School student named Billy Graham gave his heart to Jesus. And Edward Kimball thought he had botched the job! —[Robert Morgan "On This Day"](#)

**Related Resource:** [Video of Timeline of the Chain](#)

**Related story** - In May 1934 a Charlotte, North Carolina farmer lent a pasture to some thirty local businessmen who wanted to devote a day of prayer for Charlotte because the Depression had spread spiritual apathy in the city. They had planned, despite the indifference of the ministerial association, to hold an evangelistic campaign later that year. During that day of prayer on the land their leader, Vernon Patterson, prayed, "out of Charlotte the Lord would raise up someone to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth." The businessmen next erected in the city a large "tabernacle" of raw pine on a steel frame, where for eleven weeks from September 1934 a renowned, fiery Southern evangelist named Mordecai Fowler Ham, and his song leader, Walter Ramsay, shattered the complacency of church-going Charlotte. Well, God did hear their prayer. The farmer who lent his pasture for the prayer meeting was Franklin Graham and his son Billy became a Christian during the meetings and the rest is history.

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**Too Busy to Pray** - If you think you are too busy for a Quiet Time, consider Charles and John Wesley's mother [Susanna Wesley](#), who had nineteen children. And yet in the middle of her busy day, she would sit down in a chair and pull her apron up over her head and have her Quiet Time! When the apron went up, the children knew mom was praying and reading her Bible and they left her alone. While some question the veracity of this story, if true, it is certainly convicting.

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**The Way to Gain Patience** - A young man, a Christian, went to an older believer to ask for prayer. "Will you please pray that I may be more patient?" he asked. The aged saint agreed. They knelt together and the man began to pray, "Lord, send this young man tribulation in the morning; send this young man tribulation in the afternoon; send this young man...." At that point the young Christian blurted out, "No, no, I didn't ask you to pray for tribulation. I wanted you to pray for patience." "Ah," responded the wise Christian, "it's through tribulation that we learn patience." - 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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**John Bunyan's Deathbed Sayings** - On his deathbed battling high fever, [John Bunyan](#) rambled in tortured, fractured words; but even these were collected and published as Mr. Bunyan's Dying Sayings. They include this one:

The spirit of prayer is more precious than treasure of gold and silver. Pray often, for prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge for Satan.

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**A Heart for Revival** - Missionary [John "Praying" Hyde](#) Hyde [1865-1912] poured out his soul four hours a day begging God for revival in India where he labored. When an autopsy was performed after his untimely death, although a malignancy had taken him, it was discovered that his physical heart had actually shifted some distance in his chest cavity because of his agonizing hours of prayer." —Lewis A. Drummond

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**Stuck!** - 2 Chronicles 14:1-11 Panic Or Pray? - Help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on You, and in Your name we go against this multitude. —2 Chronicles 14:11 - An 85-year-old woman, all alone in a convent, got trapped inside an elevator for 4 nights and 3 days. Fortunately, she had a jar of water, some celery sticks, and a few cough drops. After she tried unsuccessfully to open the elevator doors and get a cell phone signal, she decided to turn to God in prayer. "It was either panic or pray," she later told CNN. In her distress, she relied on God and waited till she was rescued. Asa was also faced with the options of panic or pray (2 Chr 14:1-15). He was attacked by an Ethiopian army of a million men. But as he faced this huge fighting force, instead of relying on military strategy or cowering in dread, he turned to the Lord in urgent prayer. In a powerful and humble prayer, Asa confessed his total dependence on Him, asked for help, and appealed to the Lord to protect His own name: "Help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on You, and in Your name we go against this multitude" (2Chr 14:11). The Lord responded to Asa's prayer, and he won the victory over the Ethiopian army. When we are faced with tight spots, meager resources, a vast army of problems, or seemingly dead-end solutions, let's not panic but instead turn to God who fights for His people and gives them victor. — Marvin Williams

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**Enhanced 911** - An article in the November 1987 Reader's Digest reminded me of the truth that God is quick to hear and answer when we call upon Him in our need. It was about "enhanced 911," an important addition to the emergency telephone call program. Where this system is in operation, a person who dials 911 doesn't have to tell the operator his location. His name, address, and phone number appears immediately on an operator's screen. "Enhanced 911" has been a dramatic success. For example, a 6-year-old boy called 911 to report that his house was on fire. Even while the operator was telling the frightened boy what to do, fire equipment was being sent. A terrified girl called to say that a man was trying to break into her home. Within 3 minutes an arrest was being made and the child was safe. And in another city, a girl whispered to a 911 operator that a man was hurting her mother, and then hung up. Police arrived in time to capture a rapist. God too hears the cries of His people. Whenever we call on Him, and from whatever situation, we can know that He is listening and that He answers. See: 2 Chronicles 6:37-40; Nehemiah 9:27-28; Romans 10:13 - 6,000 Plus Illustrations for Communicating Biblical Truths.

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**Praying "Accordingly"** An accordionist is one who plays an accordion. A praying Christian should be an "accordingist," praying by the "accordings" of God that underlie successful praying.

- We must pray according to His Word. The man who prays Scripturally prays successfully.
- We must pray according to His will (1 John 5:14, 15).
- We must pray according to our need (Phil. 4:19). We do not always want what we need or need what we want.
- We must pray according to our faith. Several times Jesus said, "According to your faith be it unto YOU."

