

Intercession and Missions

by

Dr. Milton Martin

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APPENDIX:

MAP

NATIONS OF THE WORLD

PRAYER JOURNAL

PRAYER PRECEPTS

Pray One for Another

James 5:16

I cannot tell why there should come to me
A thought of someone miles and miles away!

In swift insistence on the memory,
Unless a need there be that I should pray.

Too hurried oft are we to spare the thought,
For days together, of some friends away;
Perhaps God does it for us, and we ought
To read His signal as a call to pray.

Perhaps, just then, my friend has fiercer fight,
And more appalling weakness and decay
Of courage, darkness, some lost sense of right;
And so, in case he needs my prayer, I pray.

Friend, do the same for me. If I intrude
Unasked upon you, on some crowded day,
Give me a moment's prayer as interlude;
Be very sure I need it, therefore, pray.

And when you pray, dear friend, I ask of thee,
That thou will seek of God not mine own way;
Not what I want, but His blest thought for me,
Do thou through Jesus Christ implore, I pray.

Marianne Farningham
(The last verse added by James M. Gray)

WHY PRAY TO GOD?

- I. To Glorify God. John 14:13**
- II. For Victory Over Temptation. Matt. 26:41; 6:13**
- III. We are Called to Fellowship with Christ. I Cor. 1:9**
- IV. We are Commanded to Pray. I Thess. 5:17**
- V. For Self-Analysis. Ps. 139:23, 24**
- VI. God Also Wants to Fellowship - Meet with Us. Gen. 3:8-9; John 4:23**
- VII. To Experience God's Grace in Our Lives. Heb. 4:15, 16**
- VIII. To Conform Our Will to His. Matt. 6:10**
- IX. To Receive God's Blessings. James 4:2**
- X. To Keep from Sinning. I Sam. 12:23**
- XI. To Have Fullness of Joy. John 16:24**
- XII. To Get Close to God. James 4:8**
- XIII. For Laborers for the Ministry. Matt. 9:36, 37**
- XIV. To Get Forgiveness. I John 1:9**

HOW ARE WE TO PRAY?

- I. In the Name of Christ - John 16:24**
- II. To the Father - Matt. 6:9; John 17:1, 5, 11, 21, 24, 25**
- III. With All Known Sin Confessed - Luke 15:21; 18:13; Prov. 28:13; I John 1:9**
- IV. According to the Will of God - I John 5:14, 15**
- V. In the Spirit - Eph. 6:18; Jude 20**
- VI. In Humility - James 4:6, 10**
- VII. Sincere and Truthful - Ps. 145:18**
- VIII. In Confidence - Heb. 4:16**
- IX. Abiding in Word - John 15:7**
- X. In Faith - Heb. 11:6; James 1:6, 7**
- XI. Be Specific - Phil. 4:6**
 - A. For lost - Rom. 10:1
 - B. Examples
 - 1. Paul - for Roman Christians. Rom. 1:9
 - 2. Paul - for Ephesian Christians. Eph. 1:15-19; 3:14-19
 - 3. Paul - for Philippian Christians. Phil. 1:3-5, 9
 - 4. Paul - for Colossian Christians. Col. 1:3, 9
 - 5. Paul - for Thessalonian Christians. I Thess. 1:2; 3:10, 12, 13; 5:23; II Thess. 1:11, 12; 2:16, 17
 - 6. Paul - for Onesiphorus. II Tim. 1:16, 18
 - 7. Paul - for Philemon. Philemon 4
 - 8. Philemon - for Paul. Philemon 22
- XII. For God's Glory - John 14:13**

HOW TO PRAY ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD

I John 5:14, 15

I. Confession - Ps. 66:18; Prov. 28:13; I John 1:9

II. Praise - Examples: Psalms chapters 145-150

To bless, magnify, glorify, worship, adore Him for what and who He is - not what He does.

III. Thanksgiving - I Thess. 5:18

Specific, definite, naming, listing - EVERYTHING

**IV. Intercession - I Sam. 12:23; Ezek. 22:30, 31; Jer. 5:1; Ps. 106:23; I Tim. 2:1- 4.
Examples: Gen. 18:23-33; Ex. 32:31, 32; John 17**

V. Petition - Matt. 6:11; 7:7, 8; 21:22; Phil. 4:6; James 4:2

OBSTACLES TO ANSWERED PRAYER

- I. Unbelief - First prayer is one of salvation. Luke 8:9-14; Heb 11:6; James 1:6, 7; Matt. 21:22; Mark 11:24; 6:5, 6**
- II. Incorrect Motive - James 4:3; I John 5:14; Matt. 6:5**
- III. Lack of Being In Word - Prov. 28:9; John 15:7**
- IV. Repetition or Vain Words - James 5:16; Matt 6:7**
- V. Incorrect Attitude Toward Wife - Lack of Harmony in Home - I Peter 3:7**
- VI. Unforgiving Spirit - Mark 11:25, 26; Matt. 5:23, 24; 6:14**
- VII. Unconfessed Sin - Ps. 66:18; Prov. 28:13; Isaiah 59:1, 2
(Must be specific - Judges 10:10)**
- VIII. Failure to Wait - Heb. 4:14; Luke 18:1; Ps. 40:1**
- IX. An Unfaithful Steward - Luke 16:11**
- X. Hypocrisy in Worship - Isaiah 1:11-15**

EXPECT MIRACLES FROM GOD

John 14:12-14

Expect great things from God;
Attempt great things for God.

Wm. Carey

INTRODUCTION

Verse 12 promises two things: (a) possible to equal the works of the Lord Jesus; and (b) possible to exceed the works of the Lord Jesus.

Most have never seen this verse in a life nor have experienced it personally. As a result, the conclusion is reached - there is something wrong with this promise or it is not literal.

God's Word is not to be dragged down to our puny experience - instead our experience is to reach up to the Word of God. We are not to cheapen the Word of God or limit it to our defeated, worldly, self-excused, self-justified, degrading reasons for not believing it. It is Biblically normal to equal and exceed the works of the Lord Jesus Christ. If we do not - something is drastically wrong.

The average Bible College and the average Church teaches that the success of a pastor depends on his ability, his preparation, his charisma - his leadership traits and shrewdness that enable him to administrate and stay a few steps ahead of the people. We are not taught to expect the supernatural in our ministry. Those who teach the opposite are trying to cover up and justify their own powerlessness.

All are in agreement that we have:

A Supernatural Savior
Who had a supernatural birth

A Supernatural Book Given
supernaturally Preserved
supernaturally

Supernatural Gospel
Produces supernatural results
A Supernatural Person - the Holy Spirit
Indwells believers supernaturally
Produces a supernatural birth

A Supernatural Warfare
Supernatural weapons

A Supernatural Church
Supernatural in origin

Supernatural in design
Supernatural in order
Supernatural in operation

If the work of the church is not carried on supernaturally, it will be superficial.

If revival were to come to the average church, it would set it back two thousand years. The supernatural would be natural; the extraordinary would be the ordinary; the abnormal would be the normal. God is disgraced and dishonored if we settle for anything less.

It is not taking verse 12 as a challenge and then going out and doing the best we can.

Our best is not enough in salvation.
Our best is not enough in living the Christian life.
Our best is not enough in doing the work of God.

How is verse 12 to become a reality in our lives? Verse 12 is accomplished by verse 13. Verse 13 begins with the conjunction and. A conjunction is a connecting word. Verse 12 is dependent on verse 13. In fact, it is so important that it is repeated again in verse 14. This indicates the importance of verse 13.

God intends that the work of His Church is carried on through prayer.

The lost are to be saved through prayer.
Laborers are to be called out through prayer.
Strongholds of Satan are to be conquered through prayer.
Countries, tribes, peoples, and cities are to be won through prayer.

I. Verse 13 - Measures of Our Praying

WHATSOEVER - ANYTHING

- A. Consider words related to prayer promises in the Bible.
 - 1. All things - whatsoever. Matt. 21:22; Mark 11:24; I John 3:22; 5:15.
 - 2. Anything. I John 5:14; Matt. 18:19.
 - 3. What ye will. John 15:7.
 - 4. Be careful for nothing; in everything. Phil. 4:6; Eph. 6:18.
 - 5. Really have not previously prayed. John 16:24.

II. Verse 13b - Means of Our Praying

IN MY NAME

- A. It is not our merits, separation, spirituality or how many times we have read our Bible through - but our access is through blood and righteousness of Christ.
 - 1. Identification - as if Christ was praying.
 - 2. Power in His Name - Demons of Hell cannot stand or stay around when His Name is used.

3. Authority - recall the story of Moses' rod. Note Ex. 4:2, 4, 5; 7:10-12, 15, 20; 8:5, 16; 10:13; 14:16; 17:6 - especially 17:9. The rod of God was a symbol of the authority God put into Moses' hand. Now for us - it is praying in Jesus' name.

