

# Spurgeon's Gems on Prayer

## INTRODUCTION

Spurgeon's Gems on prayer (of which there too many to include on this page) are taken from various sources including his devotionals Morning and Evening and Faith's Checkbook as well as from his great exposition of the psalms, The Treasury of David. Quotes are also included from other resources as noted below. If you have never read Spurgeon's personal testimony, you might one to take a moment and see the amazing providential circumstances that God orchestrated in order to bring the Prince of Preachers to saving faith ([Spurgeon's Amazing Testimony](#)).

**"Let your thoughts be psalms, your prayers incense, and your breath praise." (CHS)**

## Prayer and Life

He who lives without **prayer**, he who lives with little **prayer**, he who seldom reads the Word, and he who seldom looks up to heaven for a fresh influence from on high—he will be the man whose heart will become dry and barren. However, he who falls in secret on his God, who spends much time in holy retirement, who delights to meditate on the words of the Most High, and whose soul is given up to Christ—such a man must have an overflowing heart. As his heart is, such will his life be.

## Prevailing Prayer

There are heights in experimental knowledge of the things of God which the eagle's eye of acumen and philosophic thought hath never seen: God alone can bear us there; but the chariot in which he takes us up, and the fiery steeds with which that chariot is dragged, are **prevailing prayers**. **Prevailing prayer** is victorious over the God of mercy, "By his strength he had power with God: yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us." **Prevailing prayer** takes the Christian to Carmel, and enables him to cover heaven with clouds of blessing, and earth with floods of mercy. **Prevailing prayer** bears the Christian aloft to Pisgah, and shows him the inheritance reserved; it elevates us to Tabor and transfigures us, till in the likeness of his Lord, as he is, so are we also in this world. If you would reach to something higher than ordinary groveling experience, look to the Rock that is higher than you, and gaze with the eye of faith through the window of importunate (troublesome urgency - overly persistent in request or demand) **prayer**. When you open the window on your side, it will not be bolted on the other.

## Prayer: The Whole of Christian Experience

If any one should ask me for an abstract of the Christian religion, I should say it is in that one word **prayer**. If I should be asked, "What will take in the whole of Christian experience?" I should answer, "**prayer**." A man must have been convinced of sin before he could **pray**; he must have had some hope that there was mercy for him before he could pray. All the Christian virtues are locked up in the word **prayer**. In troubling times our best communion with God will be carried on by supplication. Tell Him your case, search out His promise, and then plead it with holy boldness. This is the best, the surest, and the speediest way of relief.

## Prayer that Cuts "Diamonds"

If we had the blessings without asking for them, we should think them common things, but **prayer** makes the common pebbles of God's temporal bounties more precious than diamonds. Spiritual **prayer** cuts the diamond and makes it glisten more. When you are wrestling like Jacob with the angel and are nearly thrown down, ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen your 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 moves.

## Prayer and Blessing

Anything is a blessing which makes us pray. Indeed the very act of prayer is a blessing. To pray is, as it were, to bathe in a cool, swirling stream and so to escape from the heat of earth's summer sun. To pray is to mount on eagle's wings above the clouds and get into the clear heaven where God dwells. To pray is to enter the treasure-house of God and to gather riches out of an inexhaustible storehouse. To pray is to grasp heaven in one's arms, to embrace the Deity within one's soul, and to feel one's body made a temple of the Holy Spirit. Apart from the answer, prayer in itself is a blessing. To pray, my friends, is to cast off your burdens. It is to tear away your rags; it is to shake off your diseases; it is to be filled with spiritual vigor; it is to reach the highest point of Christian health. God grant us to be much in the holy art of wrestling with God in prayer.

## Prayer and Perishing

**Prayer** is the certain forerunner of salvation. Sinner, you cannot pray and perish; **prayer** and perishing are two things that never go together. I ask you not what your prayer is. It may be a groan, it may be a tear, but if it is a prayer from the inmost heart, you will be saved. Yet, if from your heart you have learned to **pray**—

**Prayer** is the breath of God in man,  
Returning whence it came.

—you cannot perish with God's breath in you. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21).

## Jesus Pleads for Us

"I have prayed for thee" — Luke 22:32

How encouraging is the thought of the Redeemer's never-ceasing intercession for us. When we **pray**, he pleads for us; and when we are not **praying**, he is advocating our cause, and by his supplications shielding us from unseen dangers. Notice the word of comfort addressed to Peter—"Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but"—what? "But go and pray for yourself." That would be good advice, but it is not so written. Neither does he say, "But I will keep you watchful, and so you shall be preserved." That were a great blessing. No, it is, "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." We little know what we owe to our Saviour's **prayers**. When we reach the hill-tops of heaven, and look back upon all the way whereby the Lord our God hath led us, how we shall praise him who, before the eternal throne, undid the mischief which Satan was doing upon earth. How shall we thank him because he never held his peace, but day and night pointed to the wounds upon his hands, and carried our names upon his breastplate! Even before Satan had begun to tempt, Jesus had forestalled him and entered a plea in heaven. Mercy outruns malice. Mark, he does not say, "Satan hath desired to have you." He checks Satan even in his very desire, and nips it in the bud. He does not say, "But I have desired to **pray** for you." No, but "I have **prayed** for you: I have done it already; I have gone to court and entered a counterplea even before an accusation is made." O Jesus, what a comfort it is that thou hast pleaded our cause against our unseen enemies; countermined their mines, and unmasked their ambushes. Here is a matter for joy, gratitude, hope, and confidence.

## Pleading For Others

As an encouragement to offer intercessory **prayer** cheerfully, remember that such **prayer** is the sweetest God ever hears, for the **prayer** of Christ is of this character. His intercession must be the most acceptable of all **supplications**, and the more like our **prayer** is to Christ's, the sweeter it will be. Thus, while **petitions** for ourselves will be accepted, our **pleadings** for others, having in them more of the fruits of the Spirit—more love, more faith, more brotherly kindness—will be, through the precious merits of Jesus, the sweetest offering that we can offer to God, the very fat of our sacrifice. Remember, again, that intercessory **prayer** is exceedingly prevalent. What wonders it has wrought!

Remarkable answers to **prayer** very much quicken the **prayerfulness** of other godly persons.

Prayer is especially the duty of those to whom the Lord has specially revealed himself as their defense.

## Prayer Promoting God's Glory

"Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Mt 6:9-10-notes).

Let not your **prayers** be all concerning your own sins, your own wants, your own imperfections, and your own trials, but let them climb the starry ladder and get up to Christ Himself. Then, as you draw nigh to the blood-sprinkled mercy seat, offer this **prayer** continually, "Lord, extend the kingdom of Your dear Son." Such a **petition**, fervently presented, will elevate the spirit of all your devotions. Mind that you prove the sincerity of your **prayer** by laboring to promote the Lord's glory.

Our best **prayers** when we are in the best place are for our glorious King, and for the enjoyment of his Father's smile.

## "The prayer of the upright is his delight."

Proverbs 15:8

THIS is as good as a promise, for it declares a present fact which will be the same throughout all ages. God takes great pleasure in the **prayers** of upright men; He even calls them His delight. Our first concern is to be upright. Neither bending this way nor that, continue upright: not crooked with policy, nor prostrate by yielding to evil, be you upright in strict integrity and straightforwardness. If we begin to shuffle and shift, we shall be left to shift for ourselves. If we try crooked ways, we shall find that we cannot **pray**; and if we pretend to do so, we shall find our **prayers** shut out of heaven. Are we acting in a straight line and thus following out the Lord's revealed will? Then let us **pray** much and **pray** in faith. If our **prayer** is God's delight, let us not stint (be frugal or miserly towards) Him in that which gives Him pleasure. He does not consider the grammar of it, nor the metaphysics of it, nor the rhetoric of it; in all these, men might despise it. He, as a Father, takes pleasure in the lisplings of His own babes, the stammerings of His new-born sons and daughters. Should we not delight in **prayer** since the Lord delights in it? Let us make errands to the throne. The Lord finds us enough reasons for **prayer**, and we ought to thank Him that it is so.

## Replace Care with All Prayer

"Be anxious for nothing,  
but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving  
let your requests be made known to God.  
And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension,  
shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Phil 4:6-note, Phil 4:7-note)

NO care, but all **prayer**. No anxiety, but much joyful communion with God. Carry your desires to the Lord of your life, the guardian of your soul. Go to Him with two portions of **prayer** and one of fragrant praise. Do not **pray** doubtfully, but thankfully. Consider that you have your **petitions**, and therefore thank God for His grace. He is giving you grace; give Him thanks. Hide nothing. Allow no want to lie rankling in your bosom; "make known your requests." Run not to man. Go only to your God, the Father of Jesus, who loves you in Him. This shall bring you God's own peace. You shall not be able to understand the peace which you shall enjoy. It will enfold you in its infinite embrace. Heart and mind through Christ Jesus shall be steeped in a sea of rest. Come life or death, poverty, pain, slander, you shall dwell in Jesus above every ruffling wind or darkening cloud. Will you not obey this dear command?

Yes, Lord, I do believe thee; but, I beseech thee help mine unbelief.

## Jehovah Receives Our Prayers

"The Lord hath heard my supplication;

the Lord will receive my prayer.”—Psalm 6:9

THE experience here recorded is mine. I can set to my seal that God is true. In very wonderful ways He has answered the **prayers** of His servant many and many a time. Yes, and He is hearing my present **supplication**, and He is not turning away His ear from me. Blessed be His holy name! What then? Why, for certain the promise which lies sleeping in the Psalmist’s believing confidence is also mine. Let me grasp it by the hand of faith: “The Lord will receive my **prayer**.” He will accept it, think of it, and grant it in the way and time which His loving wisdom judges to be best. I bring my poor **prayer** in my hand to the great King, and He gives me audience and graciously receives my **petition**. My enemies will not listen to me, but my Lord will. They ridicule my tearful **prayers**, but my Lord does not; He receives my **prayer** into His ear and His heart. What a reception this is for a poor sinner! We receive Jesus, and then the Lord receives us and our **prayers** for His Son’s sake. Blessed be that dear name which franks (put an official mark on a letter indicating the right of free delivery) our **prayers** so that they freely pass even within the golden gates. Lord, teach me to pray, since thou hearest my **prayers**.

When our **prayers** are lowly by reason of our humility, or feeble by reason of our sickness, or without wing by reason of our despondency, the Lord will bow down to them. Faith, when she has the loftiest name of God on her tongue, and calls him Jehovah, yet dares to ask from him the most tender and condescending acts of love. Great as he is he loves his children to be bold with him.

## Just Call Upon Him

“Call unto me, and I will answer thee,  
and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.”—Jer 33:3-note

GOD encourages us to **pray**. They tell us that **prayer** is a pious exercise which has no influence except upon the mind engaged in it. We know better. Our experience gives the lie a thousand times over to this infidel assertion. Here Jehovah, the living God, distinctly promises to answer the **prayer** of His servant. Let us **call upon** Him again and admit no doubt upon the question of His hearing us and answering us. He that made the ear, shall He not hear? He that gave parents a love to their children, will He not listen to the cries of His own sons and daughters?

God will answer His **pleading** people in their anguish. He has wonders in store for them. What they have never seen, heard of, or dreamed of, He will do for them. He will invent new blessings if needful. He will ransack sea and land to feed them: He will send every angel out of heaven to succor them, if their distress requires it. He will astound us with His grace and make us feel that it was never before done in this fashion. All He asks of us is that we will **call upon** Him. He cannot ask less of us. Let us cheerfully render Him our **prayers** at once.

