

# The Prayer Life!

## Overview

You may be seated if you don't stop worshiping. I'm not ready to preach yet but I do want to read something from the word of the Lord. I want to talk to you about very familiar stuff this morning. There will be nothing new but it will be a review lesson because I want to talk to you about prayer and what prayer means in our lives. So if you have your Bible and you wish to turn with me to the 11th chapter of Luke we will begin to begin to read at verse 5. And Jesus said to them, Which of you shall have a friend and go to him at midnight and say to him, a friend lend me three loaves. For a friend of mine has come to me on his journey and I have nothing to set before him. And he will answer from within and say, Do not trouble me. The door is now shut and my children are with me in bed. I cannot rise and give you. I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. So I say to you, ask.

I don't know a lot about Greek but what I remember from my course. It says to keep on asking. Be in the state of asking and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened unto you. For everyone who asks receives and he who seeks finds and do him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you will give him a stone or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for a nag, will he offer him a scorpion?

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children. How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them who ask him? Somebody say, praise the Lord or Hallelujah. This is the reading of God's word. And I don't know how you are but when I'm around little kids, my wallet turns inside out. They don't even have to ask. And if we being evil know how to give good gifts to our children. How much more?

Say how much more? Say it again. How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them who ask him? We need to pray this morning. I think some of you know my friend Harold Minor who had a stroke this past week. I hear that he's progressing well but we believe in Jesus' potential to complete healing. So let's believe that this morning to say amen.

Lord Jesus, we come into your presence. Well, we are already in your presence and we thank you for that. We thank you heavenly Father that you are generous, that if we being evil know how to give good gifts you give even more. And so this morning we come to you for some more of those gifts. We pray for our brother Harold Minor that you will touch him with your healing virtue from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. I pray, oh God, that he will have complete healing and there are others on the minds of people who sit before you in your house and you know who they are and there's no distance in prayer. So we reach out by faith to you that you will reach out to them and do what needs to be done. Then, Lord Jesus, you know our personal needs. And none of them surprise you and none of them are beyond your ability. So we rest our case in your hands.

In the name of him who taught us to pray, say, our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen. Are you ready to sing some more? You're singing so well this morning. God bless you. I'm gonna go counter-cultural and let you sit for a bit. Isn't that nice of me? Oh Lord God, thou hast made the heavens and the earth by thy great power. Oh Lord God, thou hast made the heavens and the earth by thine outstretched arm. Nothing is too difficult for thee. Nothing is too difficult for thee. Great is my God.

Great in counsel and mighty in Deed. mighty in Deed. Nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing, nothing is too difficult for thee. Nothing is too difficult for thee. Nothing is too difficult for thee. Oh great in my de-God. Great in counsel and great indeed. Nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing. Nothing is too difficult for thee. How many are facing a problem and you need it in your life? Just lift your hand, don't be afraid to do it. Keep your hand up and sing this to it. Nothing is too difficult for thee. Nothing is too difficult for thee. Oh great in my God. Great in counsel and indeed. Nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing. Nothing is too difficult. Say it again. Oh, nothing is too difficult for thee. Nothing is too difficult for thee. Oh great in my God. Great in counsel and great indeed.

Nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing. Nothing is too difficult for thee. And everybody said, you know one of the reasons I like coming to Vineland is so many churches I go to, they're singing about joy and they look like dental surgery. You people actually look happy when you're singing about good songs but this is a really old song and if you don't know it just come along but we're going to be talking about prayer and it says these words. I must tell Jesus, I must tell Jesus, I cannot bear these burdens alone. I don't want to embarrass anybody and if nobody stands it's fine.

But if you have something you need to tell Jesus about and you want to stand and say, I'd like the congregation to believe with me while I'm telling Jesus, let's sing it again. Jesus, Jesus can help me, Jesus, sing it again. Lord Jesus, you see the people that are standing and you know every need and we unite to believe you're the answer to the need. You're more than enough, so we trust you now in Jesus' name. Now can everybody stand with me and we're going to sing another hymn about prayer that I know all of you know. I am thine oh Lord, I have heard thy

voice and it told thy love to me, but I long to rise in the arms of faith and be closer drawn. Sing it, draw me nearer, draw me nearer, blessed Lord to the cross where thou hast died, draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord to thy precious, bleed his eye. Let's present ourselves to him again, consecrate me now, to thy service Lord, by the power of grace. Dear hallelujah, let my soul look up with steadfast hope and my will be lost in line.