III. Verse 13c - Might of Our Praying

THAT WILL I DO

- A. Our praying puts Christ to work.
- B. Let's get out of the way and turn it all over to Him.
- C. He will do a much better job.
- D. He will go before us.
- E. We can send Him anywhere in the world. Isaiah 45:11; Matt. 9:37-38.

IV. Verse 13d - Motive of Our Praying

THAT THE FATHER MIGHT BE GLORIFIED

- A. God wants to be glorified through His Son.
- B. Jesus Christ is only interested in glorifying His Father.
- C. The Holy Spirit is only interested in glorifying the Son.
- D. Man, a personality, a church, institution or organization must not receive glory - only God.
- E. Taking glory that only belongs to God is an abomination and related to idolatry. Isaiah 42:8; 48:11.

CONCLUSION

Now:

1. Take His Promises.
2. Enter into the work of prayer.
3. What is the concern in your life?
4. Make a list.
5. Practice taking everything to the Father.
6. The things we leave out will become problems.
7. Our degree of success will be directly related to the degree we pray.
8. Prove the Lord! He does not have to be afraid of failure.

WHAT IS ON YOUR HEART?

1. Salvation of souls.
2. Ministry in lives.
3. Go anywhere in the world by prayer.
4. Financial concerns.
5. Marital problems.
6. Problems with children.
7. A life's partner.

AN INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER

"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of!"

Sir Alfred Lord Tennyson

I. The Necessity of Prayer

Bible scholars tell us there are 1,522 separate "if" clauses in the Bible. These are passages where God says in effect, "I will do this for you, if you will that." II Chronicles 7:14. Prayer leads to:

- A. Prayer leads to salvation. Rom. 10:4, 10, 13.
To call is to pray. It is an act of prayer on the part of man that opens his heart to the salvation experience. Without this prayer of confession, a believer's salvation could not be possible.
- B. Prayer leads to divine fellowship. Rev. 3:20
The act of "supping" means divine fellowshipping. Following our salvation experience, we grow in fellowship with God by spending time with Him in prayer. There can be no divine fellowship without personal prayer.
- C. Prayer leads to spiritual growth. Acts 6:4
The early Christian leaders quickly learned that their minds could easily become distracted by all kinds of non-essential responsibilities. They realized that true spiritual growth would only come by developing a strong devotional habit. Such a habit consists of much time spent in prayer and in God's word. The busier the schedule, the greater the need for time with the Lord.
- D. Prayer leads to unexplained miracles. Acts 12:5
Peter was in prison under sentence of death when this prayer incident took place. Peter's dramatic release was an astounding, unexplained miracle wrought by persistent prayer.

Throughout the New Testament, prayer helped bring dramatic, unexplained miracles.

II. The Nature of Prayer

Throughout history, people have tried to understand the extraordinary concept called prayer. Job 23:3

What exactly is the nature of prayer?

"Nature" means the intrinsic characteristics and qualities of a thing. What are the intrinsic characteristics and qualities of prayer?

First of all -

- A. Prayer is - talking directly with God. Hosea 14:2

- The fundamental nature of prayer is communion between a sovereign God and finite man. In prayer, we simply take our thoughts to God, expressing our deepest desires, whether personal or for others.
- B. Prayer is - focusing God's power on a specific need. Ex. 9:33
Moses, in this incident, focused God's power on nature, bringing about an instant miracle.
Similarly, in James 5:17-18, Elijah commanded the rain to stop and later prayed again and the rains returned.
 - C. Prayer is - hearing God share specific, divine directions. Isaiah 30:18, 21
As we wait on God in prayer, He will speak to us concerning very specific situations related to our Christian work.
 - D. Prayer is - ministering to the Lord in praise, thanksgiving, and spiritual worship. Ps. 95:2; 27:4
A most vital aspect of prayer concerns that time set aside for praise and adoration of God. Worship should be the ultimate goal of prayer. Indeed, our entire reason for being is to glorify God.

III. The Neglect of Prayer

- A. A survey reveals tragically that the average Christian prays approximately 60 seconds per day. The same survey revealed that the average minister prays 90 seconds per day.
- B. Nothing grieves the heart of God more than the neglect of prayer. Jer.. 2:32b
- C. A study of Old Testament law reveals how deeply God was displeased with this neglect of prayer. II Chron. 15:13
- D. The responsibility of prayer is the responsibility of every believer.
- E. To neglect prayer is to neglect God's power, thus assuring ultimate spiritual failure.
- F. What does neglect of prayer indicate?
 - 1. To neglect prayer is self-centered. Psalms 10:4
The neglect of prayer is one of the highest forms of spiritual selfishness and pride. To neglect prayer is to inform God that we do not need His help in carrying on the affairs of our day.
 - 2. To neglect prayer is slothful. Jer. 48:10
Laziness is slackness. The Bible declares that a spirit of laziness hinders all aspects of spiritual growth, especially prayer. Ecc. 10:18
 - 3. To neglect prayer is sin. I Sam. 12:23
To know to do good and not do it is sin. James 4:17. Prayer is not only a good thing, it is the best thing.
 - 4. To neglect to pray for a dying world is to say, "I do not care."

IV. The Nucleus of Prayer

"Nucleus" means the central thing or part of something around which all the other things are grouped. The term "nucleus" also is defined as "anything regarded as a basis for future development in growth."

Prayer is the nucleus of spiritual growth. Jesus Christ is the nucleus of prayer. Consider three important statements about our nucleus of prayer.

- A. Christ loved to pray. Luke 5:16
Throughout the Gospels, there are examples of Christ "withdrawing" for prayer.
- B. Christ taught us to pray. Luke 11:1; John 14:12-14
Christ felt prayer was important; so important that He taught His disciples the secret of prayer.
- C. Christ lives forever in prayer. Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34
If Christ is spending His entire present ministry interceding on our behalf, surely the believer ought to give a daily gift of time to join with the Lord in communion.

THE JOURNEY OF POWER

O watch and fight and pray.
The battle ne'er give o'er.
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.
Ne'er think the victory won,
Nor lay thine armor down;
The work of faith will not be done,
Till thou obtain thy crown,
Fight on, my soul . . .

I. The Cost of Prayer

There are some believers who think of the Christian life as a free ride or spiritual adventure. While it is true that salvation is free - someone wisely added, "It is not cheap." The same principle applies to prayer. Prayer is "free" to believers but to understand and engage in true prayer bears a significant price tag. To be a prayer warrior not only costs much time but tremendous spiritual energy. Satan attacks the prayer warrior like he attacks no other believer. But those willing to pay the price are destined to achieve much for God.

Consider the example of several who were willing to pay the price to be true prayer warriors.

A. The example of Daniel. Dan. 6:1-10, 16

A look at Daniel's experience reveals there is a price to be paid for maintaining a consistent prayer habit. Although we are not thrown into a den of lions, a thousand hungry "spiritual" lions come our way the moment we purpose to give ourselves to pray.

B. The example of Jeremiah. Lam. 1:16, 20; 2:19

Jeremiah, like Daniel, paid a price in carrying the burden of God's people. He wept with such intensity that he felt his insides turn within him. Jeremiah often spent whole nights weeping because of his burden.

C. The example of John Hyde.

You have been assigned the reading of John Hyde. Hyde prayed with such intensity that people in India called him "The man who never sleeps." He was also called "The apostle of prayer." In later years, he was simply called "Praying Hyde."

John Hyde spent so many days and nights in prayer that he would lose track of time. Often, he would spend upwards of 36 continuous hours on his knees in prayer.

Once, he spent 30 consecutive days in prayer. During a physical examination in his later years, it was revealed that John Hyde's heart had actually turned over in his chest cavity and moved to the right side of his body. Hyde paid a great price but brought thousands to Christ. Modern day results in India may be traced to his prayers.

D. The example of David Brainerd.

Few Christian leaders since Bible days have been able to match the intensity of a devotion of David Brainerd. David Brainerd's diary is a record of almost continual watchings in prayer. It is said that David Brainerd prayed in snowdrifts until his warm body melted the snow to the frozen ground. The life of David Brainerd touched the lives of William Carey, John Wesley, Andrew Murray, Jonathan Edwards, and hundreds of contemporary spiritual leaders. Yet, David Brainerd traveled only among the American Indians and died at 29 years of age. At the time of his death, Brainerd had been ordained only four years. Historians say David Brainerd introduced only 40 or 50 persons to Jesus Christ in his lifetime. Yet, because of his intense devotional dedication, David Brainerd touched tens of thousands of spiritual leaders in generations to follow. Brainerd was willing to pay the price of dying to self by sacrificing many long hours of costly prayer.

E. Quotes

"Spiritual work is taxing work, and men are loath to do it. Praying, true praying, costs an outlay of serious attention and of time, which flesh and blood do not relish.