## The Necessity of Prayer

“Continue in prayer.” (Colossians 4:2-note)

It is interesting to remark how large a portion of Sacred Writ is occupied with the subject of **prayer**, either in furnishing examples, enforcing precepts, or pronouncing promises. We scarcely open the Bible before we read, “Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord;” and just as we are about to close the volume, the “Amen” of an earnest **supplication** meets our ear. Instances are plentiful. Here we find a **wrestling** Jacob—there a Daniel who **prayed** three times a day—and a David who with all his heart **called** upon his God. On the mountain we see Elias; in the dungeon Paul and Silas. We have multitudes of commands, and myriads of promises. What does this teach us, but the sacred importance and necessity of **prayer**? We may be certain that whatever God has made prominent in his Word, he intended to be conspicuous in our lives. If he has said much about **prayer**, it is because he knows we have much need of it. So deep are our necessities, that until we are in heaven we must not cease to **pray**. Dost thou want nothing? Then, I fear thou dost not know thy poverty. Hast thou no mercy to ask of God? Then, may the Lord’s mercy show thee thy misery! A **prayerless** soul is a Christless soul. **Prayer** is the lisping of the believing infant, the shout of the fighting believer, the requiem of the dying saint falling asleep in Jesus. It is the breath, the watchword, the comfort, the strength, the honour of a Christian. If thou be a child of God, thou wilt seek thy Father’s face, and live in thy Father’s love.

**Pray** that this year thou mayst be holy, humble, zealous, and patient; have closer communion with Christ, and enter oftener into the banqueting-house of his love. **Pray** that thou mayst be an example and a blessing unto others, and that thou mayst live more to the glory of thy Master. The motto for this year must be, “Continue in **prayer**.”

## Sinking Times Are Praying Times

Beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me — Mt 14:30

Sinking times are **praying** times with the Lord's servants. Peter neglected **prayer** at starting upon his venturesome journey, but when he began to sink his danger made him a suppliant, and his cry though late was not too late. In our hours of bodily pain and mental anguish, we find ourselves as naturally driven to **prayer** as the wreck is driven upon the shore by the waves. The fox flies to its hole for protection; the bird flies to the wood for shelter; and even so the tried believer hastens to the mercy seat for safety. Heaven's great harbor of refuge is **All-prayer**; thousands of weather-beaten vessels have found a haven there, and the moment a storm comes on, it is wise for us to make for it with all sail. Short **prayers** are long enough. There were but three words in the **petition** which Peter gasped out, but they were sufficient for his purpose. Not length but strength is desirable. A sense of need is a mighty teacher of brevity. If our **prayers** had less of the tail feathers of pride and more wing they would be all the better. Verbiage is to devotion as chaff to the wheat. Precious things lie in small compass, and all that is real prayer in many a long address might have been uttered in a petition as short as that of Peter. **Our extremities are the Lord's opportunities.** Immediately a keen sense of danger forces an **anxious cry** from us the ear of Jesus hears, and with him ear and heart go together, and the hand does not long linger. At the last moment we appeal to our Master, but his swift hand makes up for our delays by instant and effectual action. Are we nearly engulfed by the boisterous waters of affliction? Let us then lift up our souls unto our Saviour, and we may rest assured that he will not suffer us to perish. When we can do nothing Jesus can do all things; let us enlist his powerful **aid** upon our side, and all will be well.

## Be Immersed in Prayer

"But I give myself unto prayer."— Ps 109:4

Lying tongues were busy against the reputation of David, but he did not defend himself; he moved the case into a higher court, and pleaded before the great King himself. **Prayer** is the safest method of replying to words of hatred. The Psalmist **prayed** in no cold-hearted manner, he gave himself to the exercise—threw his whole soul and heart into it—straining every sinew and muscle, as Jacob did when wrestling with the angel. Thus, and thus only, shall any of us speed at the throne of grace. As a shadow has no power because there is no substance in it, even so that supplication, in which a man's proper self is not thoroughly present in agonizing earnestness and vehement desire, is utterly ineffectual, for it lacks that which would give it force. "Fervent **prayer**," says an old divine, "like a cannon planted at the gates of heaven, makes them fly open." The common fault with the most of us is our readiness to yield to distractions. Our thoughts go roving hither and thither, and we make little progress towards our desired end. Like quicksilver our mind will not hold together, but rolls off this way and that. How great an evil this is! It injures us, and what is worse, it insults our God. What should we think of a petitioner, if, while having an audience with a prince, he should be playing with a feather or catching a fly? Continuance and perseverance are intended in the expression of our text. David did not cry once, and then relapse into silence; his holy clamor was continued till it brought down the blessing. **Prayer** must not be our chance work, but our daily business, our habit and vocation. As artists give themselves to their models, and poets to their classical pursuits, so must we addict ourselves to **prayer**. We must be immersed in **prayer** as in our element, and so **pray** without ceasing. Lord, teach us so to **pray** that we may be more and more prevalent in supplication.

## Praying always

(Ephesians 6:18-note)

What multitudes of prayers we have put up from the first moment when we learned to **pray**. Our first **prayer** was a **prayer** for ourselves; we asked that God would have mercy upon us, and blot out our sin. He heard us. But when he had blotted out our sins like a cloud, then we had more **prayers** for ourselves. We have had to **pray** for sanctifying grace, for constraining and restraining grace; we have been led to crave for a fresh assurance of faith, for the comfortable application of the promise, for deliverance in the hour of temptation, for help in the time of duty, and for succour in the day of trial. We have been compelled to go to God for our souls, as constant beggars asking for everything. Bear witness, children of God, you have never been able to get anything for your souls elsewhere. All the bread your soul has eaten has come down from heaven, and all the water of which it has drunk has flowed from the living rock—Christ Jesus the Lord. Your soul has never grown rich in itself; it has always been a pensioner upon the daily bounty of God; and hence your **prayers** have ascended to heaven for a range of spiritual mercies all but infinite. Your wants were

innumerable, and therefore the supplies have been infinitely great, and your **prayers** have been as varied as the mercies have been countless. Then have you not cause to say, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplication"? For as your **prayers** have been many, so also have been God's answers to them. He has heard you in the day of trouble, has strengthened you, and helped you, even when you dishonored him by trembling and doubting at the mercy-seat. Remember this, and let it fill your heart with gratitude to God, who has thus graciously heard your poor weak **prayers**. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

## Intercessory Prayer

"Pray one for another." — James 5:16

As an encouragement cheerfully to offer intercessory **prayer**, remember that such **prayer** is the sweetest God ever hears, for the **prayer** of Christ is of this character. In all the incense which our Great High Priest now puts into the golden censer, there is not a single grain for himself. His intercession must be the most acceptable of all supplications—and the more like our **prayer** is to Christ's, the sweeter it will be; thus while petitions for ourselves will be accepted, our pleadings for others, having in them more of the fruits of the Spirit, more love, more faith, more brotherly kindness, will be, through the precious merits of Jesus, the sweetest oblation that we can offer to God, the very fat of our sacrifice. Remember, again, that intercessory **prayer** is exceedingly prevalent. What wonders it has wrought! The Word of God teems with its marvellous deeds. Believer, thou hast a mighty engine in thy hand, use it well, use it constantly, use it with faith, and thou shalt surely be a benefactor to thy brethren. When thou hast the King's ear, speak to him for the suffering members of his body. When thou art favoured to draw very near to his throne, and the King saith to thee, "Ask, and I will give thee what thou wilt," let thy petitions be, not for thyself alone, but for the many who need his aid. If thou hast grace at all, and art not an intercessor, that grace must be small as a grain of mustard seed. Thou hast just enough grace to float thy soul clear from the quicksand, but thou hast no deep floods of grace, or else thou wouldst carry in thy joyous bark a weighty cargo of the wants of others, and thou wouldst bring back from thy Lord, for them, rich blessings which but for thee they might not have obtained:—

"Oh, let my hands forget their skill,  
My tongue be silent, cold, and still,  
This bounding heart forget to beat,  
If I forget the mercy-seat!"

## Prayer: The Forerunner of Mercy

"Thus saith the Lord God;

I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." — Ezekiel 36:37-note

**Prayer** is the forerunner of mercy. Turn to sacred history, and you will find that scarcely ever did a great mercy come to this world unheralded by **supplication**. You have found this true in your own personal experience. God has given you many an unsolicited favour, but still great **prayer** has always been the prelude of great mercy with you. When you first found peace through the blood of the cross, you had been **praying** much, and earnestly interceding with God that he would remove your doubts, and deliver you from your distresses. Your assurance was the result of **prayer**. When at any time you have had high and rapturous joys, you have been obliged to look upon them as answers to your **prayers**. When you have had great deliverances out of sore troubles, and mighty helps in great dangers, you have been able to say, "I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." **Prayer** is always the preface to blessing. It goes before the blessing as the blessing's shadow. When the sunlight of God's mercies rises upon our necessities, it casts the shadow of **prayer** far down upon the plain. Or, to use another illustration, when God piles up a hill of mercies, he himself shines behind them, and he casts on our spirits the shadow of prayer, so that we may rest certain, if we are much in **prayer**, our pleadings are the shadows of mercy. **Prayer** is thus connected with the blessing to show us the value of it. If we had the blessings without asking for them, we should think them common things; but **prayer** makes our mercies more precious than diamonds. The things we ask for are precious, but we do not realize their preciousness until we have sought for them earnestly.

"**Prayer** makes the darken'd cloud withdraw;  
**Prayer** climbs the ladder Jacob saw;  
Gives exercise to faith and love;  
Brings every blessing from above."

## The Tool of Prayer and the Treasure of the Bible

If, for your own and others' profiting, you desire to be "filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding," remember that **prayer** is your best means of study: like Daniel, you shall understand the dream, and the interpretation thereof, when you have sought unto God; and like John you shall see the seven seals of precious truth unloosed, after you have wept much. Stones are not broken, except by an earnest use of the hammer; and the stone-breaker must go **down on his knees**. Use the hammer of diligence, and let the **knee of prayer** be exercised, and there is not a stony doctrine in revelation which is useful for you to understand, which will not fly into shivers under the exercise of **prayer** and faith. You may force your way through anything with the leverage of **prayer**. Thoughts and reasonings are like the steel wedges which give a hold upon truth; but **prayer** is the lever, the prise (tool for producing leverage) which forces open the iron chest of sacred mystery, that we may get the treasure hidden within.

## Our Savior's Model of Prevailing Prayer

"And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed." — Mt 26:39

There are several instructive features in our Saviour's **prayer** in his hour of trial.

It was **lonely prayer**. He withdrew even from his three favored disciples. Believer, be much in **solitary prayer**, especially in times of trial. Family **prayer**, social **prayer**, **prayer** in the Church, will not suffice, these are very precious, but the best beaten spice will smoke in your censer in your private devotions, where no ear hears but God's.

It was **humble prayer**. Luke says he knelt, but another evangelist says he "fell on his face." Where, then, must be thy place, thou humble servant of the great Master? What dust and ashes should cover thy head! Humility gives us good foot-hold in **prayer**. There is no hope of prevalance with God unless we abase ourselves that he may exalt us in due time.