Hallelujah. You may be seated. I know I've gone way past my time and I'll take 10 minutes off my sermon. Because what we're doing right now is the reason we came to church, which is worship. We came here to worship. And I know you're sensing God, I could tell it on your face. Joan isn't with me today. She's around the throne.

But the second last time we were here, we sang this song and I want to sing it again. Fear not little flock from the cross to the throne from death into life. He went for his own all power on Earth. All power above is given to him for the flock of his love. O only believe, O only believe, These are possible with liberty. Only believe, only believe, only believe, only believe, all things are possible. I wasn't going to sing this verse, but fear not little flock, whatever your lot.

He enters all rooms, the doors being shot. He never forsakes, he never is gone, so count on his presence in the darkness. Sing, Lord, I believe, Lord, I believe, Lord, I believe, all things are possible. Lord, I believe, Lord, I believe, Lord, I believe, all things are possible. I just can't stop. Something is going on in this room right now. Are there people here who say, I need something from God, something specific, but I feel like my faith is weak and sometimes I come under attack because I feel my faith is weak. But I need God to do that.

Would you lift your hand? There's somebody here. Yeah, there's somebody else. There's somebody else. I feel my way to the back. Thank you. Thank those fans who are going up. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. I just may not get preachin' yet, the Holy Spirit's moving in the house this morning. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. We bless your name, Lord. You're worthy. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Thank you, Lord. Well, no fancy titles this morning. The fancy title is the prayer life. The English word pray in its original meaning just simply meant to ask and accept official government documents and petitions. We don't use it that way anymore. To pray means to talk to God. And prayer is so often modeled for us in Scripture. The Book of Psalms is a great resource in prayer.

One of the things I love about the Psalms is honesty in prayer. The Psalms don't try to be nice in prayer if they're upset, if they're angry, if they're fearful, they pray it out. And I want to tell you my brother and sister, God already knows how you feel. So it's good to get verbal about it. Do you say amen to that this morning in our prayers? So other people who modeled prayer were Moses, for instance. And I've often been in awe of Moses because he had such a strong prayer life that one time God said to Moses, let me alone. It's your prayers that are stopping judgment. I want you to know this morning that your prayers have great potential in God.

And sometimes they hold back things you don't even know. Hallelujah for the power of prayer. I think about Elijah. I think about the prophets of Baal getting on the mountain of Carmel. They went through a lot of religious praying to idols. They even cut themselves. But in the King James Version Elijah who knew God, His prayer was 63 words long and the fire fell. And I want to tell you it isn't necessarily long praying. It's praying in faith.

And I believe that the power still falls and God still meets his people when they pray and when they seek his face. I think about Daniel who had a prayer life that would not be interrupted by anybody's threat or any law of the land. He prayed and he prayed through. I think about Paul whose life was wrapped in prayer. I think about what he said in Ephesians for this reason I bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He prayed that we may understand the hope of our calling. He prayed that we might know the height and the depth and the breadth and the knowledge of the love of God. And I am in that place as a spiritual leader too. I pray for every one of you this morning that you will abound in hope.

That you will know the hope of your calling. You will experience the height and the depth and the length and the breadth. That you will be filled with all the fullness of God. Excuse me but hallelujah. Oh, you do clap your hands here. I gave up on you. Let's do that again. Sounded good. In his discussion of spiritual warfare, Paul discloses the might of the enemy.

Principalities and powers and rulers. He describes the armor that protects and the weapon of attack. Then Paul directs us to the source of our power. Our inner strength, our motivation, and our perseverance win the battle and bring the ultimate victory. Let's read again his manual for victory in the fight against the enemy. I'm turning this morning to familiar verses in Ephesians chapter 6. Finally, my brothers be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood.