"E. M. Bounds

"There's no easy path to glory
There's no rosy path to fame.
Prayer, no matter how you view it,
 Is no simple parlor game.
 But its prizes call for fighting,
 For endurance and for grit;
 For a rugged "I can do it"
And some "don't know when to quit."

II. The Results of Prayer

Although there is a tremendous cost to genuine prayer, there are also tremendous results.

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

"Ye have not because ye ask not." James 4:2b

If we have not because we ask not, it follows logically that we have because we ask. Charles Spurgeon said of prayer, "Whether we like it or not, asking is the rule of the Kingdom." All spiritual results come through prayer. It is a law of God.

Here are several results, among many, we can expect through our prayers:

A. Wisdom. James 1:5

All knowledge and understanding necessary to consistent Christian living can be obtained in believing prayer.

B. Prosperity. II Chron. 26:5-b

The same principle that applied to King Uzziah applies to believers today. Material and spiritual prosperity flow from spending much time with the Lord in prayer. This

- is not to suggest that our prayer should center on a desire for material blessing. However, God will meet every need of those who humbly give themselves to prayer.
- C. Spiritual awakening. Acts 1:14 with Acts 2:41
It is especially noteworthy that God's divine outpouring came as the direct result of prayer. Further, the spiritual outpouring brought an extraordinary spiritual harvest. Over 3,000 souls were added to the Church in one day.
God longs to do similar things in answer to prayer today.
 - D. Spiritual deliverance. Psalm 34:4
Here we see that deliverance from all fears is the result of prayer.
 - E. Power. Jerm. 33:3; Acts 4:33
A careful reading of the closing verses of Acts, Chapter 4, reveals that the disciples had experienced a powerful prayer meeting that led to both unity and spiritual power. Such power is not to be obtained for the sake of spiritual boasting but that many lives may come to Christ because of our praying.

III. The Equality of Prayer

When the Bible says, "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," (Rom. 10:13) a very important principle of prayer is revealed.

Prayer is not a spiritual function reserved only for a select few. Some religions reserve the right of prayer for specifically trained priests. However, all believers have the right to call upon God.

- A. Age does not matter. Luke 2:36, 37
Whether it be a little child or an elderly saint, God welcomes the prayer of anyone who comes in the name of His Son.
- B. Race does not matter. Acts 8:26-29
The evangelization of one Ethiopian was significant enough for God to send His servant, Phillip, to share Christ with this individual in the middle of a desert. In the eyes of God, race makes no difference.
- C. Status does not matter. Luke 18:10-14; Matt. 15:21-28
It is obvious in the first passage that the repentant sinner was someone of lesser status than the Pharisee. God looks at the heart of an individual rather than the social status of that person.

In the second passage, a "woman of Canaan" pleaded for her daughter's life. But Christ's disciples said, "Send her away." Possibly they doubted that Jesus wanted to deal with "a woman of Canaan" or perhaps she just was not important to the disciples and their agenda. However, Christ answered her petition with a miracle. Status is unimportant at the Throne of Grace.

IV. The Path of Prayer.

Matt. 4:19

Our Lord is in the business of making His followers "fishers of men" (or world changers) no matter what their abilities may be. Christ invites us to follow Him along the path of prayer so that we might understand those secrets necessary to affect men for His glory.

Ps. 63:1, 2

As we begin on this little-traveled road of prayer, there will be obstacles that must be destroyed - such as the "mountain of sin" and "the peak of unbelief." We will have to conquer the "avalanche of excuses" that drain our daily life of prayer.

We are much like Pilgrim in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. We are "pilgrims of prayer" in search of the mountain of God's power.

V. The Secret of Prayer

Ps. 25:14a

"Fear" means "spiritual respect." When we develop a deep respect and a holy awe for the Lord (which is manifested in prayer), God will reveal special secrets to us.

Concerning this matter of prayer, one secret must be understood from the outset:
PRAYER IS ONLY REALLY LEARNED THROUGH PRAYER.

When Christ's disciples asked, "Lord, teach us to pray," Jesus responded by teaching them a prayer. He was suggesting that, although much can be said about prayer, until we actually pray we will understand little about the secrets of prayer.

We want to learn more than theory. Join with me in prayer daily that God will show us a deep spiritual understanding of all that prayer is, and especially, how this act of divine fellowship can be developed daily in our lives.

"The greatest thing anyone can do for God and man is pray. It is not the only thing, but it is the chief thing. The great people of the earth today are the people who pray. I do not mean those who talk about prayer; nor those who say they believe in prayer; nor yet those who can explain about prayer; but I mean these people who take time to pray."

S. D. Gordon

PRAYER PRECEPTS

The secret prayer chamber is a bloody battleground. Here violent and decisive battles are fought out. Here the fate for souls for time and eternity is determined, in quietude and solitude.

O. Hallesby

O watch and fight, and pray;
The battle ne'er give o'er.
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.
Ne'er think the victory won,
Nor lay thine armor down;
The work of faith will not be done,
Till Thou obtain Thy crown. Fight
on my soul . . .
Don't despise a single minute -
Each has sixty seconds in it.
If you seize it, you can use it.
Do not waste it or abuse it.
If you pray, your little minute
Has eternal value in it.

Author Unknown

The prayers I make will then be sweet indeed
It Though the Spirit give by which I pray: My
unassisted heart is barren clay,
That of its nature self can nothing feed;
Of good and pious works Thou art the seed,
That quickens only when Thou say'st it may;
Unless Thou show to us Thine own true way
No man can find it: Father! Thou must lead.

Michelangelo

THE PRAYER OF AGREEMENT

Matthew 18:18-20

The Lord Jesus placed a tremendous value on agreement in prayer. Matthew quotes Christ's words on prayer agreement in the context of the way one should react when your brother sins against you and any disciplinary action of a church that may be involved. In this context, Christ states three general principles, very broad in their application and impact. They are all interrelated in this teaching concerning prayer.

1. God's people have been given power of binding and loosing. Verse 18.
2. God's people have special power by agreement in prayer. Verse 19.
3. God's people are assured of Christ's presence when they meet together for prayer. Verse 20.

These principles are laws of the Kingdom and laws of prayer that far transcend dealing with an erring brother. They are true for all of prayer as it relates to the total interests of Christ's Kingdom.

To agree in prayer is the most specific and powerful form of united prayer. It is the crowning activity in group prayer. It does not replace private prayer but builds upon it.

Christ placed very special emphasis on this teaching by saying, "Verily I say unto you." Matt. 18:18a. It is as to say Amen, I tell you the truth. In the next verse, He begins with "Again I say unto you." Matt. 18:19a. Again implying an Amen and "I say" emphasizing the significance of what He is about to say.

Christ revealed many wonderful truths in the short space of three verses.

I. This is momentous truth.

This is emphasized in the opening phrases in verses 18 and 19.

II. It is for practical life and God's Kingdom activities "on earth."

It is repeated twice - once in each verse. It is for our day by day living for the glory of God and is also applied to extension of His Kingdom.

III. It is for believers as part of the family of God.

It is so simple that it is available wherever God's people are. It will even hold true if only two believers are involved together.

IV. It is accomplished through prayer.

Whether binding or loosing, or any other Christian concern, it is a guaranteed method for God's results in prayer.

V. It is for every practical matter of the Lord's business.

The "whatsoever" is used twice in verse 18 and "anything" is used once in verse 19.

VI. It is especially done by uniting in prayer.

Any number of people might be involved.

VII. It requires total unity, harmony, and agreement in prayer.

The Greek verb is symphoneo (literally meaning "sound together") from which we get our word symphony. When the many and diverse instruments of a great orchestra all sound as one in perfect harmony, it is called a symphony. We must pray till there is a total symphony of agreement among those praying.

VIII. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself is present.

Not only is He there in His omnipresence, He is there in a very personal way as Savior, Priest, and Glorified Lord. He does not promise to come and join His believers, for He is already there waiting for them ("there am I" verse 20). He is specially, significantly, and purposely present in an even more wonderful way among His people whenever they meet to agree in prayer.

IX. This is a special prayer of beautiful harmony, total agreement, and sweet symphony.

It is made possible and guaranteed effective by Christ's own presence. He is the great, eternal, and moment-by-moment Intercessor. He lives to intercede. Heb. 7:25. It gives Him much pleasure when we join to pray and agree fully in prayer. He instantly, moment-by-moment, joins our agreement, our symphony of prayer. How can such prayer be effective? Whenever two meet together, there are really three. It is like the transfiguration all over again - but without Moses and Elijah - instead, it is two believers and the Lord.

HOW TO AGREE IN PRAYER

Matthew 18:18-20

If everyone who asks receives and everyone who seeks finds, and if to everyone who knocks, the door is opened (Matt. 7:7), then how much more can be expected when two, five, or ten unitedly ask, seek, and knock?

If one Jacob can prevail over a wrestling angel, what can two do? What victory would come to two joined in the same wrestling? "One of you shall chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight!" There is accumulated power in united intercession; two do not only double the force, but multiply it tenfold. God grant to each of us a praying partner.