It was **filial prayer**. "Abba, Father." You will find it a stronghold in the day of trial to plead your adoption. You have no rights as a subject, you have forfeited them by your treason; but nothing can forfeit a child's right to a father's protection. Be not afraid to say, "My Father, hear my cry."

Observe that it was **persevering prayer**. He prayed three times. Cease not until you prevail. Be as the importunate (troublesome urgency - overly persistent in request or demand) widow, whose continual coming earned what her first supplication could not win. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.

Lastly, it was the **prayer of resignation**. "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Yield, and God yields. Let it be as God wills, and God will determine for the best. Be thou content to leave thy prayer in his hands, who knows when to give, and how to give, and what to give, and what to withhold.

**So pleading, earnestly, importunately, yet with humility and resignation,  
thou shalt surely prevail.**

## Prayer that Tarries

"I called him, but he gave me no answer." — Song of Solomon 5:6

**Prayer** sometimes tarrieth, like a **petitioner** at the gate, until the King cometh forth to fill her bosom with the blessings which she seeketh. The Lord, when he hath given great faith, has been known to try it by long delayings. He has suffered his servants' voices to echo in their ears as from a brazen sky. They have knocked at the golden gate, but it has remained immovable, as though it were rusted upon its hinges. Like Jeremiah, they have cried, "Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our **prayer** should not pass through." Thus have true saints continued long in patient waiting without reply, not because their **prayers** were not vehement, nor because they were unaccepted, but because it so pleased him who is a Sovereign, and who gives according to his own pleasure. If it pleases him to bid our patience exercise itself, shall he not do as he wills with his own! Beggars must not be choosers either as to time, place, or form. But we must **be careful not to take delays in prayer for denials**: God's long-dated bills will be punctually honored; we must not suffer Satan to shake our confidence in the God of truth by pointing to our unanswered **prayers**. Unanswered **petitions** are not unheard. God keeps a file for our **prayers**—they are not blown away by the wind, they are treasured in the King's

archives. This is a registry in the court of heaven wherein every **prayer** is recorded. Tried believer, thy Lord hath a tear-bottle in which the costly drops of sacred grief are put away, and a book in which thy holy groanings are numbered. By-and-by, thy suit shall prevail. Canst thou not be content to wait a little? Will not thy Lord's time be better than thy time? By-and-by he will comfortably appear, to thy soul's joy, and make thee put away the sackcloth and ashes of long waiting, and put on the scarlet and fine linen of full fruition.

## Prayers for Sorrows and Sins

"Look upon mine affliction and my pain;  
and forgive all my sins." — Psalm 25:18

It is well for us when **prayers** about our sorrows are linked with pleas concerning our sins—when, being under God's hand, we are not wholly taken up with our pain, but remember our offences against God. It is well, also, to take both sorrow and sin to the same place.

## The Character of Our Prayers

"Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer." — Psalm 66:20

In looking back upon the character of our **prayers**, if we do it honestly, we shall be filled with wonder that God has ever answered them. There may be some who think their **prayers** worthy of acceptance—as the Pharisee did; but the true Christian, in a more enlightened retrospect, weeps over his **prayers**, and if he could retrace his steps he would desire to **pray** more earnestly. Remember, Christian, how cold thy **prayers** have been. When in thy closet thou shouldst have wrestled as Jacob did; but instead thereof, thy petitions have been faint and few—far removed from that humble, believing, persevering faith, which cries, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." Yet, wonderful to say, God has heard these cold prayers of thine, and not only heard, but answered them. Reflect also, how infrequent have been thy **prayers**, unless thou hast been in trouble, and then thou hast gone often to the mercy-seat: but when deliverance has come, where has been thy constant supplication? Yet, notwithstanding thou hast ceased to **pray** as once thou didst, God has not ceased to bless. When thou hast neglected the mercy-seat, God has not deserted it, but the bright light of the Shekinah has always been visible between the wings of the cherubim. Oh! it is marvellous that the Lord should regard those intermittent spasms of importunity which come and go with our necessities. What a God is he thus to hear the **prayers** of those who come to him when they have pressing wants, but neglect him when they have received a mercy; who approach him when they are forced to come, but who almost forget to address him when mercies are plentiful and sorrows are few. Let his gracious kindness in hearing such prayers touch our hearts, so that we may henceforth be found "**Praying** always with all **prayer** and supplication in the Spirit."

## How is Your Prayer Altar?

"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 Path of Prayer is Open



Many are “the paths of the Lord” which “drop fatness,” but an especial one is the path of **prayer**. No believer, who is much in the closet, will have need to cry, “My leanness, my leanness; woe unto me.” Starving souls live at a distance from the mercy-seat, and become like the parched fields in times of drought. Prevalence with God in wrestling **prayer** is sure to make the believer strong—if not happy. The nearest place to the gate of heaven is the throne of the heavenly grace.

**Much alone, and you will have much assurance;  
little alone with Jesus, your religion will be shallow,  
polluted with many doubts and fears,  
and not sparkling with the joy of the Lord.**

Since the soul-enriching path of **prayer** is open to the very weakest saint; since no high attainments are required; since you are not bidden to come because you are an advanced saint, but freely invited if you be a saint at all; see to it, dear reader, that you are often in the way of private devotion. Be much on your knees, for so Elijah drew the rain upon famished Israel’s fields.

## “Praying in the Holy Ghost.”

Jude 1:20-note

Mark the grand characteristic of true **prayer**—“In the Holy Ghost.” The seed of acceptable devotion must come from heaven’s storehouse. Only the **prayer** which comes from God can go to God. We must shoot the Lord’s arrows back to him. That desire which he writes upon our heart will move his heart and bring down a blessing, but the desires of the flesh have no power with him.

**Praying** in the Holy Ghost is praying in fervency. Cold **prayers** ask the Lord not to hear them. Those who do not plead with fervency, plead not at all. As well speak of lukewarm fire as of lukewarm **prayer**—it is essential that it be red hot.

It is **praying** perseveringly. The true suppliant gathers force as he proceeds, and grows more fervent when God delays to answer. The longer the gate is closed, the more vehemently does he use the knocker, and the longer the angel lingers the more resolved is he that he will never let him go without the blessing. Beautiful in God’s sight is tearful, agonizing, unconquerable importunity.

It means **praying** humbly, for the Holy Spirit never puffs us up with pride. It is his office to convince of sin, and so to bow us down in contrition and brokenness of spirit. We shall never sing Gloria in excelsis except we **pray** to God De profundis: out of the depths must we cry, or we shall never behold glory in the highest.

It is loving **prayer**. **Prayer** should be perfumed with love, saturated with love—love to our fellow saints, and love to Christ.

Moreover, it must be a **prayer** full of faith. A man prevails only as he believes. The Holy Spirit is the author of faith, and strengthens it, so that we **pray** believing God’s promise. O that this blessed combination of excellent graces, priceless and sweet as the spices of the merchant, might be fragrant within us because the Holy Ghost is in our hearts! Most blessed Comforter, exert thy mighty power within us, helping our infirmities in **prayer**.

## The Power of Prayer

“Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.” — Lamentations 3:41

The act of **prayer** teaches us our unworthiness, which is a very salutary lesson for such proud beings as we are. If God gave us favours without constraining us to **pray** for them we should never know how poor we are, but a true **prayer** is an inventory of wants, a catalogue of necessities, a revelation of hidden poverty. While it is an application to divine wealth, it is a confession of human emptiness. The most healthy state of a Christian is to be always empty in self and constantly depending upon the Lord for supplies; to be always poor in self and rich in Jesus; weak as water personally, but mighty through God to do great exploits; and hence the use of **prayer**, because, while it adores God, it lays the creature where it should be, in the very dust.

**Prayer** is in itself, apart from the answer which it brings, a great benefit to the Christian. As the runner gains strength for the race by daily exercise, so for the great race of life we acquire energy by the hallowed labour of **prayer**.

**Prayer** plumes the wings of God’s young eaglets, that they may learn to mount above the clouds.

**Prayer** girds the loins of God's warriors, and sends them forth to combat with their sinews braced and their muscles firm. An earnest pleader cometh out of his closet, even as the sun ariseth from the chambers of the east, rejoicing like a strong man to run his race.

**Prayer** is that uplifted hand of Moses which routs the Amalekites more than the sword of Joshua; it is the arrow shot from the chamber of the prophet foreboding defeat to the Syrians.

**Prayer** girds human weakness with divine strength, turns human folly into heavenly wisdom, and gives to troubled mortals the peace of God.

We know not what **prayer** cannot do!

We thank thee, great God, for the mercy-seat, a choice proof of thy marvellous lovingkindness. Help us to use it aright throughout this day!

## Our Every Ready Weapon of All Prayer

"Their **prayer** came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven." — 2 Chronicles 30:27

**Prayer** is the never-failing resort of the Christian in any case, in every plight. When you cannot use your sword you may take to the weapon of **all-prayer**. Your powder may be damp, your bow-string may be relaxed, but the weapon of **all-prayer** need never be out of order. Leviathan laughs at the javelin, but he trembles at **prayer**. Sword and spear need furbishing, but **prayer** never rusts, and when we think it most blunt it cuts the best. **Prayer** is an open door which none can shut. Devils may surround you on all sides, but the way upward is always open, and as long as that road is unobstructed, you will not fall into the enemy's hand. We can never be taken by blockade, escalade, mine, or storm, so long as heavenly succors can come down to us by Jacob's ladder to relieve us in the time of our necessities. **Prayer** is never out of season: in summer and in winter its merchandise is precious. **Prayer** gains audience with heaven in the dead of night, in the midst of business, in the heat of noonday, in the shades of evening. In every condition, whether of poverty, or sickness, or obscurity, or slander, or doubt, your covenant God will welcome your **prayer** and answer it from his holy place. Nor is **prayer** ever futile. True **prayer** is evermore true power. You may not always get what you ask, but you shall always have your real wants supplied. When God does not answer his children according to the letter, he does so according to the spirit. If thou askest for coarse meal, wilt thou be angered because he gives thee the finest flour? If thou seekest bodily health, shouldst thou complain if instead thereof he makes thy sickness turn to the healing of spiritual maladies? Is it not better to have the cross sanctified than removed? This evening, my soul, forget not to offer thy petition and request, for the Lord is ready to grant thee thy desires.

## Prayer and the Promises of God

God's promises are the peculiar treasure of believers. The substance of faith's heritage lies in them. All the promises of our covenant God are ours to have and to hold as our personal possession. By faith we receive and embrace them, and they constitute our true riches. We have certain most precious things which we can freely enjoy at this present time, but the capital of our wealth, the bulk of our estate lies in the promise of our God. That which we have in hand is only the earnest penny of the immeasurable wage of grace which is to be paid to us in due time... Nor must I forget to remind you that the promise is part of the economy of our spiritual condition here below because it excites **prayer**. What is **prayer** but the promise pleaded? A promise is, so to speak, the raw material of prayer. **Prayer** irrigates the fields of life with the waters which are stored up in the reservoirs of promise. The promise is the power of **prayer**. We go to God, and we say to Him, "Do as thou hast said. Oh Lord, here is thy word; we ask thee to fulfill it." Thus the promise is the bow by which we shoot the arrows of **supplication**. I like in my time of trouble to find a promise which exactly fits my need and then to put my finger on it and say, "Lord, this is thy word. I ask you to prove that it is so, by carrying it out in my case. I believe that this is thine own writing and I **pray** that you make it good to my faith." I believe in plenary inspiration, and I humbly look to the Lord for a plenary fulfillment of every sentence that he has put on record. I delight to hold the Lord to the very words that he has used and to expect him to do as he has said because he has said it. It is a great thing to be driven to **prayer** by necessity. It is a better thing to be drawn to it by the expectation which the promise arouses. Should we **pray** at all if God did not find us an occasion for **praying** and then encourage us with gracious promises of an answer? As it is, in the order of providence we are tried, and then we try the promises. We are brought to spiritual hunger, and then we are fed on the Word which proceeds out of the mouth of God.