Recognize these four accordings before you start praying. Remember, it might be disastrous if you received everything you thought you needed! Paul found out that greater than a trip to the third heaven or the joy of deliverance from a thorn in the flesh, is to know that God's grace is always sufficient, that we are strong when we are weak and His strength is made perfect through weakness. That is the Christian's greatest experience.—[Vance Havner](#)

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**Prayer Study** - Research at San Francisco General Hospital has revealed that victims of heart attack, heart failure and other cardiac problems who were remembered in prayers fared better than those who were not. Cardiologist Randy Byrd assigned 192 patients to the "prayed-for" group and 201 patients to the "not-prayed-for" group. All patients were in the coronary intensive care unit. Patients, doctors and nurses did not know which group patients were in. Prayer group members were scattered around the nation and given only the first names, diagnoses and prognoses of patients. The researcher said that the results were dramatic. The prayed-for group had significantly fewer complications than the unremembered group. And fewer members of the former died. The latter group was five times more likely to develop infections requiring antibiotics, and three times more likely to develop a lung condition, leading to heart failure. These findings were published in the American Heart Association. - Chicago Sun Times

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This poem by Adam Baum expressed the need for perseverance in prayer:

Pray on, when rough and dark your pathway,  
And you cannot see the light;  
When every spark of hope has vanished,  
And bright day has turned to night.

Pray on, for God doth surely hear you,  
Noting well each sad request;  
Pray then in faith, truly believing  
That He always gives what's best."

—[Our Daily Bread](#)

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## Types of Prayer

- 42% ask for material things when they pray; of this group, 59% are evangelicals. 66% are black.
  - Meditative prayer increases with age: 45% of 18 to 24 year olds pray meditatively; 70% of 65 year olds do so.
  - Of those who say God exists, 70% pray daily, as do 10% of those who don't believe in God.
  - 91% of women pray, as do 85% of men.
  - 94% of blacks, and 87% of whites
  - 32% regularly feel a deep sense of peace. 12% never experience this.
  - 26% regularly sense the strong presence of God: 21% never do.
  - 15% regularly receive a definite answer to a specific prayer, 27% never have, 25% have once or twice.
  - Sources: Poloma and Gallup, "Varieties of prayer": Norc Greeley, Newsweek: January 6, 1992.
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According to a poll on prayer for Newsweek (3/31/97), the following percentage said:

They ask for health or success for a child or family member when they pray -- 82

They ask for strength to overcome a personal weakness -- 75

They never ask for financial or career success -- 36

God answers prayers -- 87

God doesn't answer prayers -- 51

They believe God does not play favorites in answering prayers -- 82

God answers prayers for healing someone with an incurable disease -- 79

Prayers for help in finding a job are answered -- 73

They believe that when God doesn't answer their prayers, it means it wasn't God's will to answer -- 54

They don't turn away from God when prayers go unanswered -- 82

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**Prayer Is Not Enough** - If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. 2Chronicles 7:14. -- It will readily be seen here that God requires four things, not just one. And He will not settle for a fourth of what He requires. If we are going to use this verse let us use all of it. Sometimes we make it sound as though a prayer meeting alone were sufficient to produce a revival. God has said more here than "pray." **We are to humble ourselves**—not pray for humility, but humble ourselves, "as a little child" (Mt. 18:4), "in the sight of the Lord" (Jas. 4:10), "under the mighty hand of God" (1 Pt. 5:6). We are to seek God's face, His favor, the smile of His approval. "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek" (Ps. 27:8). Is that what your heart says? And **we are to turn from our wicked ways**. That fourth note is rather subdued these days. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr 28:13). Praying is not enough if God requires more. And in this sadly misused text He certainly does.—[Vance Havner](#)

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## Prayer of an Unknown Confederate Soldier

I asked God for strength that I might achieve.

I was made weak that I might learn humbly to obey.

I asked God for health that I might do greater things.

I was given infirmity that I might do better things.

I asked for riches that I might be happy.

I was given poverty that I might be wise.

I asked for power that I might have the praise of men.

I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God.

I asked for all things that I might enjoy life.

I was given life that I might enjoy all things.

I got nothing that I asked for--but everything I had hoped for...

Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.



I am among all men most richly blessed.

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Someone has vividly expressed this in a humorous little poem that reads as follows:

"The proper way for man to pray," said Deacon Lemuel Keyes;  
"The only proper attitude is down upon his knees."  
"Nay, I should say the way to pray," said Reverend Doctor Wise,  
"Is standing straight with outstretched arms with rapt and upturned eyes."  
"Oh, no, no, no," said Elder Snow, "such posture is too proud."  
A man should pray with eyes fast-closed and head contritely bowed."  
"It seems to me his hands should be austerely clasped in front.  
With both thumbs pointing to the ground," said Reverend Doctor Blunt."  
"Last year I fell in Hodgkin's well headfirst," said Cyril Brown.  
"With both my heels a-stickin' up, my head a-pointing' down;  
And I done prayed right then and there; best prayer I ever said,  
The prayin'est prayer I ever prayed, a-standin' on my head."

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**Ray Pritchard on Prayer** - According to pollster George Barna, almost 90% of Americans say they pray. Over 60% of unchurched Americans say they pray. Of those unchurched Americans, one in three believe that prayer makes a difference in their lives. Among "born again" respondents, nearly 70% say that God personally answers their prayers. But exactly how do Americans pray? Barna offers these insights: 95% express gratitude to God. 76% ask God to forgive particular sins. 61% make specific requests of God. 12% pray in tongues. **So how is your prayer life?** I imagine that your answer would be, "It depends. Sometimes it's good, sometimes it's not so good." Prayer can be easy or difficult depending on many factors. There are days when we seem to touch heaven with our prayers, and other days when our words seem to bounce off the ceiling. But regardless of how we feel, if we want to know God better, nothing matters more than our prayers. Did you know that nearly 1,400 verses in the Bible speak about prayer? If you want to grow spiritually, you must learn to pray effectively. There is no shortcut to spiritual growth. Prayer is essential. **Facts and Excuses About Prayer** - Bruce Goettsche points out a few facts that we all know about prayer:

- Prayer makes a difference ... we don't know how ... we just know it does.
- Prayer brings wisdom.
- Prayer provides strength for difficult times.
- Prayer convicts us of areas in our life that need changing.
- Prayer brings us assurance of our position in the Father.