Spurgeon

Christ referred to two gathering "in my name." Matt 18:20. The Greek is literally "into my name." This wording implies entering into all that the name of Jesus includes.

The name of Jesus, when we are sure we are praying in accordance with God's holy will (a) gives us confidence in prayer, (b) authority in prayer, and (c) special boldness in spiritual battle.

The Holy Spirit longs to work in power but there is something about disunity that grieves Him. The closer our unity, the more fully His presence can be manifested and His power appropriated by us. When the spirit sees some of God's children united in the tremendous unity of the prayer of agreement, with hearts beating as one, with longings, tears, hopes, and faith blended together in holy oneness, He puts Himself into our praying.

The sequence of the following steps is not absolute. Please do not get bound up legalistically in these steps.

I. Agree in the Assessment of the Need.

- A. Seek God's perspective on what is important to Him.
- B. Seek to be completely unbiased, to see as God sees.
- C. Seek to unite in seeing the need for which you pray.
- D. Seek to understand the reasons for the need.
- E. Seek to understand the reason for the urgency in the need being met.

II. Agree in Deep Hunger for God's Answer.

- A. Perhaps God has already given each person a real hunger to see God move in answering this prayer.
- B. As you face it together before God's throne, each can help deepen the hunger of the other as you agree together and amen each other.
- C. God may see fit to deepen your hunger or longing until you are moved to tears as you pray.
- D. Tears are precious in God's sight.
- E. Jesus prayed with "strong crying and tears." Heb. 5:7

III. Agree in Giving God Full Liberty to Work

- A. Agree with each other that God's ways are higher than your ways and that God may have a far better answer. Isaiah 55:8, 9.

IV. Come to Agreement in God's Will in the Matter.

- A. Sensing what God desires to do regarding a need is very helpful in effective praying.
- B. You can agree in the deepest sense much more totally and powerfully when each is assured of God's will in the matter.

V. Agree in Claiming an Appropriate Promise.

- A. More than mental assent is needed that a promise is indeed God's Word at this time.
- B. Unite in a specific promise from the Word of God for the specific needs at hand.
- C. Pray until you get heart agreement.
- D. Rejoice together that God has known about the need before you realized it and that He has been working even before you began to pray.

VI. Agree in Holy Determination to See God's Answer.

- A. Is this prayer request important enough to us that we will not give up until we obtain the answer?
- B. Sometimes God gives assurance that the answer has been granted before we see it actualized before our eyes.

VII. Agree in Steps of Obedience.

- A. Often in prayer, God guides to take certain steps.
- B. It may be to involve more people.
- C. It may be to set apart special times for prayer.
- D. It may be to increase the time in prayer.
- E. It may be that fasting needs to be involved in a prayer effort.
- F. It may be a prompting for something that you must do or that the person you are praying for must do.

VIII. Agree in Giving God All the Glory.

- A. It may not be necessary for others to know that you are praying.
- B. Don't touch the glory that belongs to God.
- C. Stay in the background.
- D. Do not seek glory for your church, family, or have any selfish motive.

WHY PASTORS NEED INTERCESSION

I. Pastors have More Responsibility and Accountability. James 3:1

- A. Accepting a position of Christian leadership (be it pastor, evangelist, missionary, staff in a ministry) is running a risk. Sin becomes more dangerous than ever before.
- B. All Christians must come before the judgment seat of Christ but pastors and leaders are forewarned of a divine double standard. I Cor. 4:1-4
 - 1. In the eyes of the world and God, a given sin is worse for a pastor to commit than for others.
 - 2. It is serious to violate the office of leadership. When an office of trust and example has been granted by God and recognized by some Christian community, it is a grievous offense to break that trust.

II. Pastors are More Subject to Temptation

- A. The higher the profile of a Christian leader, the higher one goes on Satan's list and order for special attack and focus. Satan is more specific, persistent, and intentional when it comes to Christian leaders.
 - 1. Satan uses the world. Eph. 2:1, 2
 - a. Pastors are tempted with greed, power, and pride.
 - (1) Sad to say, Churches have not practiced Bible discipline many times.
 - (2) It has been necessary for the secular media to do investigative reporting to uncover some of the greed among Christian leaders.
 - (3) The love of money is the root of all evil and Satan has had a "heyday" on this point.
 - 2. Satan uses the flesh. Eph. 2:2, 3
 - a. Sex also is a strong lure for pastors and preachers.
 - (1) Satan will see that one is presented with opportunities for sin - if there is no protection.
 - (2) The mind will be attacked and perverted through the eye-gate - if a covenant is not made. Ps. 101:3; 97:10; I John 2:16; Job 31:1
 - b. Gluttony is seldom considered under the search light of the Scriptures. Prov. 23:1-3; Ecc. 10:17; Luke 21:34; I Cor. 9:27; 6:12, 13; 10:23; Rom. 14:17, 18
 - 3. Satan also uses "the devil." I Peter 5:8; John 13:27
 - a. Servants of Christ can come under attack from demonization, spells, curses, and incantations.
 - (1) An area of the life uncommitted is an open door for the evil one.
 - (2) The minister of Christ must not be presumptuous but knowledgeable and circumspect.
 - (3) Witchcraft and the occult were once the encounters of the foreign missionary. This is no longer true!
 - (4) Ignorance of the devices of Satan will not give protection.
 - (5) Pretending that these things cannot happen to me will not suffice.

III. Pastors are More Targeted by Spiritual Warfare

- A. It has now become known that over the last several years Satanists, witches, New Agers, occult practitioners, shamans, spiritists, and other servants of darkness have entered into an evil covenant to pray to Satan for the breakdown of marriages of pastors and Christian leaders.
- B. There are three levels of spiritual warfare.
 - 1. Ground-level spiritual warfare, which is ordinary deliverance ministry.
 - 2. Occult-level spiritual warfare, which involves spells and curses by spiritual practitioners of darkness.
 - 3. Strategic-level spiritual warfare, which deals with territorial principalities and powers.
- C. Spiritual warfare is a very important issue and must not be considered just a figment of someone's imagination.
- D. Example of John Vaughan's (from International Mega-Church Research Center, Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, Missouri, editor Journal of North American Society for Church Growth) experience on a flight from Detroit to Boston.
- E. Bill McRae (from Ontario, Canada, Chancellor, Ontario Bible College and Ontario Theological Seminary, former pastor North Park Community Chapel) discovered that a group of Satanists in the area were committed to pray to Satan for elimination of evangelical leaders through marriage and family breakdown. They received an award at a Satanist convention for their effectiveness in bringing down five leading men through immorality and marriage breakdown. Group went into a restaurant for a meal and noticed a group praying at a booth, thinking they were Christians, they identified themselves and were shocked to discover it was Satanists praying for the downfall of spiritual leaders.
- F. The grace of God and power of God can be very real and can be released through effective, intelligent intercession in the name of Jesus.
- G. Who will pray most for pastors and leaders? Luke 18:8

IV. Pastors Have More Influence on Others

- A. If a pastor falls or fails, more people are hurt and set back in their spiritual lives than if others fall.
- B. The ripple effect can be very far-reaching and incredibly devastating.
 - 1. Strong Christians can be crushed by the hypocrisy and betrayal they feel.
 - 2. Weak Christians take the pastor's behavior as a license for them to do likewise.
- C. The pastor is the major institutional factor for determining the growth or non-growth of a church.
 - 1. Satan hates churches that glorify God and does what he can to bring them down.
- D. Intercession for pastors is one important ingredient to help realize God's plan for a church's fullest implementation.

V. Pastors Have More Visibility.

- A. A pastor is closely observed and under constant scrutiny.
- B. They are always subject to gossip and criticism.

- C. They are continually under a unique burden and need supernatural help to handle that situation well.
- D. Intercession opens the way for them to receive this help.

HOW TO PRAY FOR THE LOST?

The early Church waited in prayer for 10 days, preached 30 minutes and 3,000 came to Christ. Today, we pray for 10 minutes, preach for 3 or 4 days - and if we have 10 professions - we think we have seen ***Revival!***???

Ezekiel 22:;30, 31; Jeremiah 5:1; Psalms 106:23

(I Timothy 2:1; Romans 10:1)

Luke 18:1, 8

I. Toward Satan. Romans 10:1

- A. Lost are Bound. II Tim. 2:25, 26; Matt. 12:29; Luke 11:21, 22
- B. Lost are Blind. II Cor. 4:3,4; I Cor. 2:14; II Cor. 10:4
- C. Blind and Bound can be freed - so can act on message. Heb. 2:14, 15; I John 3:8; Col. 2:14, 15; Acts 26:18.
- D. Believer has authority. Matt. 16:19; 18:8.

Binding can be broken - Emancipation.

Blinding can be taken away - Enlightenment.

The Lord has redeemed, paid for - the emancipation and enlightenment of souls. It is time we claimed and appropriated this literally, truly, and fully by faith. We must take what is rightfully the Lord's and ours!