Look at me please every one of you. The devil will try to trick you that your enemy is some person. That's a distraction. Your enemy is the devil. Somebody needs to hear this this morning. Your enemy is not some person. Your enemy is the devil. And we have the armor to defeat him. Hallelujah for that.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood. Against principalities, powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this age. Spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day. And having done all to stand. Stand therefore having girded your waste with truth. Having put on the breastplate of righteousness. And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all take the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit. Being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for the saints. The Lord will bless this reading of His word to our hearts. And to His name be the praise and the glory. And that the reading of God's word all the saints shouted. Amen. So this morning I want to talk about seven things in the prayer life. Paul says praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit.

Philip translates this prayer all the time with every kind of spiritual prayer. And I V says pray in the spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayer. There are many kinds of prayer but there is one God who answers prayer. First of all, prayer is praise. The Psalms are filled with praise. I will bless the Lord at all times. Well, I do in the happy times. I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise will continually be in my mouth.

Psalms 35 and 28 says my tongue shall speak of your praise all the day long. The Bible says that praise is God's do. The Bible says in Psalms 65 and 1 that praise waiteth for the O Lord in Zion. You say what does that mean? What does that mean? It means that when we praise the Lord we expect Him to happen. Praise waiteth for the O God in Zion. It's not just going through the motions of singing some songs. It's expecting God to move among his people.

And he is the one who indeed is enthroned on the praises of Israel. Hallelujah for that. My father gave me some very good secrets to the ministry. He only had a little education but he did have a lot of experience.

And he told me something about prayers and praise. He said Ken in the ministry sometimes you're going to feel like the mountain is on top of you. And he said I want you to get somewhere where you can do this. I want you to walk up and down with your hands up and praise the Lord for everything you can think of to praise Him. And after a while, you'll be on top of the mountain and sit on the mountain being on top of you.

Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and His wonderful works to the children of men. Prayer is also worship. Psalm 29 says to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Again in Psalm 5 seven I will worship toward thy temple. Psalm 95 and 1 oh let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord our maker. I'm sorry that we have lost the art of kneeling. I know that some of us can't physically but I'm sorry that we have lost the art of kneeling. Because when I kneel that says physically you're sovereign.

I come before you as the maker of the universe. Worship in prayer acknowledges the character of God. Worship in prayer gives us a fresh revelation of who He is. All of the I am in scripture come into my worship when I have private prayer. And worship involves delighting in Him. And when we delight in the Lord He will give us the desires of our heart. Prayer is also a declaration. In the old days when I was a kid, we used to call this claiming the promises. How many remember that phrase?

We used to talk about claiming the promises and making declarations. In Psalm 118 and verse 17, the writer says I shall not die but live and declare the works of God. Psalm 138 verse 6 the Lord will perfect that which concerns me. Matthew 6 19 whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. And whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. An alternative rendering of this verse says whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven. I'm not saying that we shouldn't bind or loose things but I am saying two things about this kind of declaration. This declaration should be uttered with reverence and authority. It should not be abused as some kind of mantra or formula.

It is a holy thing to bind something in the name of Jesus Christ. It is with reverence that we should take that name upon our lips. You say I'm into that this morning. A greater victory in this area was revealed to me in the preaching of David Shepherd. He said that greater victory in this area is discovering what is already bound or loosed in heaven and thus declaring heaven's agenda. And I believe when we're declaring we can call for the gifts of revelation to operate in us so that we pray according to the will of God. I'm not there yet but I'm going there. I'm on the upward way. Number four prayer is the petition.

We just read it. Ask Luke 11 19 and you will receive. Mark 11 24 whatever things you ask when you pray believe you receive them and you shall have them. And I want you to notice that this scripture is in the context of forgiveness. You can ask and claim and bind and loose but if you don't have forgiveness in your heart your voice isn't going any higher than the ceiling. God helps us to forgive our brothers and sisters not because they're right but because forgiveness sets us free from whatever wounds they have placed upon us. Do you say amen to that this morning? And as we do then whatever things we ask when we pray and believe we shall have them. Philippians 4 verses 6 and part of 7 be anxious for nothing but knit everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving.