We know these things by heart. We know by experience that "prayer changes things." We know that prayer changes us and it changes the world around us. We know that God gave prayer to us as a wonderful gift. If that is true (and it is), then why don't we pray more than we do? Several years ago D. A. Carson, New Testament professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, wrote *A Call to Spiritual Reformation*. In one chapter he discusses six excuses we make for not praying more than we do. Do any of these sound familiar?

- "I am too busy to pray."
- "I feel too spiritually dry to pray."
- "I feel no need to pray."
- "I am too bitter to pray."
- "I am too ashamed to pray."
- "I am content with mediocrity."

I doubt that anyone actually says, "I am content with mediocrity." If they are, they simply don't pray at all. These excuses don't amount to anything at all. An excuse is just "the skin of a reason stuffed with a lie." We fail to pray because we don't want to pray. If we wanted to pray more, we would. All the excuses in the world can't erase that truth. I realize that whenever someone preaches on prayer, especially if you've gone to church for many years, it's tempting to say, "Hey, I already know this. Tell me something I don't know." I smile when I hear that because one of my jobs as a pastor is to tell you what you already know—and then to tell you over and over and over again. Some things are so important that we need to be constantly reminded of them. Nowhere is that more true than in the area of prayer. The question is not, "Do you already know this?" but rather "What are you doing about it?" Knowledge that is not put into action is worse than useless.

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**Give Thanks in Everything** - In the autobiography of the late Dr. Clarence E. MacCartney, the following story is told: Two men were passing through a field in the country when they were charged by an enraged bull. They started for the nearest fence, but it was soon apparent that they couldn't make it before the animal reached them. One said to the other, "Put up a prayer, John. We're in for it!" But John answered, "I can't. I never made a public prayer in my life." "But you must," said his companion, "the bull will soon be upon us." "All right," panted John, "I'll give you the only prayer I know, the one my father used to repeat at the table: 'O Lord, for what we are about to receive, make us truly thankful!' " We may smile at this story; yet it is true that no matter what trials we may face, or how deep the waters through which we must pass, the true Christian should give thanks "always for all things."

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Two men were talking together. The first challenged the other, "If you are so religious, let's hear you quote the Lord's Prayer. I bet you \$10.00 you can't." The second responded, "Now I lay my down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. And If I die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." The first pulled out his wallet and fished out a ten dollar bill, muttering, "I didn't think you could do it!" - Anonymous

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When Peter the Great saw that Russia was backward in education and technology, he turned to western Europe. He "opened a window to the west." (Da 6:10-note) For very different reasons, when the captive Daniel prayed, he opened a window to the west. Certainly it makes no difference whether we pray with windows open or closed, whether we face east or west. It does make a difference whether or not we pray in faith. In that sense, we must open a window heavenward. - [1000 Windows: A Speaker's Sourcebook of Illustrations.](#)

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The minister of music had changed the order of service. He wanted to make certain there would be no confusion, so he whispered to the preacher, "After the prayer there will be no response." Does it sometimes seem to you that after the prayer, there is no response? It may seem that way, but it is not that way. Whenever we pray in faith, whenever we pray in Jesus' name, there is always a response. It may not be the response we want, but there will always be a response. - [1000 Windows: A Speaker's Sourcebook of Illustrations.](#)

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Oswald Chambers said that "We take for granted that prayer is preparation for work, whereas prayer is the work. Intercessory prayer is God's chosen way of working."

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It does not always pay to pray. In Caribou County, British Columbia, a man was accused of setting a forest fire. Left alone in a room at the police station, he fell to his knees and prayed, "Oh God, please let me get away with it." The prayer was picked up by a closed circuit television camera. It was ultimately admitted into evidence and used against him. - [1000 Windows: A Speaker's Sourcebook of Illustrations.](#)

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If you can't sleep, don't count sheep. Talk to the shepherd.

Phillips Brooks said, "Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks." - [1000 Windows: A Speaker's Sourcebook of Illustrations.](#)

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In his sermon "The Disciple's Prayer," Haddon Robinson recalls:

When our children were small, we played a game. I'd take some coins in my fist. They'd sit on my lap and work to get my fingers open. According to the international rules of finger opening, once the finger was open, it couldn't be closed again. They would work at it, until they got the pennies in my hand. They would jump down and run away, filled with glee and delight. Just kids. Just a game. Sometimes when we come to God, we come for the pennies in his hand.

"Lord, I need a passing grade. Help me to study."

"Lord, I need a job."

"Lord, my mother is ill."

We reach for the pennies. When God grants the request, we push the hand away.

More important than the pennies in God's hand is the hand of God himself. That's what prayer is about.

- Haddon Robinson - The Disciple's Prayer - Preaching Today, 117

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**Praying a Bible Into Existence** - Hyatt Moore of the Wycliffe Bible Translators writes: On November 14, 1983, two American students named David and Ray teamed up to pray for the 40,000 Tira people in Africa. The large group had no Bible in their native tongue.

Two-and-a-half years later, other Christians, Jerry and Jan, joined them in praying daily for the Tira. Then, in March 1990, Jane and Marjeanne wrote to the Bibleless Peoples Prayer Project of Wycliffe Bible Translators, asking for the name of a Bibleless people to

pray for. They too began praying....

In August 1990, we heard that Avajani, a young Tira man, was beginning to translate the Bible. Great news! We wrote, telling him of those praying and how he was an answer to their prayers.

"I'm grateful," Avajani wrote back. "I have never known that there are teams praying for the Tira people. It is wonderful news to me. The same year and month when David and Ray started praying, I got saved. When Jerry and Jan began praying, I was accepted for theological studies... and now I have finished. Jane and Marjeanne can praise the Lord with me, too! In March 1990, a miracle happened. I met a man (a Wycliffe translator) who was able to arrange for me to study biblical translation principles and linguistics.

"God did another miracle. Many young Tira have become Christians."

Today, seven years after David and Ray began praying in faith, the Bible is being translated for 40,000 new readers.

--The Christian Reader, Jan/Feb 1993.