II. Toward the Saints. Matt. 9:38

Examples of Praying Peoples:

Moravians - A prayer meeting was begun in 1731 that lasted over 100 years. Someone was praying every 15 minutes around the clock for over 100 years. As a result, they sent out proportionally more missionaries than anyone else ever in history.

Galilean Baptist, Houma, Louisiana - They adopted island of Malta which is a closed country. After two weeks of daily prayer, God called Ray Hoover, whom they did not know, from another state. The pastor met him three months later at a fellowship meeting and invited him for a meeting. There the pastor challenged him to make a survey trip, as he was on deputation to go to a country that was not allowing missionaries in. He was able to go for two weeks. Galilean had special daily prayer meetings at the church. Toward the end of the trip, Ray Hoover felt led to go to the authorities and make application for legal papers. They were granted and he was the first missionary to Malta in hundreds of years. In four years, he started two Baptist churches that exist there today.

Bible Baptist, Staten Island, New York. In February 1987, I took Pastor Mel Sabaka and two of his men on a survey trip to Central America. In three weeks in a pick-up truck, we criss-crossed five thousand miles in Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras. In one area of Guatemala, we went through 50 villages where there was only one small Baptist

mission. Every village had a Pentecostal work. The people mobbed us for tracts. Several times we passed out only ten tracts which resulted in over 30 people approaching us and asking for the free Bible Correspondence Courses. Once we sat for 30 minutes at a cross-roads near a bus stop waiting on a missionary and just passed out tracts to those that walked by. Again, almost 30 cards were returned on the spot and one person returned and asked, When are you going to start a church here? We are interested. Pastor Sabaka returned to his church very burdened. He prayed about transmitting his burden to his people. Reports were given by the two men who went. Later, they presented slides to the church. As a result, a 48-hour a week, 15 minutes a day, around the clock, every Tuesday and Wednesday prayer chain was begun for Central America. Three weeks after they began to pray God touched a converted Jewish man in Ohio to contact Mel Sabaka and ask if there was not a project in which he could get involved. This man gave over \$150 thousand toward Central America in a 2 1/2 year period. Two and a half months after they began, God called my son Daniel to Guatemala to work with them. A little over a year later, my son-in-law and daughter were called to Guatemala. Daniel has been there nine years. David and Beth have been there 8 years. God supplied 10 tons - a sea container of literature - provided free shipping through a banana company - and got it in legally and delivered to Guatemala a little over a year from the time Staten Island started praying. In January, 1991, there were 6,000 consistently studying the Bible by mail. In 1990, God called Robert Creech, a pastor from Arkansas, to Panama - also in answer to their intercession.

Bible Baptist Church, New Braunfels, Texas. While I was in three communist countries in eastern Europe in September, 1990, Daniel was in special evangelistic meetings in three cities in the Central American country of El Salvador, our church had someone praying every 15 minutes around the clock for us for two weeks. God did some things in Czechoslovakia that will have a nationwide impact. God gave me a ministry in a man's life who without a doubt is God's man for that country. Daniel saw very special protection at the same time in El Salvador while in guerrilla areas. Thirty souls each week came to Christ and he had a ministry in the lives of 15 Salvadorean preachers. He was back in November and saw much greater results. Many churches have become involved in the intensive, systematic use of Gospel tracts. Several hundred thousand pieces of literature were gotten into the country. Again, Bible Baptist Church of New Braunfels had someone praying every hour around the clock for two weeks. A correspondence school has been established there. One high school has 700 students now doing the Bible correspondence courses. He came out of the country about 5 p.m. on a Monday night and at 7 p.m. - at the time our church stopped prayer - the guerrillas launched a nationwide major offensive. December 1990: From 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. each day from December 3 to December 21, our church had someone praying each hour for me while in Mexico. We got 3 tons of literature into the country and into the hands of pastors and churches who needed it in over 90 locations or towns. A total of 9 of us Americans were on the trip. On Sunday afternoon, December 9, we were arrested by 16 heavily armed judicial police. We were kept under guard for about two hours and were taken for formal charging to the county district attorney who ordered the chief to release us without an explanation. Certainly, it was because someone was praying.

God honors specific prayer. Isaiah 45:11; Num. 16:48.

Name countries:

- Pray for laborers - missionaries. (Know when praying.)
- Pray for the key for that country.
- Pray for prepared hearts.
- Pray for the salvation of souls.
- Pray for God to call nationals.
- Pray for establishment of churches.
- Pray for establishment of churches that will remain until Jesus comes.
- Pray for live, vibrant, reproducing churches. (Not just any kind.)

Parents can name and give their children to God. It should be the normal thing to see God calling them.

Sunday School teachers should be praying specifically by name for every member of their classes - pray them out.

Pastors must set the pace in claiming the church's best and linking them by prayer to the most needy fields of the world.

III. Toward the Savior. John 14:12-14.

Send Christ to do the work.

Send Holy Spirit to prepare the way. (John 16:8-11)

Prayer promises are not limited to super-saints!

Every believer has the right to expect miracles.

It is normal for a believer to have prayer answered.

Luke 18:8

Luke 18:13

PRAYER PRECEPTS

You know the value of prayer: it is precious beyond all price.
Never, never neglect it.

Sir Thomas Buxton

Prayer is not conquering God's reluctance,
But taking hold upon God's willingness.

Phillips Brooks

Prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God,
And a scourge for Satan.

John Bunyan

Prayer is the first thing,
The second thing,
The third thing necessary to a minister. Pray,
then, my dear brother; pray, pray, pray.

Edward Payson

Prayer and patience and faith are never disappointed.

Richard Newton

There is no enterprise which you cannot submit to the test of prayer.

Hosea Ballow

Between the humble and contrite heart and the majesty of heaven,
There are no barriers: the only password is prayer.

Matthew Henry

Prayer is not to change God but to change us.

Charles Finney

HOW TO PRAY FOR MISSIONARIES!

II Cor. 10:3,4

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

Eph. 6:12

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

There is a war in the spiritual realm, but it is a war already won by the Lord Jesus on Calvary. This victory is only applied to the present world need as we perseveringly and believably pray. As we pray, we stand on victory ground, and can shout the hallelujah of victory whatever seeming setbacks and trials come upon the work of God.

Prayer is a mystery. God is all powerful, yet He desires our prayers to accomplish His work in the world. A prayer inspired by the Holy Spirit has a part in forming the eternal decrees of God. Prayer unites puny men to almighty God in a miraculous partnership. It is the most noble and most essential ministry God gives to His children - but it is the most neglected. May God make us real intercessors as we turn to the world in its great need. May God convict us of the awful sinfulness of lack of prayer. I Sam. 12:23 *Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:*

PRAY FOR YOUR MISSIONARIES:

I. Culture Shock.

Over one-quarter of all missionaries who return prematurely from the field do so because they could not adapt to new languages, foods, and customs. Humility is needed to adapt to and respect the cultures of those to whom the Lord has sent them.

II. Protection From Satan's Attacks.

The powers of darkness are very real. Pray for authority to resist the Devil and to spoil his goods.

III. Protection of His Mind.

The Devil uses discouragement, loneliness, lack of fruit, and evil thoughts to make the missionary useless for the Lord's work.

V. His Health.

In a climate possibly very different to his homeland, he is exposed to many and varied exotic diseases to which he has no or very little resistance. Sickness has shortened the careers of many missionaries.

V. Brokenness.

In dealing with national believers and fellow workers, having difficult orders from those in authority, and also "impossible" home conditions. Pray that all these trials may drive him to a dependence on Christ alone.

VI. Love of God for Sinners.

Human pity and love are insufficient; only the constraining love of Christ can help a missionary love the unlovely.

VII. Anointing of God in His Ministry.

The anointing of God in his ministry and also the constant knowledge of God's will in the big and small events of his life.

VIII. Lack of Personal Discipline.

In having a devotional time, in the study of the language and customs of the people, in the use of time. These, as well as overworking, cause many missionaries to fail on the field. Pray for the effective and wise use of time.

IX. His Family.

There is often an inadequate family life with many separations. The wife is often alone with insufficient money and few conveniences. The children are often separated from their parents for long periods and become rebellious and resentful in their teens. Pray that missionary families may be an effective witness of all that a Christian family ought to be, since believers saved out of a heathen background often have low standards of marriage.

X. Priorities in Service.

He needs clear objectives in his ministry and the time to reach them. Interruptions, trials, and trivialities are common! He needs a sense of urgency and a proper perspective of his purpose and goals for his particular field and country. He must work with definite and specific plans since his time on the field can suddenly be terminated.

XI. His Financial Need.

Many live poorly and sacrificially by the standards of their homeland but magnificently in the eyes of local national people. Pray for a right balance in the use of money and possessions and the supply of all his needs.