Let your requests be made known unto God and the peace of God which defies human understanding will guard your heart and mind through Christ Jesus.

Many years ago when I was in Bible college for our spiritual emphasis days a man that some of you are older will remember came to our college. His name was CM Ward. And he was talking about this scripture and he said in this particular scripture there is no promise of an answer. What Paul said is if you tell Jesus everything and get it off your chest the peace of God will fill your heart. So whatever is on your chest this morning get it off. And in the place of whatever was, there will come the peace of God which defies understanding. Psalm 34 and 4 says I sought the Lord and he heard me and delivered me from all my fears. Now if you've been here before when I preach you know that when I start singing in the middle of my sermon it is not the end.

How many of you know that? Well, I want to sing a song I know April will know it I'm quite sure the cukes will and the rest of you can hum. Tell it to Jesus, tell it to Jesus he is a friend that's well known. You've no other such a friend or brother tell it to Jesus alone tell it to Jesus tell it to Jesus he is a friend that's well known. You've no other such a friend or brother tell it to Jesus alone prayer is petition but then there's prayer in the Holy Spirit. Jude 20 reads but you beloved building yourself up in your most holy faith praying in the Holy Spirit keep yourselves in the love of God. This kind of praying involves the supernatural. How many people are saved here this morning I want to see you put your hand up if you know you're safe. Do you know that when you're saved the Holy Spirit comes to live in you?

So you've got supernatural potential inside of you this morning say amen to that. I know the devil tries to lie to us that we are of no effect and no account but he's a liar and you can pray in the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit lives in you. Now part of this praying has to do with praying in tongues because sometimes we don't know how to pray but the Holy Spirit knows how to pray and he prays beyond our human limitations. Hallelujah and glory to God for that. Praying in the Spirit also involves revelation. Think of the prophet Ananias he was surely in the Spirit when God talked to him and told him the address and the street of where Saul of Tarsus was lying and sent him there to bring him healing and deliverance. I want to tell you I believe that that God still works today and as we draw near to him in the Holy Spirit he can reveal to us not only who to pray for but how to pray for them. I think also of Peter who fell into a trance that's the way the King James Version puts it. I'm a Pentecostal he fell under the power.

He was getting ready for supper and God spoke to him and he revealed to him that he was to visit the house of Cornelius and he also took away from him the prejudice he had against people that weren't Jewish. I want to tell you a story this morning. I am watching that clock. I want to tell you a story this morning. A very true story. It's about the first guy that I ever interned as a pastor. His name was Dawn. He and his wife went to Indonesia to be missionaries and were trying to dig a hole for a well. And Dawn was down there with a machine that he didn't know was letting off poisonous fumes.

He was overcome by them and could have been as fixated. But you know what happened on the other side of the world? A lady living on the north shore of New Brunswick who had been in his congregation before was wakened in the middle of the night with a strong burden to pray. She saw him lying on the ground overcome with something she didn't understand. She prayed and prayed and prayed till the burden lifted. When Dawn's wife came home, she saw her husband, she had been shopping, lying on the ground and the workers around him trying to revive him they could do nothing and there was not a doctor within reach.

But as that woman prayed in the Holy Spirit on the north shore of New Brunswick over in Indonesia the Holy Spirit touched that man and he is alive today and well by the power of God. I believe in praying in the Holy Spirit. Sometimes in the Holy Spirit, we get direction because we do not know the answers.

But Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit takes over and he prays with groans. I don't know maybe you haven't had this but sometimes that's exactly what happened to me. groans have come out of me. Only groans know other sounds because I did not know how to pray. But in our weakness, the Holy Spirit is our strength and he prays through us. Hallelujah for that. Then there's praying mentally. Prayer is abundantly described in the Bible as being verbal. But David said in Psalm 139 you understand my thoughts are far off again in verse 18 how precious are your thoughts to me?

An old hymn that describes this well is from the Presbyterian hymnal. Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed. The motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast. We can pray sometimes when it's not right to pray verbally the Holy Spirit knows our thoughts and he transfers them into prayers. What a compassionate God we serve. Then prayer is meditation. You all know in Hebrew that meditation means in the Bible to chew the cud, to ruminate. And I worked on a farm for one summer and then God delivered me. But I did sit under several cows that were doing that while I milked them.