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Although we don't always see the effect of our prayers at the time, God hears and answers. -[Craig Larson - 750 Engaging Illustrations](#).

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**Do You Realize To Whom You are Talking?** - The brother of a seminary student came to visit him one day. Unsure of directions, he turned to the first person who passed by and asked, "Is this Davidson Hall?" On hearing the man described later, the seminary student asked his brother if he had realized that he had been talking to a world-famous theologian. The brother couldn't believe it. He had the opportunity to ask any question—and he asked only where a building was. Unfortunately that's how many of us pray. We talk to God and ask for inane little things that are really insignificant. - [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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**Prayer and Belief** - The story is told of a time when a great Scotch preacher prayed in the morning service for rain. As he went to church in the afternoon his daughter, said, "Here is the umbrella, Papa." "What do we need it for?" he asked. "You prayed for rain this morning. Don't you expect God to send it?" his daughter replied. They carried the umbrella, and while they came home they were glad to take shelter under it from the drenching storm. Such should be our faith when we pray, just like that little child's—with no doubt, and expecting an answer. - [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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**Pray Like An Iceberg** - Eight-ninths of the bulk of an iceberg is below the waterline and out of sight. Only one-ninth is visible above the surface. Our prayer life should be like an iceberg, with about one-ninth showing in public group prayer and eight-ninths out of sight in our personal prayer time. - Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching

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A woman asked [G Campbell Morgan](#), "Do you think we ought to pray about even the little things in life."

Dr. Morgan, in his typically understated British manner, replied, "Madam, can you think of anything in your life that is big to God."

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**Meyer Prays For Morgan** - [F B Meyer](#) told the following experience to a few personal friends: "It was easy," he said, "to pray for the success of [G Campbell Morgan](#) when he was in America. But when he came back to England and took a church near to mine, it was somewhat different. The old Adam in me was inclined to jealousy, but I got my heel upon his head, and whether I felt right toward my friend, I determined to act right. "My church gave a reception for him, and I acknowledged that if it was not necessary for me to preach Sunday evenings I would dearly love to go and hear him myself. Well, that made me feel right toward him. "But just see how the dear Lord helped me out of my difficulty. There was Charles Spurgeon preaching wonderfully on the other side of me. He and Mr. Morgan were so popular, and drew such crowds, that our church caught the overflow, and we had all we could accommodate!" —King's Business

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**When Leader's Pray** - Robert Lewis of Fredricksburg, Virginia, was Washington's private secretary. During the first part of the presidency, he said that he accidentally witnessed Washington's private devotions, both morning and evening. He saw him in a kneeling posture, with an open Bible before him; and he said that he believed such was his daily practice. His custom was to go to his library at four o'clock in the morning for devotions. God please, we beg Thee, give us such men in Washington! Amen

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**Queen Victoria's Prayer Answered** - When William IV of England died, there was a young girl spending the night at the palace. They awakened her and told her that she was now the Queen of England. As soon as she heard the news she dropped on her knees and asked the Heavenly Father to help and guide her through all the years that were to follow. For sixty-four years this girl, who was [Queen Victoria](#), reigned over the British Empire. England never made greater progress than during her reign. A prince of India asked her what was the secret of England's power, and for her answer she quietly picked up a Book from the table near by. "This is the secret," she said. The Book was God's Word, the Bible.—[George W. Truett](#)

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**The Other Side of the Mountain** - D. E. Host, the man who took over for Hudson Taylor, wrote a book titled Behind the Ranges. He was trying to analyze a problem he had seen while working in two different villages in China. The people with whom he lived and worked were not doing very well. But the people in the other village across the ranges were doing great! He visited them only now and then, but they were always doing fine, so he began to ask the Lord what was going on. How could those across the ranges be doing better than those with whom he lived and worked? The Lord showed Host the answer. Although he was spending much time counseling, preaching, and teaching with those with whom he lived, he spent much more time in prayer for those across the ranges. He concluded that there were four basic elements in making disciples: (1) prayer, (2) prayer, (3) prayer, (4) the Word—in that order and in about that proportion.- Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching

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**Prayer is Power** - Do you ever play the game "how far"? Its rules are really simple—you fill up your gas tank and then drive to see how far you can go before you fill up again. You watch the gauge nervously as it falls closer and closer to the big E. What about your spiritual gas tank—do you play "how far" with it, too, trying to see how far you can get on a single fill-up? **When was the last time you spent an extended time of prayer before your heavenly Father?**

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**Do You Persevere in Prayer?** - A father related that during their family devotional time each person was going to pray for one person. His son prayed to ask God to help his friend Eddie be better at school because he was so bad. When they got together the next week, the father asked his son if he was going to pray for Eddie again. "No," the son replied, "I prayed for Eddie last week and he is still bad."

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**What Dogs Are Barking at You?** - In Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan, Christiana (the hero's wife), Mercy (a young pilgrim), and the children are graphically pictured knocking on the Wicker Gate. They knock and knock, but no one answers. Meanwhile, a ferocious dog comes and begins to bark—making the women and children very afraid. They simply do not know what to do. If they continue to knock, they must fear the dog. If they turn away, they fear the gatekeeper will be offended. They determine to knock again, ever so fervently. Finally they hear the voice of the gatekeeper asking, "Who is there?" And the dog ceases barking. What dogs are barking in your life that the Lord can silence?

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**Are You Holding Your Missionary's Rope?** - The story is told of a long-ago couple who said farewell to their home church as they were about to leave for an African mission field known as "The White Man's Grave." The husband said, "My wife and I have a strange dread in going. We feel much as if we were going down into a pit. We are willing to take the risk and go if you, our home church, will promise to hold the ropes." One and all promised to do so. Less than two years had passed when the wife and the little one God had given the couple succumbed to the dreaded fever. Soon the husband realized his days were also numbered. Not waiting to send word of his coming, he started back home at once and arrived at the time of the Wednesday prayer meeting. He slipped in unnoticed, taking a back seat. At the close of the meeting, he went forward. An awe came over the people, for death was written on his face. He said, "I am your missionary. My wife and child are buried in Africa and I have come home to die. This evening I listened anxiously as you prayed for some mention of your missionary to see if you were keeping your promise, but in vain! You prayed for everything connected with yourselves and your home circle, but you forgot your missionary. I see now why I am a failure as a missionary. It is because you have failed to hold the ropes."