XII. Failures in Personal Relationships.

Failures in personal relationships between missionaries and nationals are the source of many missionary casualties. The grace of God is needed to live in harmony and close spiritual fellowship with other workers.

XII. Furloughs.

Are longed for but are often a great disappointment. Lack of interest from believers and churches, ignorance of the true world conditions on the part of believers and churches, adaptation to a changed homeland, much traveling and separation from family due to having to report to churches when rest, spiritual revival, and refreshment is the need.

XIV. Revival.

The constant need of both missionaries and churches all over the world.

PRAYER AND THE GREAT COMMISSION

I. Pray Devotedly Col. 4:2

Prayer can be a sleeping pill.
"Watch & Pray."
Should consciously give best time to prayer.
Church - Prayer instead of activities.

II. Pray Synchronously - Coin a New Word

Pray in synch with God.
His Purpose - Glory Himself Phil. 2:9-11
(John 13:31, 32; 14:13; 15:8; 17:4; 21:19).
His Passion - Missions is not a program. It is the passion of God. (Missionary from New Guinea sent home some slides - lady captured a turtle, turned it over and laid it in fire alive. Roasted it alive. People more concerned with turtle than woman.)
His Plan -Is a responsibility but more - is a privilege. II Cor. 5:18-20.

III. Pray Personally - Specific

Name countries, people, tribes.
Returned missionary's experience Libyan Ambassador.

IV. Pray Currently - Use Newspapers, Magazine as Prayer List

Recognize Sovereign God working - Kuwait was largest provider finances Muslim movement.
Somalia in news - is 99.9% Muslim.
Oklahoma City - God also had something in mind for Oklahoma.

V. Pray Spontaneously - Sensitive to Holy Spirit

Recognize urges from Spirit of God.

VI. Pray Sensibly

Must have some guide.
Must focus.
Must be informed.

VII. Pray Scripturally - "the Act of Faith Appropriation"

In accord with Scripture using Scripture.

A MINISTER'S PRIORITY: PRAYER

Exodus 18:19-22

Acts 6:4

I. Stand Before God for the People. Verse 19c

- A. Nothing is more important than intercession.

I believe the Lord has taught me this lesson above all: Never undertake more Christian work than can be covered in believing prayer. Each of us has to work out what this means in personal experience in relation to our ministry, but I believe it is an abiding principle for us all. To fail here is to act not in faith but in presumption.

Alan Redpath

I ought to spend the best hours of the day in communion with God. It is my noblest and most fruitful employment, and is not therefore to be thrust into any corner.

Robert Murray McCheyne

We live in a day characterized by the multiplication of man's machinery and the diminution of God's power. The great cry of our day is work, work, work, organize, organize, organize, give us some new society, tell us some new methods, devise some new machinery: but the great need of our day is prayer, more prayer, and better prayer.

R. A. Torrey

Prayer is vital. It is the pathway to tranquillity and strength of soul. A man's prayers are the measure of his Christianity, understanding of spiritual matters, and experience of God. To fail in prayer is to fail in all else. Prayer is the place of testing and conflict; for prayer challenges all doubt, all disillusionment, all material and cardinal preoccupation.

E. M. Blaiklock

In prayer, you align yourself to the purpose and power of God and He is able to do things through you that He could not do otherwise . . . for this is an open universe, where some things are left open, contingent upon our doing them. If we do no do them, they will never be done. So God has left certain things open to prayer - things which will never be done except as we pray.

E. Stanley Jones

The work of praying is prerequisite to all other work in the Kingdom of God, for the simple reason that it is by prayer that we couple the powers of Heaven to our helplessness, the powers which can turn water into wine and remove mountains in our own lives and the lives of others, the powers which can awaken those who sleep in sin and raise up the dead, the power which can capture strongholds and make the impossible possible.

O. Hollesby

If we think that prayer is something we do only in dignified ceremonies or desperate emergencies, we have missed its value. We treat prayer as though it were the spice of life but the Bible prescribes it as a vital staple in our diet. We are content with a dash of praise, a pinch of petition, a drop of confession to bring a slight spiritual flavor to our secularity. We sprinkle a shake or two of the supernatural over our basic humanism and call the mixture religion. But God sees prayer as the breath of spiritual life.

David Hubbard

The direct power of prayer is, in a sense, omnipotent. Prayer moves the hand that moves the world. It secures for the believer the resources of divinity. It is the oratory that gives power to the pulpit. It is the hand that strikes down Satan and breaks the fetters of sin. It turns the scales of fate more than the edge of the sword, the craft of the statesman, or the weight of the scepters. It has arrested the wings of time, turned away the scythe of death, and discharged heaven's frowning and darkest cloud in a shower of blessings.

A Modern Writer

Prayer power is not only the most direct, but also the most effective force that can be brought to bear upon the many difficulties that exist in the Lord's work. He who waits upon God moves on in quiet confidence and needs neither the blare of trumpets nor press-agent methods to announce his success, but in godly fear, leaves until the day of Christ's return the record of achievement.

Unknown Author

Prayer is the key that unlocks all the storehouses of God's infinite grace and power. All that God is, and all that God has, is at the disposal of prayer.

R. A. Torrey

The most important work of the child of God is intercession.

J. D. Drysdale

Our one great business is prayer.

E. M. Bounds

Doubtless more men and money are needed for foreign missions work, but the greatest need of foreign mission work is prayer.

R. A. Torrey

A man might preach with the eloquence of a Beecher and be the most skilled of diplomats, a soul winner, but he will fall short of his ministry in both fields if he isn't backed up by the prayer life.

Kenyon

Missions must have their root in prayer. It must have prayer in all of its plans and prayer must precede, go with, and follow all of its missionaries and laborers.

A Preacher

God's children can conquer everything by prayer. Is it any wonder that Satan does his utmost to snatch that weapon from the Christians or to hinder them in the use of it.

Andrew Murray

II. Thou Shalt Teach Them Ordinances and Laws. Verse 20.

- A. Prepare key themes.
- B. Impart Biblical principles.
- C. Give systematic instruction.

III. Show Them the Way Wherein They Must Walk. Verse 20b.

- A. Incarnate the Word of God.
- B. Seek long-range vision.
- C. Develop strategy based on principle.

IV. And the Work They Must Do. Verse 20c.

- A. There must be a plan for work.
- B. Goals must be included.
- C. Impart the mechanics of implementation.

V. Select From All the People Able Men That Fear God. Verse 21a.

- A. Delegation must be a conviction.
- B. Develop and appoint leadership.

VI. Every Great Matter They Shall Bring to You. Verse 22b.

- A. Define your priorities.
- B. Redeem the time.
- C. Keep focus.
- D. Evaluate.

"HE STOOD BETWEEN THE DEAD AND THE LIVING"

Numbers 16:41-50

Text: Verse 48

INTRODUCTION

Korah led a murmuring and rebellion against Moses. In judgment, Korah and two other men with their families were swallowed alive into Hell. Two hundred fifty men followed them and were consumed by fire. The next day, the people of Israel criticized Moses, believing the judgment was too severe.

God was angered and was about to destroy all the people. Num. 16:45. God's anger was against the people of Israel and a plague began that was to wipe them out completely.

However, Moses, the intercessor, gave instructions to Aaron. Num. 16:46.

Aaron means the enlightened - also, the bright one or one that shines.

Here we discover some principles of intercession.

I. Aaron Ran Among the People. Verse 46 and 47.

- A. An intercessor cannot become a monk or a hermit.
- B. Cannot be out of touch with reality.
- C. Must know the people and discern their needs.
- D. It may be necessary to "sit where they sit." Ezekiel 3:15.
- E. Intercessors relate to the sin of the people. Neh. 1:4-7; Dan. 9:6-19.
- F. Intercessors confess the sin of the people. Neh. 1:6, 7; Ps. 106:6; Dan. 9:5.

II. Aaron Had to Do It Alone. Verse 47.

- A. He was the designated one.
- B. A price had to be paid - loneliness.
- C. He could only be strengthened and sustained by the Lord.
- D. Entire countries and languages have no one remembering them.
- E. Self-pity will be a danger and possible pitfall. Heb. 12:2, 3.
- F. Our Lord set the example. Isaiah 51:28; 59:16; 63:5.

III. Aaron Exposed Himself - Took Great Risk.

- A. He was in danger of contacting the plague.
- B. The Good Samaritan placed himself in danger by contamination. Luke 10:33, 34.
- C. There are no shortcuts. John 12:24.
- D. An intercessor cannot really get comfortable.
- E. An intercessor will be vulnerable - subject to special attack.

IV. Aaron Went in Haste. Verse 46.

- A. There was not time for discussion or to appoint a committee.
- B. Souls were dying.
- C. A nation was about to be exterminated.
- D. "The King's business required haste." I Sam. 21:8.
- E. "Haste thee, escape thither." Gen. 19:22.

V. Aaron Did Not Go Empty Handed. Verse 46, 47.

(The designated one took the designated tools in the designated manner.)