The precious promises of our great God are expressly intended to be taken to Him and exchanged for the blessings which they

guarantee. **Prayer** takes the promise to the Bank of Faith and obtains the golden blessing. Mind how you **pray**. Make real business of it. Let it never be a dead formality. Some people **pray** a long time but do not get what they are supposed to ask for because they do not **plead** the promise in a truthful, business-like way. If you were to go into a bank and stand an hour talking to the clerk and then come out again without your cash, what would be the good of it? If I go to a bank, I pass my check across the counter, take up my money, and go about my business. That is the best way of **praying**. Ask for what you want, because the Lord has promised it. Believe that you have the blessing, and go forth to your work in full assurance of it. Go from your knees singing because the promise is fulfilled. Thus will your **prayer** be answered. It is not the length of your **prayer**, but the strength of your **prayer** which wins with God. The strength of **prayer** lies in your faith in the promise which you have pleaded before the Lord.

## Specificity in Prayer

King David knew what the Lord had engaged to give him, and he referred to it specially in his **prayer** as “this good thing” (2 Sa 7:28). We greatly need to be more definite in our **supplications** than we usually are. We **pray** for everything in such a way that we practically **pray** for nothing. It is good to know what we want. Hence our Lord said to the blind man, “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?” (Mark 10:51). He wished him to be aware of his own needs and to be filled with earnest desires concerning those needs. These are valuable ingredients in the composition of **prayer**.

## The Holy Spirit, Your Great Teacher

When we have no commentator or minister, we still have the Holy Spirit. Let me tell you a little secret: Whenever you cannot understand a text, open your Bible, bend your knee, and **pray** over that text. If it does not split into atoms and open itself, try again. If **prayer** does not explain it, it is one of the things God did not intend you to know, and you may be content to be ignorant of it. **Prayer** is the key that opens the cabinets of mystery. **Prayer** and faith are sacred picklocks that can open secrets and obtain great treasures. There is no college for holy education like that of the blessed Spirit, for He is an ever-present tutor. We only have to **bend the knee**, and He is at our side, the great expositor of truth.

## Prayer and Understanding Scripture

Dear friends, whenever you want to understand a text of Scripture, try to read the original. Consult anybody who has studied what the original means, but remember that the quickest way into a text is **praying** in the Holy Ghost. **Pray** the chapter over. I do not hesitate to say that if a chapter is read upon one’s knees, looking up at every word to Him that gave it, the meaning will come to you with infinitely more light than by any other method of studying it.

## Prayer Meeting

When he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying”—Acts 12:12.

“... On all occasions “many were gathered together **praying**.” While **praying** the Spirit of God came down upon them; while **praying** the Spirit often separated this man and that for special work; while **praying** their hearts grew warm with inward fire; while **praying** their tongues were unloosed, and they went forth to speak to the people; and while **praying** the Lord opened to them the treasures of his grace. By **prayer** they were protected, and by **prayer** they grew; and if our churches are to live and grow they must be watered from the self-same source. “**Let us pray**,” is one of the most needful watchwords which I can suggest to Christian men and women, for if we will but **pray**, **prayer** will fill up the pools in the valley of Baca, yea, and open to us all the channels of that river of God which is full of water, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God.

## Prayer and Praise

Come, believer, when you **pray**, you are but a man, but when you praise, you are as an angel. When you **ask favor**, you are but a beggar, but when you stand up to extol, you become next of kin to cherubim and seraphim... If I were to put to you the question, "Do you **pray**?" the answer would very quickly be given by every Christian, "Of course I do." Suppose I then added, "And do you **pray** every day?" the prompt reply would be, "Yes, many times in the day. I could not live without **prayer**." This is no more than I would expect. However, let me change the inquiry and ask, "Do you bless God every day? Is praise as certain and constant a practice with you as **prayer**?" I am not sure that the answer would be quite so certain, so generous, or so prompt. You would have to stop a little while before you gave the reply. I fear in some cases, when the reply did come, it would be, "I am afraid I have been negligent in praise." Well, dear friend, have you not been wrong? Should we omit praise any more than we omit **prayer**? Should not praise come daily and as many times in the day as **prayer** does? It strikes me that to fail in praise is as unjustifiable as to fail in **prayer**. I will leave it with your own heart and conscience, when you have answered the question, to see to it in the future that far more of the sweet frankincense of praise is mingled with your daily offering of **prayer**. Praise is certainly not at all so common in family prayer as other forms of worship. We cannot all of us praise God in the family by joining in song, because we are not all able to carry a tune, but it would be well if we could. I agree with Matthew Henry when he says, "They that **pray** in the family do well; they that **pray** and read the Scriptures do better; but they that **pray**, and read, and sing do best of all." There is a completeness in that kind of family worship which is much to be desired.

**Prayer** heard should always suggest praise. It were well if we were more demonstrative in our holy rejoicings. We rob God by suppressing grateful emotions.

"And my prayer unto the God of my life" (Ps 42:9). **Prayer** is yoked with praise. The living God is the God of our life; from him we derive it, with him in **prayer** and praise we spend it, to him we devote it, in him we shall perfect it. To be assured that our sighs and songs will both have free access to our glorious Lord is to have reasons for hope in the most deplorable condition.

## Prayer and the Place of Meditation

Do we not miss very much of the sweetness and efficacy of **prayer** by lack of careful meditation before it and of hopeful expectation after it? We too often rush into the presence of God without forethought or humility. We should be careful to keep the stream of meditation always running, for this is the water to drive the mill of **prayer**. **Prayer** without preparation is hawking with a blind falcon. **Prayer** is the work of the Holy Spirit, but he works by means. The Holy Spirit is the author of **prayer**, but he employs the thoughts of a fervent soul as the gold with which to fashion the vessel. Let not our **prayers** and praises be the flashes of a hot and hasty brain, but the steady burning of a well-kindled fire. Furthermore, we forget to watch for the result of our **prayers**. We sow the seed and are too ideal to seek a harvest. Let holy preparation link hands with patient expectation, and we shall have far larger answers to our **prayers**.

## Prayer for Preservation from All Sin

We should never think our **prayers** complete until we ask for preservation from all sin, and all enemies.

## A Little Prayer Book

"Be gracious to me, O Lord. Behold my affliction from those who hate me,  
Thou who dost lift me up from the gates of death." -- Ps 9:13

Just as Luther used to call some texts little Bibles, so we may call this sentence a **little prayer-book**; for it has in it the **soul and marrow of prayer**. The ladder looks short, but it reaches from earth to heaven.

## Prayer Our Weapon of War

**Prayers** are the believer's weapons of war. When the battle is too hard for us, we call in our great ally, Who, as it were, lies in ambush until faith gives the signal by **crying out**, Arise, O Lord.

## Pray or Fear?

When **prayer** engages God on our side, and when faith secures the fulfillment of the promise, what cause can there be for flight, however cruel and mighty our enemies?

## Prayer for our Foes

Our Lord spoke evil of no one, but breathed a **prayer** for his foes; we must be like him, or we shall never be with him.

## Proper Repetition in Prayer

"Hear a just cause, O Lord, give heed to my cry.  
Give ear to my prayer, which is not from deceitful lips." -- Ps 17:1

Some **repetitions** are not vain. The **reduplication** here used is neither superstition nor tautology, but is like the repeated blow of a hammer hitting the same nail on the head to fix it the more effectually.

## The Port of All Prayer is Always Open

Satan knows how to blockade our coasts with the iron warships of sorrow, but, blessed be God, the port of all **prayer** is still open, and grace can run the blockade bearing messages from earth to heaven, and blessings in return from heaven to earth... **Prayer** is that postern (private entrance) gate which is left open even when the city is straitly besieged by the enemy... It is never an ill time to **pray**; no distress should prevent us from using the divine remedy of supplication... the operation of **prayer** with God is immediate and personal. We may **cry** with confident and familiar **importunity**, while our Father himself listens.

## Mountain Moving Prayer

"Then the earth shook and quaked and the foundations of the mountains were trembling  
And were shaken, because He was angry." -- Ps 18:7

Observe how the most solid and immovable things feel the force of **supplication**. **Prayer** has shaken houses, opened prison doors, and made stout hearts to quail. **Prayer** rings the alarm bell, and the Master of the house arises to the rescue, shaking all things beneath his tread... See how **prayer** moves earth and heaven, and raises storms to overthrow in a moment the foes of God's Israel. Things were bad for David before he **prayed**, but they were much worse for his foes so soon as the **petition** had gone up to heaven. A trustful heart, by enlisting the divine aid, turns the tables on its enemies. If I must have an enemy let him not be a man of **prayer**, or he will get the better of me by **calling** his God into the quarrel.

## Prayers of the Wicked

"They cried for help, but there was none to save,  
Even to the Lord, but He did not answer them." -- Ps 18:41

**Prayer** is so notable a weapon that even the wicked will take to it in their fits of desperation. Bad men have **appealed** to God against God's own servants, but all in vain; the kingdom of heaven is not divided, and God never succors his foes at the expense of his friends. There are **prayers** to God which are no better than blasphemy, which bring no comfortable reply, but rather provoke the Lord to greater wrath.

## Prayer and Presumptuous Sins

"Keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins.  
Let them not rule over me." -- Ps 19:13-note

This earnest and humble **prayer** teaches us that saints may fall into the worst of sins unless restrained by grace, and that therefore they must watch and **pray** lest they enter into temptation. There is a natural proneness to sin in the best of people, and they must be held back as a horse is held back by the bit or they will run into it. Presumptuous sins are particularly dangerous. All sins are great sins, but yet some sins are greater than others. Every sin has in it the very venom of rebellion; but there are some sins which have in them a greater development of the essential mischief of rebellion, and which wear upon their faces more of the brazen pride which defies the Most High. It is wrong to suppose that because all sins will condemn us, that therefore one sin is not greater than another. The presumptuous sins of our text are the chief and worst of all sins.

## Prayer and Meditation

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
Be acceptable in Thy sight,  
O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer." -- Ps 19:14-note

A sweet **prayer**, and so spiritual that it is almost as commonly used in Christian worship as the apostolic benediction. Words are mockery if the heart does not meditate; but both together are useless unless accepted; and even if accepted by man, it is all vanity if not acceptable in the sight of God. We must in **prayer** view Jehovah as our strength enabling, and our Redeemer saving, or we shall not **pray** aright, and it is well to feel our personal interest so as to use the word my, or our **prayers** will be hindered. Blessed Redeemer, give us now to meditate acceptably upon thy most sweet love and tenderness.

Prayer and New Birth

**Prayer** is the autograph of the Holy Spirit upon the renewed heart.

Nothing can make a true believer cease **praying**; it is a part of his nature, and **pray** he must.