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**Reminding God** - A young man, who was obviously worried, stepped into an elevator to go to the second floor of a hospital where his father was in the intensive-care unit. Although the button labeled "2" was already lighted, he pushed it again and again. A doctor standing behind him said, "Pushing the button someone has already pushed is like reminding God you're still there when he hasn't answered your prayer immediately." As the man thought of his father in intensive care, it was comforting to know that God does encourage believers to continue to pray the same prayers until he answers (Matt. 7:7-8).

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Prayer is the only omnipotence God grants to us.

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**Are You Switching Channels?** - When Edmund Gravely died at the controls of his small plane while on the way to Statesboro, Georgia, from the Rocky Mount-Wilson Airport in North Carolina, his wife, Janice, kept the plane aloft for two hours. As the plane crossed the South Carolina/North Carolina border, she radioed for help: "Help, help, won't someone help me? My pilot is unconscious." Authorities who picked up her distress signal were not able to reach her by radio during the flight because she kept changing channels. Eventually Mrs. Gravely made a rough landing and had to crawl for forty-five minutes to a farmhouse for help. How often God's people cry out to him for help but switch channels before his message comes through! They turn to other sources for help, looking for human guidance. When you cry out to God for his intervention, don't switch channels!

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**When God is Silent** - Students at the university level are usually familiar with an experiment performed with chickens. A chicken is placed in a cage. On one side of the cage are two buttons, one red and the other green. Every time the chicken pecks the green button, a small amount of chicken feed comes out of a slot below the buttons. However, when the chicken pecks the red button, nothing comes out. The chicken soon learns the game and will repeatedly peck the green button to receive grain. The interesting thing is that if the experimenter reverses the effect of each button, the chicken eventually realizes that pecking the green button now does nothing, so it stops. How like chickens we are when we pray! When we turn to God to ask him for something and are not granted our request immediately, we stop praying about it. Why? Because we think of prayer as a supernatural button to press to get what we want. We forget that unanswered prayer is still heard by God, and so his silence is for a purpose. Perhaps he wishes to do more than supply our requests. Perhaps he wishes to draw us closer to him, test the maturity of our faith, or force us to re-evaluate our request.

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**The Value of Unanswered Prayer** - A newborn baby cries frequently when he or she has needs, and the mother comes immediately, day or night, to fill those needs. Thus, children learn to cry when they want Mother's presence. Later, Mother comes but does not pick up the child; she only softly says, "Hush, child, go back to sleep." Later she may not even come every time the baby cries. Of course, the baby does not like this one bit, but the feelings of "abandonment" lessen as he or she learns that Mother will always come in the morning. In the process, all babies learn that they cannot manipulate a mother, especially one who distinguishes between her baby's needs and wants. So it is with prayer. When we are young believers, God often answers our prayers quickly. Later, as we mature, he uses unanswered prayer as a means of teaching us to rely on him—he who knows our real needs and who is always faithful.

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**Gratitude for Unanswered Prayer** - [Dr. Howard Hendricks](#) tells of the time when he was a young man, before he was married. He was aware that certain mothers had set their caps for him on behalf of their daughters. One mother even said to him one day, "Howard, I just want you to know that I'm praying that you'll be my son-in-law." Dr. Hendricks always stops at that point in the story and says, very solemnly, "Have you ever thanked God for unanswered prayer."

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Andrew Murray - Little of the Word with little prayer is death to the spiritual life. Much of the Word with little prayer gives a sickly life. Much prayer with little of the Word gives emotional life. But a full measure of both the Word and prayer each day gives a healthy and powerful life.

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George Mueller wrote concerning his orphan ministry: "The funds are exhausted. We had been reduced so low as to be at the point of selling those things which could be spared. . . ." Then a woman arrived who had been traveling four days, bringing with her sufficient funds for the orphanage. Mueller and his co-workers had prayed those four days for something God had already answered. Under these circumstances, Mueller made the following observation: "That the money had been so near the orphan house for several days without being given, is a plain proof that it was from the beginning in the heart of God to help us; but because he delights in the prayers of His children, He had allowed us to pray so long; also to try our faith, and to make the answer so much sweeter." (Cited in George Mueller, *Autobiography* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981], p. 110.)

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**Recognizing God's Answers** - Let us not be like the man who was lost in the deep woods. Later, in describing the experience, he told how frightened he was and how he had prayed. "Did God answer your prayer?" someone asked. "Oh, no," was the reply. "Before God had a chance, a guide came along and showed me the path." Was that prayer really unanswered?

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**Asking and Disobeying** - A young boy saw a pack of cigarettes on the ground and decided to try them. He went to a field near his home and, after several fumbling attempts, got one to light up. It didn't taste good; indeed, it burned his throat and made him cough. But it made him feel very grown up. Then he saw his father coming. Quickly he put the cigarette behind his back and tried to be casual. Desperate to divert his father's attention, the young boy pointed to a nearby billboard advertising the circus. "Can we go, Dad? Please, let's go when it comes to town." The father quietly but firmly replied, "Son, never make a petition while at the same time trying to hide a smoldering disobedience."

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A four-year-old boy once saw a picture of Christ praying and asked what Jesus was doing in that picture. When he was told that Jesus was praying, the youngster responded by asking who Jesus was praying to. After being told that Jesus was praying to God, the young boy replied, "But Jesus IS God." This same thought was captured well by St. Cyprian who said, "If He prayed who was without sin, how much more it becomes a sinner to pray."