- A. He took a censer. Lev. 16:12-14. (A fire pan - sometimes made of brass and sometimes of gold.)
 - 1. The censer speaks of priesthood. Ex. 19:6; I Peter 2:9.
- B. He put fire in the censer from off the altar.
 - 1. The altar fire is what consumed the sacrifices.
 - a. The altar fire reminds us of the sacrifice of Christ.
 - b. Christ died as a propitiation, gathering all the wrath of God upon Himself.
 - c. Christ offered Himself to undergo the penalty of our sins, and His sacrifice is the only basis of God's forgiveness.
- C. He put incense on the fire.
 - 1. The incense represents prayer and intercession kindled by the fire and based upon the sacrifice.
 - 2. This is prayer in the power of the Holy Spirit. Jude 20; Rom. 8:26.
 - 3. Our intercessor, the Lord Jesus Christ, ever intercedes for us. Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; I Tim. 2:5.
 - 4. Prayers are so important to God that He preserves them. Rev. 5:8.
 - a. The vial was a small vessel.
 - b. The gold speaks of the value God places on the prayers of His own.
 - 5. Rev. 8:3-5 is a scene in heaven.
 - a. The angel is Christ.
 - b. The golden altar is before the throne.
 - c. The prayers of the saints of God go up to heaven where they are never forgotten and are mingled with the intercession of Christ.
- D. In order to make atonement, blood was required.
 - 1. Almost immediately after the great prayer of John 17, the Lord Jesus shed His precious blood, through which later on the day of His resurrection, He entered once into the Holy Place. Heb. 9:12.
 - 2. Christ made atonement and now intercedes with the Father on the ground of it.
 - 3. We must never forget the importance of the blood of Christ.

VI. Aaron was Ready and Could Go in an Instant.

- A. He did not hesitate.
- B. He did it - unquestioningly.
- C. He was right with God so did not have to waste time getting into a proper relationship. I Thess. 5:17.

- D. For an intercessor, sin must always be dealt with so that he is always in fellowship with God. Prov. 28:13, 14; Ps. 32:3, 5; I John 1:9.

VII. The Plague was Real and Literal.

- A. People were dying.
- B. "Wrath is gone out from the Lord."
- C. "The plague is begun."
 - 1. The plague began when Adam sinned.
 - 2. Death still reigns. Rom. 5:14.
- D. All around us people are perishing and dying without Christ and without hope.

VIII. There is One that Stands Between the Dead and the Living.

- A. Aaron is a type of Christ as High Priest.
- B. In all the work of redemption, Christ did as His Father commanded. Num. 16:47.
- C. "The plague was stayed." Num. 19:48b.
 - 1. In Christ, the condemnation of God is averted.
 - 2. In Christ, the power of sin is arrested.
 - 3. In Christ, death is defeated.
 - 4. Jesus Christ has won the victory.
- D. We now as priests of God must get between the dead and the living.
 - 1. The wrath of God can be held back. Ezekiel 22: 30, 31.
 - 2. "The plague was stayed" is mentioned twice. Num. 16:48, 50.

PRAYER PRECEPTS

Someone Had Prayed

The day was long; the burden I had borne
Seemed heavier than I could longer bear,
And then it lifted - but I did not know
Someone had knelt in prayer.

Had taken me to God that very hour, And
asked the easing of the load, and He, In
infinite compassion, had stooped down
And taken it from me.

We cannot tell how often as we pray
For some bewildered one, hurt and distressed,
The answer comes - but many times those hearts
Find sudden peace and rest.

Someone had prayed, and Faith, a reaching hand,
Took hold of God and brought Him down that day!
So many, many hearts have need of prayer!
Oh! Let us pray!

Good Housekeeping Magazine

Prayer makes the darkened clouds withdraw;
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw; Gives
exercise to faith and love;
Brings every blessing from above.
Remaining prayer, we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the Christian's armor bright;
And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.

William Cowper

ABRAM: PIONEER PRAYERWALKER

Part I

Genesis 13:1-13

Prayerwalking - Praying on-site with insight.

Prayerwalking - Walking while praying.

On-site praying is simply praying in the very places
where you expect your prayers to be answered.

Joshua 1:3

- I. Lot Chose for Himself. Gen. 13:10, 11.**
- II. Separation Came Before a Word From the Lord. Gen. 13:14a.**
- III. God Directed ABRAM to Survey the LAND WITH HIS EYES. Gen. 13:14b. (Deut. 3:27; 34:1) Gen. 28:13, 14.**
- IV. God Ordered Abram to Walk the Land. Gen. 13:17; Josh. 1:3; 6:3.**
- V. Abram Did Not Just See Real Estate But Saw Future Generations. Gen. 13:15, 16; John 8:56; Heb. 11:13.**
- VI. It is God That Gives. Gen. 13:15b, 17b; 24:7; Rom. 4:20, 21. (Gen. 12:7; 15:18)**

What are you ready to believe God for?

PIONEER PRAYERWALKER

Part II

Joshua 1:3; 5:13-6:20

I. Prerequisites for Receiving a Battle Plan.

- A. Appearance of Captain of the host of the Lord. Josh. 5:13, 14; 6:2
 - 1. When there is an appearance of this manner in the scriptures, there is usually a special message or revelation about to be given. Gen. 18:1, 2.
 - 2. Captain of the host of the Lord. Our Lord is Lord over all - angels, forces of nature, strongholds, fortified cities, kingdoms, etc.
- B. Joshua fell on his face. Josh. 5:14; Num. 20:6; I Kings 18:42; II Chron. 20:18; Matt. 26:39.
- C. Joshua worshipped. Josh. 5:14; Judges 7:15; Gen. 24:26; Ex. 34:8; I Sam. 1:28; II Sam. 12:20; II Chron. 7:3; Neh. 9:6; Job 11:20.
- D. Joshua was teachable. *What saith my Lord unto His servant.* Josh. 5:14; Ezra 8:21; Luke 11:1; John 9:36; Acts 8:31; 9:6; Prov. 25:12.
- E. Joshua was on holy ground. Joshua 5:15; Ex. 3:5; Deut. 25:9; Ruth 4:8; II Sam. 15:30; Acts 7:33.
- F. Joshua responded correctly in the presence of the Lord because of an attitude of Godly reverence. Ps. 4:4; 33:8; 89:7; Hab. 2:20.
- G. Joshua obeyed the Lord. Josh. 5:15; 11:15; II Kings 18:6.

II. The Lord Gave Joshua Instructions on Taking Jericho. Josh. 6:2-5.

- A. The divine plan to march around Jericho for seven days would test Israel's faith.
- B. It would accentuate the fear already present in the people of Jericho. Josh. 2:9; 9:9; 10:24.
 - 1. This was in fulfillment of the promise of God. Ex. 23:27; Deut. 2:25.

III. Battle of Jericho was different from any other battle the Israelites ever fought.

- A. Heavenly powers were manifest.
 - 1. The Captain of the host of the Lord was made visible.
 - 2. The host of angelic powers at his command was unseen except for the fallen walls.
 - a. Some unseen power pushed down those walls with incredible precision.
 - b. Although no mention is made nor is there any manifestation of evil angelic forces, they undoubtedly were present.
- B. Jericho was the foremost important battle that shook the defensive might of the entire land.
 - 1. Israel had fought other battles but they were primarily defensive skirmishes against individual attacking tribes.
 - 2. This was Israel's first battle against a well-fortified and entrenched enemy.
 - 3. It marked their entry into an entire territory.

4. With the stronghold of Jericho devastated, the inhabitants were forced to retreat and make hasty alliances that exposed them even more greatly. Josh. 9:1-3; 10:1-8.
- C. The battle of Jericho was for God alone.
1. The people were to *Shout; For the Lord hath given you the city.* Josh. 6:16.
 2. God gave them the city in order to give it back to Him again. Josh. 6:17.
 3. Note that the *accursed* or *accursed thing* was something God reserved as a ceremonial gift of worship to Himself. Lev. 27:28.
 - a. The Hebrew words for accursed in Josh. 6:17 *are under the ban* and is translated *consecrate* in Micah 4:13.
 - b. The entire city of Jericho and everything in it was to be burned except for the precious metals.
 - c. They were consecrated as *being unto the Lord.* Josh. 6:19.
 - d. They were to be placed *into the treasury of the house of the Lord.*
 4. Apparently God wished to teach every Hebrew heart and every Canaanite mind that God was Lord of all the earth.
 5. Although the location of Jericho was desirable and strategic, it was not conquered to be inhabited by Israel. Josh 6:26.
 6. At the beginning of the campaign, God made it clear that this was not a looting, pillage party by a ruthless, wild, uncontrolled horde.
 7. God made his purpose clear at the first attempt to enter the land years before. Num. 14:21.
 8. The result of the battle of Jericho was God's glory among distant nations. Josh. 6:27.
 1. The reputation of God's name is of utmost concern in the context.
 2. God was advancing the plan to glorify Himself.
 9. In the next chapter, Joshua asks God what He would do for *His great name* if Israel's memory was cut off from the earth. Josh. 7:9.
 10. Later in the book, travelers came supposedly from distant lands telling the story that the force and name of the Lord had been heard in a very far country. Josh 9:9.
 11. The battle was God's - for His glory, against His enemies. Josh. 6:27.