Saints are first called of God, and then they call upon God; such calls as theirs always obtain answers. Not without **prayer** will the blessing come to the most favored, but by means of **prayer** they will receive all good things.

## The Soul and Prayer

"To Thee, O Lord, I lift up my soul" --Ps 25:1

See how the holy soul flies to its God like a dove to its cote. When the stormwinds are out, the Lord's vessels put about and make for their well-remembered harbor of refuge. What a mercy that the Lord will condescend to hear our **cries** in time of trouble, although we may have almost forgotten him in our hours of fancied prosperity. It is but mockery to lift up the hands and the eyes unless we also bring our souls into our devotions. **True prayer** may be described as the soul rising from earth to have fellowship with heaven; it is taking a journey upon Jacob's ladder, leaving our cares and fears at the foot, and meeting with a covenant God at the top. Very often the soul cannot rise, she has lost her wings, and is heavy and earth-bound; more like a burrowing mole than a soaring eagle. At such dull seasons we must not give over **prayer**, but must, by God's assistance, exert all our powers to lift up our hearts. But what a lift it has sometimes proved! With all our tugging and straining we have been utterly defeated, until our Saviour's love has displayed its omnipotent attractions, and then our hearts have gone up like flames of fire... As long as the anchor of faith holds there is no fear in the worst tempest; if that should fail us there would be no hope left. We must see to it that our faith is sound and strong, for otherwise **prayer** cannot prevail with God. Woe to the warrior who throws away his shield; what defense can be found for him who finds no defense in his God?

## Prayer and Answers

We may expect answers to **prayer**, and should not be easy without them any more than we should be if we had written a letter to a friend upon important business, and had received no reply.

Genuine **suppliants** are not satisfied with the results of **prayer** itself in calming the mind and subduing the will—they must go further and obtain actual replies from heaven, at once if possible; they dread even a little of God's silence. When God seems to close his ear, we must not therefore close our mouths, but rather **cry** with more earnestness; for when our note grows shrill with eagerness and grief, he will not long deny us a hearing. What a dreadful case should we be in if the Lord should become forever silent to our **prayers**! This thought suggested itself to David ("Do not be deaf to me" [Ps 28:1](#)), and he turned it into a plea, thus teaching us to argue and reason with God in our **prayers**. Deprived of God who answers **prayer**, we should be in a more pitiable plight than the dead in the grave, and should soon sink to the same level as the lost in hell. We must have answers to **prayer**: ours is an urgent case of dire necessity; surely the Lord will speak peace to our agitated minds, for he never can find it in his heart to permit his own elect to perish... We cannot be put off with a refusal when we are in the spirit of **prayer**; we labor and agonize until a hearing is granted... Answered **prayers** should be acknowledged. We should live daily in the heavenly atmosphere of thankful love.

**Prayer** heard should always suggest praise. It were well if we were more demonstrative in our holy rejoicings. We rob God by suppressing grateful emotions.

"**Unanswered**" **prayer**: For our **prayer** to appear to be unheard is no new trial. Jesus felt it before us. He still held fast on God, and cried still, "My God," but his faith did not render him less **importunate**. (troublesome urgency - overly persistent in request or demand) Our Lord continued to **pray** even though no comfortable answer came, and in this he set us an example of obedience to the words, "men ought always to **pray**, and not to faint." No daylight is too glaring and no midnight too dark to **pray** in; no delay or apparent denial, however grievous, should tempt us to forbear from **importunate pleading**.

Pharisees may rest in their **prayers**; true believers are eager for an answer to them.

God's memorial is that he hears **prayer**, and his glory is that he answers it in a manner fitted to inspire awe in the hearts of his people.

Our experience confirms us in the belief that Jehovah the living God really does aid those who call upon him, and therefore we **pray** because we really find it to be a practical and effectual means of obtaining help from God in the hour of need. There can be no reason for **praying** if there be no expectation of the Lord's answering.

**Prayer** is never lost: if it bless not those for whom **intercession** is made, it will bless the **intercessors**. Clouds do not always descend in showers upon the same spot from which the vapors ascended, but they come down somewhere; and so do **supplications** in some place or other yield their showers of mercy.

When answers come upon the heels of our **prayers** they are all the more encouraging.

Answered **prayers** bring God very near to us

**Prayer** may be answered in anger and denied in love. That God gives a man his desire is no proof that he is the object of divine favor; everything depends upon what that desire is.

Answered **prayers** are silken bonds which bind poor hearts to God. When someone's **prayers** are answered, love is the natural result.

When **prayer** is heard in our feebleness, and answered in the strength and greatness of God, we are strengthened in the habit of **prayer**, and confirmed in the resolve to make ceaseless intercession.

## Prayer and Praise

Praise as well as **prayer** was presented to the Father by our Lord Jesus, and we are not truly his followers unless our resolve be, "I will bless the Lord."

The pendulum of spirituality swings from **prayer** to praise. Spiritual life is **prayer** and praise. The voice of **prayer** soon awakens praise.

From **prayer** to praise is never a long or difficult journey. Be sure that he who **prays** for holiness will one day praise for happiness.

In our most **importunate** (troublesome urgency - overly persistent in request or demand) **intercessions**, we must find breathing time to bless the Lord: praise is never a hindrance to **prayer**, but rather a lively refreshment therein.

**Prayer** is yoked with praise. The living God is the God of our life; from him we derive it, with him in **prayer** and praise we spend it, to him we devote it, in him we shall perfect it. To be assured that our sighs and songs will both have free access to our glorious Lord is to have reasons for hope in the most deplorable condition.

It is well when praise and **prayer** go together. Since the Lord's answers so frequently follow close at the heels of our **petitions**, and even overtake them, it becomes us to let our grateful praises keep pace with our humble **prayers**.

If anything can make a man **pray** and praise, it is the knowledge that the Lord is his God.

Let us **bless** God before we **pray**, and while we **pray**, and when we have done **praying**, for he always deserves it of us. If we cannot understand him, we will not distrust him. When his ways are beyond our judgment we will not be so foolish as to judge; yet we shall do so if we consider his dealings to be unkind or unfaithful. He is, he must be, he shall be forever our blessed God.

Now **prayer** follows upon praise, and derives strength of faith and holy boldness therefrom. It is frequently best to begin worship with a hymn, and then to bring forth our vials full of odors after the harps have commenced their sweeter sounds.

"Praise ye the Lord" (Ps 113:1-note) or Hallelujah, praise to Jah, Jehovah. Praise is an essential offering at all the solemn feasts of the people of God. **Prayer** is the myrrh, and praise is the frankincense, and both of these must be presented unto the Lord. How can we **pray** for mercy for the future if we do not bless God for his love in the past? The Lord hath wrought all good things for us; let us therefore adore him. All other praise is to be excluded; the entire devotion of the soul must be poured out unto Jehovah only.

## Prayer Our Resource

**Prayer** is the unfailing resource of God's people. If they are driven to their wits' end, they may still go to the mercy-seat. When an earthquake makes our mountain tremble, the throne of grace still stands firm, and we may come to it. Let us never forget to **pray**, and let us never doubt the success of prayer. **Prayer** will succeed where all else fails.

## The Grounds of Prayer

"O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man!

**For** Thou art the God of my strength" -- Ps 43:1-2

**"For"** (explains the) argument (see value of querying terms of explanation), which is the very sinew of **prayer**. If we reasoned more with the Lord we should have more victories in **supplication**. All my strength belongs to thee. I will not, therefore, use it on my own behalf against my personal foes; I seek help from thee; I leave the task of combating my foes entirely in thy hands.

The Word of the Lord arouses **prayer**

Our **prayers** are according to the mind of God when they are according to the Word of God.

It is instructive to find meditation so constantly connected with fervent **prayer**: it is the fuel which sustains the flame. How rare an article is it in these days.

Those can **pray** best who make most sure of their personal interest in God, and those who have the fullest assurance that the Lord is their God should be the foremost to **plead** for the rest of the faithful.

"Thou art my King, O God. Command victories for Jacob." (Ps 44:4) This verse contains a personal declaration and an **intercessory prayer**; those can **pray** best who make most sure of their personal interest in God, and those who have the fullest assurance that the Lord is their God should be the foremost to plead for the rest of the faithful.

It is but mockery to lift up the hands and the eyes unless we also bring our souls into our devotions. True **prayer** may be described as the soul rising from earth to have fellowship with heaven; it is taking a journey upon Jacob's ladder, leaving our cares and fears at the foot, and meeting with a covenant God at the top. Very often the soul cannot rise, she has lost her wings, and is heavy and earth-bound; more like a burrowing mole than a soaring eagle. At such dull seasons we must not give over **prayer**, but must, by God's assistance, exert all our powers to lift up our hearts. But what a lift it has sometimes proved! With all our tugging and straining



we have been utterly defeated, until our Saviour's love has displayed its omnipotent attractions, and then our hearts have gone up like flames of fire.

It is the mark of a **thoughtful prayer** that the titles which are applied to God are appropriate, and are, as it were, congruous to the matter, and fitted to add force to the argument. Will Jehovah endure to see his people oppressed? Will the God of hosts permit his enemies to exult over his servant? Will the faithful God of a chosen people leave his chosen to perish? The name of God is, even in a literal sense, a fortress and high tower for all his people.

"For my expectation is from him" (Ps 62:5) We expect from God because we believe in him. Expectation is the child of **prayer** and faith, and is owned of the Lord as an acceptable grace. We should desire nothing but what it would be right for God to give, then our expectation would be all from God; and concerning truly good things we should not look to second causes, but to the Lord alone, and so again our expectation would be all from him.

Promised preservation should be the subject of perpetual **prayer**; and we may pray believingly, for those who have God for their keeper will be safe from all the perils of the way.

With God's faithfulness and righteousness upon our side we are guarded on the right hand and on the left. These are active attributes, and fully equal to the answering of any **prayer** which it would be right to answer. Requests which do not appeal to either of these attributes it would not be for the glory of God to hear, for they must contain desires for things unpromised, and unrighteous.

"O my God, make haste for my help" (Ps 71:12) To call God ours, as having entered into covenant with us, is a mighty plea in **prayer**, and a great stay to our faith. The cry of make haste has occurred many times in this portion of the Psalms, and it was evoked by the sore pressure of affliction.

"Let us kneel before the Lord our maker." (Ps 95:6) Posture is not everything—**prayer** is heard when knees cannot bend—but it is seemly that an adoring heart should show its awe by prostrating the body, and bending the knee.

Longing is the soul of **praying**, and when the soul longs till it breaks, it cannot be long before the blessing will be granted.

There are many whose formal **prayers** and false professions will never bring them into communion with the Lord. To pray in truth, we must have a true heart, and the truth in our heart; and then we must be humble, for pride is a falsehood; and be earnest, or else prayer is a lie. A God of truth cannot be nigh to the spirit of hypocrisy; neither can he be far from a sincere spirit, since it is his work, and he forsakes not the work of his own hands.

**Prayers** which come out of distress generally come out of the heart, and therefore they go to the heart of God. **Prayer** may be bitter in the offering, but it will be sweet in the answering.

So many a one offers what he calls **prayer** when he is in good case and thinks well of himself, but in very deed the only real **cry** to God is that which is forced out of him by a sense of utter helplessness and misery. We **pray** best when we are fallen on our faces in painful helplessness.