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**Leonard Ravenhill** - The church has many organizers, but few agonizers; many who pay, but few who pray; many resters, but few

wrestlers; many who are enterprising, but few who are interceding. People who are not praying and praying. The secret of praying is praying in secret. A worldly Christian will stop praying and a praying Christian will stop worldliness. Tithes may build a church, but tears will give it life. That is the difference between the modern church and the early church. In the matter of effective praying, never have so many left so much to so few. Brethren, let us pray" (Leonard Ravenhill).

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Much prayer in private leads to short prayers in public.

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**No Mealtime Prayer** - A boy, age six, was invited by a friend to have dinner. When his friend's family were all seated around the table, the food was served. The young guest was puzzled and—with the frankness children are so well known for—asked, "Don't you say any prayer before you eat?" The host was embarrassed by the question and mumbled, "No, we don't take time for that." The boy was silent for a moment and then said, "Oh, I see, you eat like my dog does. He just starts right in, too."

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**When It's Safe to Pass** - An aircraft pilot was following a major highway and observing the traffic below. One particular car caught his attention. The driver was attempting to pass a large truck, but because of oncoming traffic and no-passing zones, he was not able to pass safely. Over and over again, just as he would pull out, an oncoming vehicle would force him to retreat. The pilot, being able to see several miles down the highway, thought to himself, "If I could only talk to the driver, I could tell when and where it is safe to pass." God, of course, is the ultimate Pilot and his perfect knowledge is exactly what we need to guide our life. Prayer is how we talk to God, and as we learn to listen to his responses, we will find the guidance we seek- [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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**Coloring within the Lines** - When children first start to color, they have two problems. First, they might choose colors that are inappropriate. Secondly, once the colors are chosen, they have a difficult time keeping the colors within the boundary lines. As they mature and keep on coloring, they learn to keep within the guidelines and to choose the appropriate colors, resulting in a satisfying picture. As children of our Heavenly Father, our prayer life often resembles a child's coloring. At first, we don't know what to pray for nor do our prayers stay within the guidelines of His will. As we mature and continue praying, though, we pray for the right things and stay within His will, resulting in a satisfying prayer life.- [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart" (John Bunyan).

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Lord  
I crawled across the barrenness  
to you with my empty cup  
Uncertain  
in asking any small drop of refreshment.  
If only I had known you better  
I'd have come running with a bucket  
Nancy Spiegelberg

Spurgeon has a sermon which is related to this same idea - [The Inexhaustible Barrel](#) - 1 Kings 17:16

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**A "Divine Dilemma"** - Two Christian men lived near each other. The first was a farmer. Since there had not been any rain for several weeks, the farmer got up one morning and prayed for rain, but there was no rain that day. His next-door neighbor was also up early, but he was praying that it would not rain, because he was taking an unsaved friend fishing that morning. There was no rain that day. God hears both requests, but he can't answer both. He will do that which glorifies him the most.- [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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**Are You a Lazy River?** - Have you ever seen a straight river? Canals are straight, but all rivers seem to be crooked. We call it "meandering." Why are rivers crooked? Because the natural tendency of a river is to take the easiest way around any obstacle. So rivers are always crooked, and they always run downhill. Some people are like rivers. They are too lazy and immature to put forth much effort into walking with God. For them it's easier to watch T.V. than to pray and easier to read their newspaper than their Bible.- [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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The story is told of a carpenter who was nailing shingles on the roof of a house. He lost his footing and started to slide off. As he was sliding he began praying, "Lord, oh, Lord, help me!" Still he kept sliding. Again the man prayed, "Lord, oh, Lord, help me!" He

kept sliding until he got to the edge and a nail sticking up caught hold of his pants. After he came to a stop he said, "Never mind, Lord. The nail's got hold of me now." -- I will add to that story - As a young boy, probably around 8yo, long before I was a believer in Jesus Christ, I was retrieving a ball on a garage with a rotten flat roof and fell through headfirst. There was nothing but a concrete floor 10 feet below. In those days we used to roll up the cuffs of our blue jeans and it was that cuff that grabbed hold of an old rusty nail and I was left hanging upside down until my mother brought a step ladder and set me free. So I personally praise God for rusty nails and a sovereign, omnipotent God Who knew that 31 years later I would bow my knee to Jesus Christ as my Lord and my Savior. Unknown to me, my father (who left my mom before I was one year old) had become a believer and had prayed daily for my salvation for 20 years. So I thank my heavenly Father for a rusty nail and the persistent prayers of my redeemed father.

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**Prayer and the Divine will.**—As Michael Angelo says, "The prayers we make will then be sweet indeed, If Thou the Spirit give by which we pray." Our own desires may be hot and vehement, but the desires that run parallel with the Divine will, and are breathed into us by God's own Spirit, are the desires which, in their meek submissiveness, are omnipotent with Him Whose omnipotence is perfected in our weakness. -Illustrations from the Sermons of Alexander Maclaren.

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**Prayer in the Last Hour** - When Martin Luther's daughter, Magdalena, was fourteen years old, she was taken sick and lay dying. Luther prayed, "O God, I love her so, but nevertheless, Thy will be done." Then he turned to his daughter and said, "Magdalena, would you rather be with me, or would you rather go and be with your Father in heaven?" And the girl said, "Father, as God wills." Luther held her in his arms as she passed away, and as they laid her to rest, he said, "Oh my dear Magdalenachen, you will rise and shine like the stars in the sun. How strange to be so sorrowful and yet to know that all is at peace, that all is well." It is this hope in the hour of death that the resurrection gives to us.

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**Thankful Prayers** - A little boy was asked by his father to say grace at the table. While the rest of the family waited, the little guy eyed every dish of food his mother had prepared. After the examination, he bowed his head and honestly prayed, "Lord, I don't like the looks of it, but I thank you for it, and I'll eat it anyway. Amen."