And I know what that sort of thing means. But the psalmist said, my eyes awaken the night watches that I may meditate on your word. Psalm 19:14, that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight. I want to tell you that personally when I meditate on God in prayer I often receive instruction from God while I'm meditating. I often find that God is clarifying or enlarging my vision for him and what I should do for him. I also experience his mind overcoming my misguided or troubled mind. As in meditation, I center on him. Turn your eyes upon Jesus.

Look full in his wonderful face. And the things of earth will grow strangely dim. In the light of his glory and grace. Prayer is meditation. I want to remind us this morning that by grace we are allowed access to the creator of the universe, to the throne of grace. In faith, we tap into the potential of God to equip us with all that his will requires of us. I want to read that again. In faith, we tap into the potential of God to equip us with all that his will requires of us.

Prayer empowers the sword of the spirit. As I pray I know I preach better. It empowers the sword of the spirit. The possibilities recorded in scripture about prayer are staggering. They're manifest even in church history down to our day. Prayer can break the chains of a jailhouse. Prayer can shake a room where people are praying and power happens. Prayer can bring down fire on a sacrifice. Somebody say hallelujah.

This is shouty self. Prayer can bring Peter out of prison. Prayer changed 15 students in the university in Britain until the fire came and called the Methodist Revival, which saved England from the French Revolution and reformed prisons, and ultimately set slaves free. I want to tell you there's power in prayer. Two old sisters rocking in their chairs 81 and 82 and see I'm old enough, just old enough to remember this. And six elders praying all night, three nights a week in a Hayman. They were Presbyterian elders. One night at three o'clock in the morning the glory came into that room and something happened to them that doesn't often happen to people of that persuasion.

They were slain in the Holy Spirit. And upon that the revival hit the Hebrides Islands, until there were no people in theaters, there were no people in dance halls, there were no people in beer halls, you say why? Because they were all in church. Nobody was preaching against that stuff. There was such hunger for God. There were more people in all of the night services every night of that revival than were in the Sunday morning services before. God has great potential with two sisters who pray through and six elders. Pray till a victory comes, saints.

Don't let go because God hears and he answers prayer. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. And so this morning I want us to sing a song. I want us to stand and sing it two or three times. Will you bless this morning by the word where you are refreshed by it? I want you to stand and sing it to God. And sing it two or three times and if you can't stand, if you have to sit, lift your hands where you're sitting. I want you to sing it with me because I believe in our day.

We need revival in Canada. How many of you know that? We need God to move on our nation. And I believe there's enough potential in this room for that to happen because we have a God who answers by fire. Oh, saints get ahold of God. Something is going on in this room. If you're not the loud type, just however you reach out, reach out right now. God's moving in this room.

Oh, God. Oh, God. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Yeah. That's right. Just let the intercession come. We're going to take a few minutes. That's all right. Oh, God. Call unto me and I will answer you, he said, and show you great and mighty things. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Savior. Savior.

Hear my humble God. While on others thou art call me. Do not pass me. Once more. Savior. Savior. Hear my humble God. While on others thou art calling. Do not pass me. I know it's a quarter after a thousand. Can we take five more minutes here? How many cents God in the room? I do. Okay. Pass me not, O gentle say. I know that there are all seven of these. In the heart of the Lord, I know that there are all seven of these. I know that there are all seven of these. Do not pass me. Just reach out. God's listening. Savior. Save your hear my humble cry. While others thou art call me. Do not pass me. Now you old-timer sing with me.

Reach out and touch the Lord as He goes by. You'll find He's not too busy to hear your heart cry. He is passing by this moment your needs to supply. Reach out and touch the Lord as He goes. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts. Praise the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Praise the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen. Now to Him that can exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or think according to the power that worketh in us. To Him be glory in the church both now and forevermore and the blessing of God Almighty,

the Father, Creator, the Son, Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit Empower. Be with you and remain upon you both now and forevermore.

Reach out Hallelujah.

Go in peace to love and serve.