## Prayer: Trial, Suffering and Affliction

Under trial it is not easy to behave ourselves aright; a candle is not easily kept alight when many envious mouths are puffing at it. In evil times **prayer** is particularly needful, and the wise resort to it at once. If we would be preserved, we must **cry** to the Preserver, and enlist divine support upon our side.

No net of trouble can so hold us that the Lord cannot free us. Our afflictions may be numerous and complicated, but **prayer** can set us free from them all, for the Lord will show himself strong on our behalf.

**Prayer** stands us in good stead in every evil day.

Silence to man and **prayer** to God are the best cures for the evil of slander.

The weapon of **all-prayer** is one which the believer may always carry with him, and use in every time of need.

Let us always resort to **prayer** in our despondent times, for it is the surest and shortest way out of the depths. In that **prayer** let us plead nothing but the Word of God; for there is no plea like a promise, no argument like a word from our covenant God.

Suffering enlarges the heart by creating the power to sympathize. If we **pray** eagerly for ourselves, we shall not long be able to forget our fellow-sufferers. We ought to be grateful for occasional griefs if they preserve us from chronic hardheartedness; for of all

afflictions, an unkind heart is the worst. **Prayer** when it is of the Holy Spirit's teaching is never selfish; the believer would have everyone in a similar state to partake of divine mercy with him.

**Prayer** is as effectual on a sick-bed as in the wilderness or in prison; it may be tried in all places and circumstances with certain result.

**Prayer** is good in a storm. We may pray staggering and reeling, and when we are at our wit's end. God will hear us amid the thunder and answer us.

"My knees are weak through fasting and my flesh faileth of fatness" (Ps 109:22) He was wasted to a skeleton, and as his body was emaciated, so was his soul bereft of comfort: he was pining away, and all the while his enemies saw it and laughed at his distress. How pathetically he states his case; this is one of the truest forms of **prayer**, the setting forth of our sorrow before the Lord. Weak knees are strong with God, and failing flesh has great power in leading.

"Help me, O Lord my God" (Ps 109:26) . Laying hold of Jehovah by the appropriating word my, he implores his aid both to help him to bear his heavy load and to enable him to rise superior to it. He has described his own weakness, and the strength and fury of his foes, and by these two arguments he urges his appeal with double force. This is a very rich, short, and suitable **prayer** for believers in any situation of peril, difficulty, or sorrow.

"O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul." (Ps 116:4) This form of **petition** is short, comprehensive, to the point, humble, and earnest. Real trouble produces real **prayer**. Here we have no multiplicity of words, and no fine arrangement of sentences; everything is simple and natural; there is not a redundant syllable, and yet there is not one lacking.

## Prayer: Silent and Audible

There are two sorts of **prayer**—those expressed in words, and the unuttered longings which abide as silent meditations. Words are not the essence but the garments of **prayer**. Moses at the Red Sea cried to God, though he said nothing. Yet the use of language may prevent distraction of mind, assist the powers of the soul, and excite devotion. David uses both modes of **prayer**, and craves for the one a hearing, and for the other a consideration: if I have asked what is right, give it to me; if I have omitted to ask what I most needed, fill up the vacancy in my **prayer**; consider it as presented through my all-glorious Mediator, then regard it in thy wisdom, judge my sincerity and the true state of my needs, and answer me in due time for thy mercies' sake! There may be **prevailing intercession** where there are no words, and words where there is no **true supplication**. Let us cultivate the **spirit of prayer** which is even better than the **habit of prayer**. We should begin to **pray** before we kneel down, and we should not cease when we rise up.

The voice may be profitably used even in private **prayer**; for though it is unnecessary, it is often helpful, and aids in preventing distractions.

A silent **prayer** may have a louder voice than the cries of those priests who sought to awaken Baal with their shouts.

People find it very helpful to use their voices in **prayer**; it is difficult long to maintain the intensity of devotion unless we hear ourselves speak

Vocal **prayer** helps the supplicant, and we keep our minds more fully awake when we can use our tongues as well as our hearts.

"Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer." (Ps 64:1) It often helps devotion if we are able to use the voice and speak audibly; but even mental **prayer** has a voice with God which he will hear. We do not read that Moses had spoken with his lips at the Red Sea, and yet the Lord said to him, "Why criest thou unto me?" **Prayers** which are unheard on earth may be among the best heard in heaven. It is our duty to note how constantly David turns to **prayer**; it is his battleaxe and weapon of war; he uses it under every pressure, whether of inward sin or outward wrath, foreign invasion or domestic rebellion. We shall act wisely if we make **prayer** to God our first and best trusted resource in every hour of need.

"I Love the Lord, because He hears my voice and my supplications." (Ps 116:1) The psalmist had used his voice in **prayer**, and the habit of doing so is exceedingly helpful to devotion. If we can **pray** aloud without being overheard it is well to do so. Sometimes, however, when the psalmist had lifted up his voice, his utterance had been so broken and painful that he scarcely dared to call it **prayer**; words failed him, he could only produce a groaning sound, but the Lord heard his moaning voice.

When our **prayer** is very feeble, so that we ourselves can scarcely hear it, and question whether we do **pray** or not, yet God bows a listening ear, and regards our supplications.

**Prayer** is sometimes presented without words by the very motions of our bodies: bended knees and lifted hands are the tokens of

earnest, expectant **prayer**. Certainly work, or the lifting up of the hands in labor, is prayer if it be done in dependence upon God and for his glory; there may be a hand-**prayer** as well as a heart-**prayer**. Holy hope, the lifting up of hands that hang down, is also a kind of worship. The psalmist would have his humble cries and **prayers** to be as much regarded of the Lord as the appointed morning and evening sacrifices of the holy places. After all, the spiritual is in the Lord's esteem higher than the ceremonial.

## The Language of Prayer

One poet has said **prayer** is "the simplest form of speech that infant lips can try," and yet it is one of the "sublimest strains that reach the majesty on high."

## Prayer -- When?

"Early will I seek thee." (Ps 63:1) Possession breeds desire. Full assurance is no hindrance to diligence, but is the mainspring of it. He is up at cockcrow to meet his God. Communion with God is so sweet that the chill of the morning is forgotten, and the luxury of the couch is despised. The psalmist consecrates the morning to **prayer** and devout fellowship. The best people have been **early on their knees**.

Pause a little while before you **pray**, that you may not offer the sacrifice of fools. Get a distinct idea of your need, and then you can **pray** with more fluency of fervency.

Spurgeon testifies "I had need to beware of lean **prayers**, lean praises, lean duties, and lean experiences, for these will eat up the fat of my comfort and peace. If I neglect **prayer** for ever so short a time, I lose all the spirituality to which I had attained; if I draw no fresh supplies from heaven, the old corn in my granary is soon consumed by the famine which rages in my soul."

**Prayer** must not be our random work but our daily business, our habit, and our vocation. As artists give themselves to their models, and poets to their classical pursuits, so must we surrender ourselves to **prayer**. We must be immersed in prayer as in our element and so "pray without ceasing" (1Thess 5:17-note). Lord, teach us to **pray** that we may be more prevalent in **supplication**. The common fault with the most of us is our readiness to yield to distractions. Our thoughts go roving hither and thither, and we make little progress towards our desired end. Like quicksilver, our minds will not hold together but roll off this way and that. How great an evil this is! It injures us, and, what is worse, it insults our God.

## Prayer and Sin

**"If I regard wickedness in my heart,  
The Lord will not hear" --Ps 66:18**

Can I desire him to connive at my sin, and accept me while I willfully cling to any evil way? Nothing hinders **prayer** like iniquity harbored in the heart; as with Cain, so with us, sin lies at the door and blocks the passage. If you refuse to hear God's commands, he will surely refuse to hear your **prayers**. An imperfect **petition** God will hear for Christ's sake, but not one which is willfully miswritten by a traitor's hand. For God to accept our devotions, while we are delighting in sin, would be to make himself the God of hypocrites, which is a fitter name for Satan than for the Holy One of Israel... Love of sin is a killing sign, but those prayers which evidently live and prevail with God most clearly arise from a heart which is free from dalliance with evil. See to it that your inmost soul is rid of all alliance with iniquity, all toleration of secret lust or hidden wrong.

Secret sins, like private conspirators, must be hunted out, or they may do deadly mischief; it is well to **bemuch in prayer** concerning them. If we had eyes like those of God, we should think very differently of ourselves.

Transgression destroys peace of mind, obscures fellowship with Jesus, hinders **prayer**, brings darkness over the soul; therefore be not the serf and bondman of sin.

If you want power in **prayer**, you must have purity in life. If our faith is to grow exceedingly, we must maintain constant intercourse with God.

## Prayer and Motivation

**Prayer** is the outcome of that sense of need which arises from the new life. A man would not **pray** to God if he did not feel that he had an urgent need for blessings which only the Lord can bestow.

Those are the only **true prayers** where the heart's desire is first, and the lip's request follows after. Jesus prayed vocally as well as mentally; speech is a great assistance to thought. The requests of the Saviour (are) not withheld. He was and still is a prevailing Pleader. He is ready to ask for us at the mercy-seat. Have we not at this hour some desire to send up to his Father by him?

A fully assured possession of God does not set aside **prayer**, but rather urges us to it.

It is well when our **supplications** are such that we find pleasure in looking back upon them. He that is cheered by the memory of his **prayers** will **pray** again. He did not go round about to men, but ran straight forward to Jehovah.

All true fruit is the fruit of the Spirit. Every true **prayer** must be "praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude 1:20-note). He helps our infirmities in **prayer**.

"I cried with my whole heart" (Ps 119:145) His **prayer** was a sincere, plaintive, painful, natural utterance, as of a creature in pain. We cannot tell whether at all times he used his voice when he thus cried; but we are informed of something which is of much greater consequence, he cried with his heart. **Heart-cries** are the essence of **prayer**. He mentions the unity of his heart: his whole soul pleaded with God, his entire affections, his united desires all went out towards the living God. It is well when we can say as much as this of our **prayers**: it is to be feared that many never cried to God with their whole heart in all their lives. There may be no beauty of elocution about such **prayers**, no length of expression, no depth of doctrine, nor accuracy of diction; but if the whole heart be in them they will find their way to the heart of God.

"I rise before dawn and cry for help; I wait (hope) for Thy words." (Ps 119:147) **Hope** is a very powerful means of strengthening us in **prayer**. Who would **pray** if he had no hope that God would hear him? Who would not **pray** when he has a good hope of a blessed issue to his entreaties? His hope was fixed upon God's Word, and this is a sure anchorage, because God is true, and in no case has he ever run back from his promise, or altered the thing that has gone forth from his mouth. He who is diligent in **prayer** will never be destitute of hope. Observe that as the early bird gets the worm, so the early prayer is soon refreshed with hope.

People of God look upon **prayer** as a reality, and they are not content without having an audience with God; moreover, they have such confidence in the Lord's condescending grace that they hope he will even attend to that poor broken **prayer** which can only be described as a cry... Gracious people may not only be low, but very low; and this should not be a reason for their doubting the efficacy of their **prayers**, but rather a plea with the Lord why they should have special attention.