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**Thank God for the Fleas!** - [Corrie Ten Boom](#) in [The Hiding Place](#) ([click for full movie](#)) relates an incident that taught her always to be thankful. She and her sister, Betsy, had just been transferred to the worst German prison camp they had seen yet, [Ravensbruck](#). On entering the barracks, they found them extremely overcrowded and flea-infested. That morning, their Scripture reading in 1 Thessalonians had reminded them to rejoice always (1Th 5:16), pray constantly (1Th 5:17), and give thanks in all circumstances (1Th 5:18). Betsy told Corrie to stop and thank the Lord for every detail of their new living quarters. Corrie at first flatly refused to give thanks for the fleas, but Betsy persisted, and Corrie finally succumbed to her pleadings. During the months spent at that camp, they were surprised to find how openly they could hold Bible study and prayer meetings without guard interference. It was not until several months later that they learned the reason the guards would not enter the barracks was because of the fleas.

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**If I Should Die Before I Wake** - Young Danny was praying at Mother's knee. "If I should die before I wake... If I should die...." "Go on, go on, Danny," said his mother. "You know the rest of the prayer." "Wait a minute," interrupted the small boy. Scrambling to his feet, he hurried downstairs. In a short time, he was back. Dropping to his knees once again, he took up the petition where he had left off. Finally his mother questioned him about the episode and issued a loving rebuke. Danny explained: "Mom, I did think about what I was saying, but I had to stop and put all of Ted's wooden soldiers on their feet. I had turned them on their heads just to see how mad he'd be in the morning. If I should die before I wake, I wouldn't want him to find them like that. Lots of things seem fun if you are gonna keep on living, but you don't want them that way if you should die before you wake." "You're right, dear," said his mother with a quiver in her voice. She thought of herself and many other grown-ups who should have stopped in the middle of their prayers to undo some wrong against another before proceeding. - [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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**A Sad Bedtime Prayer** - After attending church with his father one Sunday morning, before getting into bed that evening a little boy kneeled at his bedside and prayed, "Dear God, we had a good time at church today, but I wish you had been there."

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**Do You Pray Often** - A little boy walked down the beach, and as he did, he spied a matronly woman sitting under a beach umbrella on the sand. He walked up to her and asked, "Are you a Christian?"

"Yes."

"Do you read your Bible every day?"

She nodded her head, "Yes."

"Do you pray often?" the boy asked next, and again she answered, "Yes."

With that he asked his final question, "Will you hold my quarter while I go swimming?" - [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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**A Puritan "Prayer Toast"** - An English Puritan, Quire Bruen, was at a dinner given by the sheriff, and a toast to the prince was proposed. As the cup of wine was passed along the line, they looked to see what the Puritan would do. He said, "You may drink to his health, and I will pray for his health," and so passed the cup.

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**Praying for Revival Within the Circle** - A man once came to Gipsy Smith, the celebrated English evangelist of an earlier time, and asked him how to have revival. Asked Gipsy, "Do you have a place where you can pray?" "Yes," was the reply. "Tell you what to do, you go to that place, and take a piece of chalk along. Kneel down there, and with the chalk draw a complete circle all around you—and pray for God to send revival on everything inside of the circle. Stay there until He answers—and you will have revival." - [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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**Praying for Open Doors** - In the early days of Wycliffe Bible Translators in Mexico, Cameron Townsend, the founder, tried to get permission from the Mexican government to translate the Scriptures into the languages of the Indian tribes. But the government was adamantly opposed to it. The official to whom he had to appeal told him, "As long as I am in this office the Bible will never be translated into the Indian languages—it would only upset them." Townsend did everything he could think of, went to every official he could find, and had all his Christian friends praying that God would open this door. But it seemed to remain totally closed. Finally, Townsend decided to give up pressing the issue. He and his wife went to live in a little, obscure Indian village, learned the language, ministered to the people as best they could, and waited for God to move. It was not very long before Townsend noticed that the fountain in the center of the village plaza produced beautiful, clear spring water, but that it ran off down the hill and was wasted. He suggested that the Indians plant crops in an area to which the water could easily be diverted and thus make use of it. Soon they were growing twice as much food as before, and their economy blossomed as a result. The Indians were grateful. Townsend wrote this up in a little article and sent it to a Mexican paper he thought might be interested. Unknown to him, that article found its way into the hands of the President of Mexico, Lazaro Cardenas. The President was amazed that a gringo would come to live in and help a poor Indian village where he couldn't even get many of his own people to live. The President wanted to meet Townsend, so he, his limousine, and his attendants drove to that little Indian village and parked in the plaza. Cameron Townsend is not one to miss an opportunity. He went up to the car and introduced himself and, to his amazement, heard the President say, "You're the man I've come here to see! Tell me more about your work." When he heard what it was, he said, "Of course you can translate the Scriptures into the Indian languages!" That began a friendship that continued throughout the lifetime of President Cardenas. His power and authority were used of God all those years to open doors to Wycliffe Translators throughout Mexico.- [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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Spurgeon said that this prayer would be the very last one he would pray, if able: "Lord, send to thy Church men filled with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Give to any denomination such men and its progress must be mighty; keep back such men, send them college gentlemen, of great refinement and profound learning, but of little fire and grace, dumb dogs which cannot bark, and straightway that denomination must decline." - [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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**Public Prayer** - While still a young boy, a certain Christian formed the habit of praying beside his bed before he went to sleep. Later, when he joined the army, he kept up this practice, though he became an object of mockery and ridicule in the barracks. One night, as he knelt to pray after a long, weary march, one of his tormentors took off his muddy boots and threw them at him one at a time, hitting him on each side of his head. The Christian said nothing, took the persecutor's boots, put them beside the bed, and continued to pray. The next morning, when the other soldier woke up, he found his polished and shined boots sitting beside his own bed. It so affected him that he asked for forgiveness and after a time became a Christian. - [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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**Thy Will Be Done** - Five-year-old Jessica became a bit frightened as lightning flashed and thunder cracked just as she was stepping out of her evening bath. The lights began flickering as she was getting into her pajamas. She remembered the other times the electricity had gone out and they had lit candles. Now she asked if she could "please sleep in Mommy's room" because of the storm. Before kissing her parents goodnight, Jessica prayed: "Dear God, I hope it doesn't thunder and I hope the lights don't go out." After a brief pause she continued, "But I thought it over, and you can do what you want. In Jesus' name, Amen." What better way to say, "Thy will be done"? - [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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I asked for strength that I might achieve;  
He made me weak that I might obey.  
I asked for health that I might do great things;  
He gave me grace that I might do better things.