**Praying** men **pray** better as they proceed. Note that we do not show our trouble before the Lord that he may see it, but that we may see him. It is for our relief, and not for his information that we make plain statements concerning our woes: it does us much good to set out our sorrow in order, for much of it vanishes in the process, like a ghost which will not abide the light of day; and the rest loses much of its terror, because the veil of mystery is removed by a clear and deliberate stating of the trying facts. Pour out your thoughts and you will see what they are; show your trouble and the extent of it will be known to you: let all be done before the Lord, for in comparison with his great majesty of love the trouble will seem to be as nothing.

## Prayer and Faith

Faith finds pleas in the worst circumstances; she uses even the fallen stones of her desolate palaces, and assails with them the gates of heaven, casting them forth with the great engine of **prayer**.

The confidence of faith makes us bold in **prayer**, but it never teaches us to live without **prayer**, or justifies us in being other than humble beggars at mercy's gate.

Observe that ancient saints **cried** and trusted, and that in times of trouble we must do the same; and the invariable result was that they were not ashamed of their hope, for deliverance came in due time; this same happy portion will be ours. The **prayer** of faith can do the deed when nothing else can. Let us wonder when we see Jesus using the same pleas as ourselves, and immersed in grief far deeper than our own... Godly men of old **prayed** in faith, nothing wavering, and spoke of the answer to their **prayers** as a certainty.

If our faith is to grow exceedingly, we must maintain constant **intercourse** with God.

Faith grows by the exercise of **prayer**.

Lord, if thou wilt make us mighty with thee in **prayer**, we shall also be kept faithful before thee in the service which thou hast laid upon us.

It must be a **prayer** full of faith. A man prevails only as he believes. The Holy Spirit is the author of faith, and strengthens it, so that we **pray** believing God's promise.

The precious promises of our great God are expressly intended to be taken to Him and exchanged for the blessings which they guarantee. **Prayer** takes the promise to the Bank of Faith and obtains the golden blessing... The strength of **prayer** lies in your faith in the promise which you have pleaded before the Lord.

It is easy work to **pray** when we are grounded, as to our desires, upon God's own promise. How can He that gave the word refuse to keep it? Immutable veracity cannot demean itself by a lie, and eternal faithfulness cannot degrade itself by neglect. God must bless His Son; His covenant binds Him to it. That which the Spirit prompts us to ask of God for Jesus and His kingdom is that which God decrees to give Him. Whenever you are **praying** for the kingdom of Christ, let your eyes behold the dawning of the blessed day, which draws near, when the Crucified will receive His coronation in the place where men rejected Him.

## Prayer and Blessing

**Prayer** is the rustling of the wings of the angels that are on their way bringing us the blessings of heaven. Have you heard **prayer** in your heart? You will see the angel in your house. When the chariots that bring us blessings do rumble, their wheels do 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 foreshadows rain, so **prayer** foreshadows the blessing; even as the green blade is the beginning of the harvest, so **prayer** is the prophecy of the blessing that is about to come.

Have we **petitioned** for success in the Lord's work? How joyful is the prosperity which comes flying upon the wings of **prayer**! It is always best to get blessings into our house in the legitimate way, by the door of **prayer**; then they are blessings indeed, and not temptations. Even when **prayer** speeds not, the blessings grow all the richer for the delay; the child Jesus was all the more lovely in the eyes of Mary when she found him after having sought him sorrowing. That which we win by **prayer** we should dedicate to God, as Hannah dedicated Samuel. The gift came from heaven, let it go to heaven. **Prayer** brought it, gratitude sang over it, let devotion consecrate it. Here will be a special occasion for saying, "Of thine own have I given unto thee." Reader, is **prayer** your element or your weariness? Which?

## SPURGEON AT HIS BEST Quotes on Prayer

### Intercessory Prayer

I commend intercessory prayer, because it opens man's soul, gives a healthy play to his sympathies, constrains him to feel that he is not everybody, and that this wide world was not, after all, made that he might be its petty lord. It does him good to make him know that the cross was not uplifted alone for him, for its far-reaching arms were meant to drop with benedictions on millions of the human race.

What wonders it has wrought! Intercessory prayer has stayed plagues (Ex 7-11). Intercessory prayer has healed diseases. We know it did in the early church. It has restored withered limbs. Intercessory prayer has raised the dead (1 Kings 17). As to how many souls intercessory prayer has instrumentally saved, recording angel, you can tell! Eternity, you shall reveal! There is nothing which intercessory prayer cannot do.

Let me have your prayers, and I can do anything! Let me be without my people's prayers, and I can do nothing.

Do you say you have nothing to pray for? What, no children unconverted, no friends unsaved, no neighbors who are still in darkness? What! Live in London and not pray for sinners?

Perhaps you hear a sinner swear. What does that say to you, but "Pray for that sinner"? All the sins we see other men commit ought to be so many jogs to our memory to pray for the coming of Christ and the salvation of souls.

Until the gate of hell is shut upon a man we must not cease to pray for him. And if we see him hugging the very doorposts of

damnation, we must go to the prayer. Surely God has an eye of love on those whom he has encompassed with his own dear servants who day and night are praying for them.

It has been truly said that if you have a very hard thing, you can cut it with something harder. And if any heart is especially hard, God can use the hard, strong, persistent vehemence of other mighty, passionate souls to pray the blessing of eternal life into that stubborn, rebellious heart.

### **Prayer, neglect of**

Live and die without prayer, and you will pray long enough when you get to hell.

Could you read the story of Abraham's interceding for Sodom and say that you have interceded for London like that? Can you read of Jacob at the brook Jabbok and say that you ever spent an hour, much less a night, in wrestling with the angel? The prayerlessness of this age is one of its worst signs.

Neglect of private prayer is the locust which devours the strength of the church.

A prayerless church member is a hindrance. He is in the body like a rotting bone or a decayed tooth. Before long, since he does not contribute to the benefit of his brethren, he will become a danger and a sorrow to them.

**Prayer, posture in** - He that is never on his knees on earth shall never stand upon his feet in heaven.

### **Prayer, power of**

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!

You can be omnipotent if you know how to pray, omnipotent in all things which glorify God.

There is no force in nature that is equal to the power of prayer. The law of gravitation holds the planets in their orbits, and links the sun to all the spheres that circle round him. But prayer has now made gravitation itself cease to exert its energy: "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon," said Joshua, who had first spoken to the Lord about the matter ( Josh. 10:12.

**Prayer, public** - When you pray in public, as a rule, the shorter the better.

**Prayer, specific** - There is a general kind of praying which fails for lack of precision. It is as if a regiment of soldiers should all fire off their guns anywhere. Possibly some-body would be killed, but the majority of the enemy would be missed.

**Prayer Meeting** - The condition of the church may be very accurately gauged by its prayer meetings. So is the prayer meeting a grace-ometer, and from it we may judge of the amount of divine working among a people. If God be near a church, it must pray. And if he be not there, one of the first tokens of his absence will be slothfulness in prayer.

Prayer is the breath of faith. Prayer meetings are the lungs of the church.

[Spurgeon at His Best - Compiled by Tom Carter](#)

**MORE SPURGEON  
QUOTES ON PRAYER**

Anything is a blessing which makes us pray.

As artists give themselves to their models, and poets to their classical pursuits, so must we addict ourselves to prayer.

He that is never on his knees on earth shall never stand upon his feet in heaven.

I always feel that there is something wrong if I go without prayer for even half an hour in the day.

If you cannot go to the house of the Lord, go to the Lord of the house.

It is a good rule never to look into the face of man in the morning till you have looked into the face of God.

Neglect of private prayer is the locust which devours the strength of the church.

Prayer has become as essential to me as the heaving of my lungs and the beating of my pulse.

Prayer is the breath of faith. Prayer meetings are the lungs of the church.

Prayer meetings are the throbbing machinery of the church.

Remember that prayer is your best means of study.

Sometimes we think we are too busy to pray. That is a great mistake, for praying is a saving of time.

We shall never see much change for the better in our churches in general till the prayer meeting occupies a higher place in the esteem of Christians.

Whether we like it or not, asking is the rule of the Kingdom.

Because God is the living God, he can hear; because he is a loving God, he will hear; because he is our covenant God, he has bound himself to hear.

Grass cannot call for dew as I do. Surely the Lord who visits the unpraying plant will answer to his pleading child.

If there be anything under heaven that I am as sure as I am of the demonstrations of mathematics, it is the fact that God answers prayer.

The granting of prayer, when offered in the name of Jesus, reveals the Father's love to him, and the honour which he has put upon him.

We must hear Jesus speak if we expect him to hear us speak.

Do not reckon you have prayed until you have pleaded, for pleading is the very marrow of prayer.

He who prays without fervency does not pray at all.

I know of no better thermometer to your spiritual temperature than this, the measure of the intensity of your prayer.

Let your fleece lie on the threshing floor of supplication till it is wet with the dew of heaven.

Only that prayer which comes from our heart can get to God's heart.

The habit of prayer is good, but the spirit of prayer is better.

Prayer prompted by the Holy Spirit is the footfall of the divine decree.

Prayer should be definite. What a lot of praying there is that prays for everything in general and nothing in particular!

The goal of prayer is the ear of God.

Believing supplications are forecasts of the future.

Prayer without faith! What sort of prayer is it? It is the prayer of a man who does not believe in God.

Public prayer is no evidence of piety. It is practised by an abundance of hypocrites. But private prayer is a thing for which the hypocrite has no heart.

It is necessary to draw near unto God, but it is not required of you to prolong your speech till everyone is longing to hear the word 'Amen'.

All our perils are as nothing, so long as we have prayer.

I could no more doubt the efficacy of prayer than I could disbelieve in the law of gravity.

Every prayer is an inverted promise... If God teaches us to pray for any good thing, we may gather by implication the assurance that he means to give it.

[Complete Gathered Gold - John Blanchard](#)

## SPURGEON QUOTES FROM THE SALT CELLARS

Practical holiness is the seal of personal election. Pray against sin, but don't sin against prayer.

We sin against prayer when we ask for what we will not seek, and pray one thing and act another. To forget our own petitions, or to refuse their answers when they come, is an offence against the mercy-seat. So also to pray holiness and live ungodliness is a crime against the throne of grace.

A man of prayer is a man of power.

A pack of cards is the devil's Prayer-book.

We lie to God in prayer, if we do not rely on him after prayer.

Prayer without faith is a kind of mockery.

What we weave in time we must wear in eternity. What we win with prayer we should wear with praise.

First speak with God in prayer in the morning before you have a word to say to your fellow mortals.

George Whitefield's prayer was, "O Lord, make me an extraordinary Christian." He sought extraordinary grace, and he was answered by extraordinary usefulness.

Never dare to despair While God answers prayer.

Watch against weariness in prayer, or you may soon be weary of prayer.

Strength in prayer is better than length in prayer. Long prayers may send people to sleep, but a strong prayer tends to arouse the listener. God does not measure our pleadings by the yard. Prayer must be estimated by weight, not by length.

Yield to God's word and will, and you will escape many a calamity. Prayer will be your safeguard.

The prayer of the heart is the heart of the prayer. The language of the heart cannot be imitated. Talma, the famous actor, hearing of the death of his father, uttered a loud cry of distress. Soon after he murmured, "Oh, that I could cry like that on the stage!" Too many prayers are but stage performances; the voice of the heart is not heard in them.

A weighty word. Very applicable to some who have more of the gift of prayer than of the grace of prayer.

Ought we not then to find all the grace we need? Prayer is the bucket, and the river of life is close at hand.