I asked for riches that I might be happy;  
He gave me poverty that I might be wise.  
I asked for power that I might have the praise of men;  
He gave me weakness that I might feel a need of God.  
I asked for all things that I might enjoy life;  
He gave me life that I might enjoy all things.  
I received nothing I had asked for;  
He gave me all that I had hoped for.

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**God Owns the Cattle** - Shortly after Dallas Seminary was founded in 1924, it came to the point of bankruptcy. All the creditors were going to foreclose at noon on a particular day. That morning, the founders of the school met in the president's office to pray that God would provide. In that prayer meeting was Harry Ironside. When it was his turn to pray, he prayed in his characteristically refreshing manner: "Lord, we know that the cattle on a thousand hills are thine. Please sell some of them and send us the money." While they were praying, a tall Texan came into the business office and said, "I just sold two carloads of cattle in Fort Worth. I've been trying to make a business deal go through and it won't work, and I feel that God is compelling me to give this money to the Seminary. I don't know if you need it or not, but here's the check." A secretary took the check and, knowing something of the financial seriousness of the hour, went to the door of the prayer meeting and timidly tapped. When she finally got a response, Dr. Lewis Chafer took the check out of her hand, and it was for the exact amount of the debt. When he looked at the signature, he recognized the name of the cattle rancher. Turning to Dr. Ironside, he said, "Harry, God sold the cattle." - [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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**Asking in Jesus' Name** - A father took his children to the county fair one day. Since they were obviously not interested in the prize pig or calf, the father bought a whole roll of tickets for the various rides at the fair. As each of the children approached a ride, they would hold out a hand to get a ticket from their father. At one ride, after all his children had received tickets, a strange boy whom the father had never seen came up and held out his hand, obviously expecting a ticket. The father drew back his roll of tickets. He wasn't about to give this boy a ticket. Upon seeing this, the man's son Stephen turned and said to his dad, "It's okay, Dad, this is my friend. I told him you would give him a ticket." Do you know what the father did? He gave the boy a ticket in Stephen's name. That boy had no right to a ticket, but since his son had said he would do it, the father honored the name of his son by giving that strange boy a ticket. - [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

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**On the Way Home** - Thyra Bjorn told the story of accompanying her pastor father one evening to the shack of a poverty-stricken old man. He was crippled with age and pain, yet he offered them what hospitality he could, and when they prayed together, the old man's face came alive as the agony of his present life gave way to radiant joy. Rather than asking anything of God, the man thanked him in detail for his shack, his warm bed, his visitors, for everything that was a part of his seemingly cramped and limited existence. When he had finished, Bjorn wrote, "he looked as happy and contented as though he had no discomfort at all." On the way home through the dark cold fall air, Thyra's father sighted the lamp being lit in their parsonage in the valley below and called his daughter's attention to it. Then the thought struck the young girl that this too was what the old man in the cabin had seen: "He had seen his Father's house and knew that he soon would be home. There would be no more sickness or pain or loneliness there, and no more sorrow. And the light of prayer would lead him home." (Cited in Thyra F. Bjorn, *Mama's Way* [New York: Bantam, 1976]).

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**"Wrong Vocabulary"** - The elders of a certain church once came to a young man to criticize some of the theology and vocabulary he used in the prayers he prayed publicly in the church service. After they had laid their load on him, he turned to them and said, "Are you gentlemen finished? I have just one thing to say: I wasn't speaking to you."

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**911 Prayers** - They tell us the 911 emergency system is the state of the art. All you need do is dial those numbers, and you will almost instantly be connected to a dispatcher. In front of the dispatcher will be a read-out that lists your telephone number, your address, and the name by which that telephone number is listed at that address. Also listening in are the police, the fire department, and the paramedics. A caller might not be able to say what the problem is. Or perhaps a woman's husband has just suffered a heart attack, and she is so out of control that all she can do is hysterically scream into the telephone. But the dispatcher doesn't need her to say anything. He knows where the call is coming from. Help is already on the way. There come times in our lives when in our desperation and pain we dial 911 prayers. Sometimes we're hysterical. Sometimes we don't know the words to speak. But God hears. He knows our name and our circumstance. Help is on the way; God has already begun to bring the remedy. - [Craig Larson - 750 Engaging Illustrations.](#)

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**Dr. Charles Stanley** has suggested ten ways to pray for leaders who occupy the highest offices in the land.

- 1. Pray that they would realize their daily need for cleansing of their sin by Jesus Christ.
  - 2. Pray that they would recognize their personal inadequacy to fulfill their tasks and that they would depend upon God for knowledge, wisdom, and the courage to do what is right.
  - 3. Pray that they would reject all counsel that violates spiritual principles, trusting God to prove them right.
  - 4. Pray that they would resist those who would pressure them to violate their conscience.
  - 5. Pray that they would reverse the trends of socialism and humanism in this nation, both of which deify man rather than God.
  - 6. Pray that they would be ready to sacrifice their personal ambitions and political careers for the sake of this nation, if yielding them would be in the best interest of their country.
  - 7. Pray that they would rely upon prayer and the Word of God as the source of their daily strength, wisdom and courage.
  - 8. Pray they would restore dignity, honor, trustworthiness, and righteousness to the office they hold.
  - 9. Pray that they would remember to be good examples in their conduct to the fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters of this nation.
  - 10. Pray that they would be reminded daily that they are accountable to Almighty God for the decisions they make. —
- Excerpted from the Rebirth of America, Arthur S. DeMoss Foundation