Prayer will make us leave off sinning, or sinning will make us leave off praying. - Fuller

Pray against sin, but don't sin against prayer.

Make matters of care matters of prayer.

Prayer is the key of the morning and the lock of the night.

Never dare to despair While God answers prayer.

Lip prayers are lost prayers.

"In prayer the lips ne'er act the winning part,



Without the sweet concurrence of the heart."

--Herrick

Let prayer be the preface to all your business.

Life in prayer Brings death to care.

Prayer would be heard if we'd hearken to the Word.

The spontaneous bounty of God should be a great incentive to believing prayer.

He who lives without fear shall die without hope. He who lives without prayer dies without hope. He who looks not before will soon be behind.

Be not hot in prayer and cold in praise.

Let not our prayers die while our Intercessor lives.

Because he prays we should pray also.

And wilt thou in dead silence lie,

While Christ stands waiting for thy prayer?

My soul, thou hast a Friend on high;

Arise, and try thy interest there.

Take care of prayer, and prayer will take care of everything else.

We should pray when we are in a praying mood, for it would be sinful to neglect so fair an opportunity. "We should pray when we are not in a proper mood, for it would be dangerous to remain in so unhealthy a condition. Prayer is as suitable for any spot on earth as praise is suitable for any place in heaven.

No pillow so soft as God's promise.

No skin, no hair; No grace, no prayer.

There can be no hair where there is no skin, and no true prayer where there is no grace. A prayerless soul is a graceless soul.

None can pray well but he who lives well.

Prayer will make us leave off sinning, or sinning will make us leave off praying.—Fuller.

Pray David's prayer if you would sing David's song. Pray for a blessing, and your prayer will be a blessing.

In the very seeking of a benediction grace is put into action, and is strengthened by the exercise.

Pray for those who do not pray for themselves.

Some one prayed for you when you were yet unsaved: return that effectual prayer to the treasury of the church by pleading for others. Plead hard for the hard heart which never pleads.

Pray for your minister, and you will be praying for yourself.

Whatever blessing he obtains will appear in his ministry, and you will be a partaker of it.

Prayer breathes in the air of heaven, and praise breathes it out again.

Thus we have heavenly respiration, and by it we live unto God.

Prayer and praise, with sins forgiven,

Bring down to earth the bliss of heaven.

Prayer bringeth heaven down to man, and carrieth man up to heaven.

Prayer is God's rod which fetches forth streams of blessing from the Rock of affliction.

Prayer knocks till the door opens.

Open it will, for so runs the promise of our faithful God, "To him that knocketh it shall be opened." "If the angel opened the door of the prison to let Peter out, it was prayer that opened the door of heaven to let the angel out."

Prayer moves the hand that moves the world.

"Prayer is a creature's strength, his very breath and being;

Prayer is the golden key that can open the wicket of Mercy.

Prayer is the magic sound that saith to Fate, 'So be it';

Prayer is the slender nerve that moveth the muscles of Omnipotence."

—Martin Tupper.

Prayer must not come from the roof of the mouth, but from the root of the heart.

Prayer oils the wheels of the waggon of life.

Try the effect of it when the wheel begins to creak. A missionary in a heathen land had grown sadly weary and discouraged. He was going forth to his work with a joyless face, when his young wife called him back, went to him, put her hands on his shoulders, and, with tears in her eyes, said, "O Willie, Willie! much work and little prayer is hard work." Then she led him to a private room, and there, kneeling down, prayed with him as only one who loved with a true heavenly love could pray. From that room he went forth strong in the strength which never failed him; never again was he tempted to sever work and prayer.

Prayer rightly offered is richly answered.

"Prayer, like Jonathan's bow, returns not empty; never was faithful prayer lost. No tradesman trades with such certainty as the praying saint. Some prayers, indeed, have a longer voyage than others, but then they return with richer lading at last; the praying soul is a gainer by waiting for an answer."—Gurnall.

Prayer should be pillared on promises, and pinnacled with praises.

Prayer without words can win: Words without heart are sin.

## Some of Spurgeon's Sermons on Prayer

- [Genesis 32:9-12 Jacob's Model Prayer](#)
- [Genesis 32:10 Humility, the Friend of Prayer](#)
- [Exodus 14:15 Unseasonable Prayer](#)
- [Judges 1:12-15 Achsah's Asking-A Pattern of Prayer](#)
- [Nehemiah 2:4 Brief, Silent Prayer](#)
- [Nehemiah 4:9 The Two Guards: Praying and Watching](#)
- [1 Samuel 3:9 The Child Samuel's Prayer](#)
- [2 Samuel 7:27 Prayer Found in the Heart](#)
- [2 Samuel 7:27 Where True Prayer is Found](#)
- [1 Kings 9:2-3 Essential Points in Prayer](#)
- [1 Kings 18:41 God's Answer to Persistent Prayer](#)
- [2 Kings 6:17 Young Man! A Prayer for You](#)
- [1 Chronicles 4:10 The Prayer of Jabez](#)
- [2 Chronicles 6:28-30 The Place of Prayer and Pardon](#)
- [Job 15:4 Restraining Prayer](#)
- [Job 23:3-4 Order and Argument in Prayer](#)
- [Job 42:10 Intercessory Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 16:1 Christ's Prayer and Plea](#)
- [Psalm 22:2 Unanswered Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 25:18 A Troubled Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 28:9 A Prayer for the Church Militant](#)

- [Psalm 32:6 Prayer, the Proof of Godliness](#)
- [Psalm 41:4 A Singular Plea in Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 50:15 Prayer to God in Trouble an Acceptable Sacrifice](#)
- [Psalm 51:11 A Most Necessary Prayer Concerning the Holy Spirit](#)
- [Psalm 65:11 Thanksgiving and Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 72:15 Pray for Jesus](#)
- [Psalm 72:19 David's Dying Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 73:28 Let Us Pray](#)
- [Psalm 85:6 A Prayer for Revival](#)
- [Psalm 86:6-7 Concerning Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 89:4 A Comprehensive Prayer \(go to #XV\)](#)
- [Psalm 90:14 The Young Man's Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 106:4-5 The Poor Man's Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 107:17-22 Sickness and Prayer, Healing and Praise](#)
- [Psalm 116:1 Prayer Answered, Love Nourished](#)
- [Psalm 119:27 The Student's Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 119:37 My Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 119:49 Pleading Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 119:117 My Hourly Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 141:5 Intercessory Prayer](#)
- [Psalm 142 David's Prayer in the Cave](#)
- [Isaiah 30:19 Encouragement to Trust and Pray](#)
- [Isaiah 41:7 Wordless Prayers Heard in Heaven](#)
- [Isaiah 62:6-7 A Call to Prayer and Testimony](#)
- [Jeremiah 14:7-9 Praying and Pleading](#)
- [Jeremiah 33:3 The Golden Key of Prayer](#)
- [Lamentations 3:56 Comfort for those Whose Prayers are Feeble](#)
- [Ezekiel 36:37 Prayer - The Forerunner of Mercy](#)
- [Daniel 9:17 Prayer for the Church](#)
- [Daniel 9:23 The Dawn of Revival or Prayer Speedily Answered](#)
- [Matthew 14:30 Peter's Shortest Prayer](#)
- [Matthew 15:23 Prayer--Its Discouragements and Encouragements](#)
- [Matthew 15:25 A Prayer for Everybody](#)
- [Mark 10:51 A Definite Challenge for Definite Prayer](#)
- [Mark 11:24 True Prayer -- True Power!](#)
- [Luke 3:21-22 The Preparatory Prayers of Christ](#)
- [Luke 5:8 Peter's Prayer](#)
- [Luke 6:12 Special Protracted Prayer](#)
- [Luke 11:9-10 Prayer Certified of Success](#)
- [Luke 18:1 When Should We Pray?](#)
- [Luke 18:7 Prayerful Importunity](#)
- [Luke 22:32 Christ's Prayer for Peter](#)
- [John 15:7 The Secret of Power in Prayer](#)
- [John 17:9-10 Christ's Pastoral Prayer for His People](#)
- [John 17:15 Christ's Prayer for His People](#)
- [John 17:15 Christ's Negative and Positive Prayer](#)
- [John 17:17 Our Lord's Prayer for His People's Sanctification](#)
- [John 17:20 Christ's Prayer for Believers](#)
- [John 17:24 The Redeemer's Prayer](#)
- [Acts 1:14 Prayer Meetings](#)
- [Acts 9:11 Behold He Prays](#)
- [Acts 9:11 Paul's First Prayer](#)
- [Acts 12:12 The Special Prayer Meeting](#)
- [Romans 15:30-33 Pleading for Prayer](#)
- [2 Corinthians 1:11-12 The Power of Prayer and the Pleasure of Praise](#)
- [Philippians 4:6 Prayer Perfumed with Praise](#)
- [Philippians 4:6-7 Prayer, the Cure for Care](#)

- [Colossians 4:2 A Sermon for the Week of Prayer](#)
- [John 12:28 A Golden Prayer](#)
- [Acts 9:11 Paul's First Prayer](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 5:17 Pray Without Ceasing](#)
- [1 Peter 3:7 Hindrances to Prayer](#)
- [1 John 3:22-24 The Conditions of Power in Prayer](#)
- [1 John 5:13-15 Praying and Waiting](#)
- [Jude 1:20 Praying in the Holy Spirit](#)
- [Revelation 8:3-4 Preparing for the Week of Prayer](#)

## RELATED RESOURCES

- Spiritual Warfare: Praying Always
- [Collection of Spurgeon's Sermons on Prayer \(off site\)](#)
- Commentary on "Lord's Prayer" Matthew 6:9, 6:10
- Commentary on 1 Thessalonians 5:17 - Pray Without Ceasing
- Commentary on Colossians 4:2 - Devote Yourself to Prayer
- Commentary on Prayer & Thanksgiving Philippians 4:6 Philippians 4:7
- Commentary on Romans 8:26 - Spirit Helps our Weakness & Intercedes
- Commentary on Ephesians 6:18 - All Prayer and Petition

## RESOURCES TO ASSIST STUDY OF THE WORD OF GOD

- **HOW TO PERFORM A QUICK GREEK WORD STUDY** - using tools on Web
- GREEK QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE - chart of Greek verb tense, voice and mood
- INTRODUCTION TO INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY
- **OBSERVATION**: What does it say?
- INTERPRETATION: What does it mean?
- **APPLICATION**: How do I respond?
- APPROACH TO INTERPRETATION - supernaturalistic, naturalistic, existential, dogmatic
- BIBLE VERSIONS How Literal is your translation?
- BIBLE COMMENTARIES Some recommendations and caveats
- BIBLIOGRAPHY of resources quoted on preceptaustin.org
- MEMORIZING GOD'S WORD - tips on this neglected discipline
- PRIMER ON MEDITATION - guidelines on this vital spiritual discipline
- SEVEN MINUTES WITH GOD - "Jumpstart" your quiet time if its too "quiet"
- DAILY LIGHT ON THE DAILY PATH - Sola Scriptura on given topic, updated from KJV to NAS
- **A FEW GOOD CHRISTIAN BOOKS ONLINE** - alphabetically by title, be discerning
- [BASICS OF BIBLE INTERPRETATION](#) - [Greek Word Study](#), [Hebrew Language](#), [Figures of speech](#)
- RBC DISCOVERY HOUSE BOOKLETS: 148 booklets on virtually any Biblical topic
- **PRAYING HIS WORD**