IV. What Actually was Joshua's Assignment in Fulfilling God's Ultimate Purpose to be Honored and Glorified by the Nations of the Earth?

- A. When the Israelites conquered cities the way God told them to, two things were accomplished.
1. God was destroying systems of false worship; every idol, shrine, temple, altar, high place of worship, or instrument of sorcery was to be utterly obliterated. Deut. 2:1-3.
 - a. God's goal was to subdue every enslaving spiritual force at work in the idols.
 - b. God knew the people to be weak and easily seduced into subjugation by spiritual forces.
 - c. Joshua was never commissioned to come against any spiritual entities. Josh. 23:6, 7; Deut. 12:29-30.

- (1) There is no reference that Joshua dealt directly with the spiritual forces resident in the idols.
- (2) Joshua was commanded to destroy the devices of false gods which held people captive and would certainly ensnare the Israelite people.
- 2. The second objective of God was to punish the Canaanites for their sin which had taken generations to come to a *filled up* point. Gen. 15:16. God allowed sin to run its full course.
- 3. God's retribution was just.
 - a. How did the Canaanites feel about God's wrath and judgment.
 - b. King Adoni-bezek said, *As I have done, so God hath requited me.* Judges 1:7.

V. How Can Jericho Teach Lessons on Prayer?

- A. Jericho is a picture of taking new territory. Josh. 6:1-16.
 - 1. Crossing into the land of promise, Jericho was the first major obstacle to be removed in order to capture enemy territory.
 - 2. No mission field or field of service is free of obstacles.
 - 3. There are demonic forces in many lands that have given rise to Jericho walls.
- B. Jericho speaks of the need for receiving our strategies for conquering enemy strongholds directly from our Commander-in-Chief, the Lord Himself. Josh. 5:13-15.
 - 1. We must get on our faces before our Captain.
 - 2. He has specific strategy for tackling each Jericho-type obstacle.
- C. Jericho speaks of the miraculous intervention of God who alone caused the walls of the city to fall flat. Josh. 6:20.
 - 1. The people of God had to do their part in taking Jericho, which began with simple obedience to the highly unusual strategy given to Joshua while on his face in prayer. Josh. 5:13.
 - 2. But only God could cause the actual miracle - the literal falling of the walls - thus making possible the seizing of the city.
 - 3. God has placed the responsibility of evangelization of the world on His children but only He can miraculously remove the barriers.
 - 4. He does this solely in response to the fervent prayers of His children.
- D. Jericho pictures a warfare thrust that made little sense militarily. Josh. 6:2-5.
 - 1. Walking around the city in silence for seven days was not a physical act comparable to the battering of that city's gates continuously for seven days.
 - 2. Joshua's Jericho operation was clearly a spiritual directive orchestrated by the Commander-in-Chief of the heavenly armies Himself.
 - 3. Walls of opposition to the Gospel will only fall as the result of victorious spiritual warfare.
 - 4. Prayer warfare must be on the agenda of every church if they are to be effective.
- E. The Jericho model pictures man's humble availability linked with God's supernatural ability through prayer. Josh. 6:20.
 - 1. God gave the miracle of the falling walls at Jericho, but His people still had to take the city.

2. Through our persistent prayer, God will remove every wall of oppression, but we, His children, must take advantage of these miracles by doing our part in looting the enemy's camp once the walls have fallen.

Without God we cannot, but without us, God will not.

Augustine

PRAYER PRECEPTS

Because You Prayed

Because you prayed -
God touched our weary bodies with His power
And gave us strength for many a trying hour In
 which we might have faltered,
Had not you, our intercessors,
 Faithful been, and true.

Because you prayed -
God touched our lips with coals from altar fire,
 Gave Spirit-fullness, and did so inspire
That, when we spoke, sin-blinded souls did see;
 Sin's chains were broken;
 Captives were made free.

Because you prayed -
The dwellers in the dark have found the Light;
The glad Good News has banished heathen night;
 The message of the cross, so long delayed,
 Has brought them life at last,
 Because you prayed.

Charles B. Bowser

PRAYER WALKING

Part III

Luke 10:1

I. Prayerwalking is Simple to Learn But Can be Difficult to Pursue.

- A. Prayerwalking is spiritual battle.
 - 1. Prayerwalking is spiritual trespassing on evil powers.
 - 2. Direct attack from the enemy will probably be the norm.
 - 3. Doubts and thoughts of uselessness plus questions of *Why am I here?* will be experienced.
 - 4. The struggle to pray will escalate.
- B. Prayerwalking requires patience.
 - 1. Human nature wants immediate visible results.
 - 2. Generations of harm being undone may take time.
 - 3. Prayerwalkers need to be patient because God is patient.

It's hard, week after week, going through different neighborhoods, praying the same things, trying to be disciplined and deliberate about it, just to proclaim the Kingdom. Sometimes the heart didn't mesh with what the mind said was the right thing to do. But we could see how right and needful it was to prayerwalk the city, so we just pressed on. I'm glad we did. The difficulty of praying helped stretch our faith that God was going to do great things in quiet ways.

Jack Ryan, speaking of praying through a mostly Muslim city in southeast Asia.

- 4. Prayerwalking is a fairly quiet affair without a lot of hubbub and thrills.
- C. Prayerwalkers need the freedom of well-learned fundamentals.
 - 1. Care must be taken not to fall into rigid routines.
 - 2. Much of the pleasure of prayerwalking is the joy of discovering hundreds of ways to pray for the same neighborhood.
 - 3. The most persistent prayerwalkers are the ones who seek always to grow in the basic foundations of praying according to the Word of God and the Spirit of God.
 - 4. Again, be aware of the danger of dead formulas.

II. Before the Walk: Prepare.

- A. Refresh yourself in the Lord.
 - 1. It makes sense to begin in every prayerwalk with a time of worship before God.
 - 2. You are about to become a bridge of blessing between heaven and earth.
- B. Gather your mind.
 - 1. Fix your attention on the purposes and ways and thoughts of God before you launch out.
 - 2. Commit your burdens, pressures, and distractions to the Lord before launching out. I Peter 5:7.

- 3. Take charge of the direction your mind will go.
- C. Seek God for guidance.
 - 1. Be still before the Lord at least for a short while.
 - 2. Develop a sense of readiness to sense special instructions regarding where you should walk or what you should pray.

We felt from the start that we should only take prayers into those areas that God wanted us to pray for. You could spend your whole life praying all over the place, but you may not get anywhere until you've got people praying in the area that God is telling them to pray in.

Mark Pritchard, Boston, Massachusetts

- D. Refresh relationships.
 - 1. Take care of all offenses and friction.
 - 2. You are going into spiritual battle.
 - a. Unresolved problems will open hearts and lives to special attack.

Before we set out prayerwalking, we had a very strong sense of the fear of God, that we were to get our hearts right before each other. If there was any unforgiveness among our team, we should get that out in the open and get our hearts right before God before we ever left our property.

James Foreman, Austin, Texas, on his experience leading on-site prayer efforts in Japan.

- E. Brief the teams.
 - 1. Organize prayer teams of two or three people.
 - 2. Designate areas, routes or sites.
 - a. Maps can help.
 - b. Some sketch by hand map portions for each team.
 - c. Some teams may have a member who is acquainted with the neighborhood.
 - 3. Some prayerwalkers may focus prayer at specific sites.
 - a. Some may be burdened to systematically bless every home.
 - b. Some may be led to pray for city hall.
 - c. Others may be impressed to surround a place of evil.
 - (1) A hedge may be prayed around such a place. Hosea 2:6.
 - (2) Evil powers may be bound. Matt. 16:19; 18:18.
 - d. The perimeter of an entire city may be covered or the city encircled.
 - e. Elevated viewpoints may be a favorite spot. Elevated places can be bridges, mountains, or top floors of buildings.
 - f. Other sites with a potential of far-reaching effects may be considered.

III. During the Walk: Praying.

- A. Open your eyes.
 - 1. Most of prayerwalking is vision, which has been described as *the art of seeing what you are looking at*.
 - 2. A practical way to use *the eyes of your understanding* (Eph. 1:18) is to ask God to help you see the city with His eyes.

When I came to the city of Amsterdam, I spent six months simply walking the streets of every major neighborhood in the city. I rode trams and metros and buses, getting a feel for the city. I asked God to let me see the city through His eyes. I asked Him to help me understand her culture. I read every book I could get my hands on about Amsterdam. I sat in coffee shops and brown cafes, listening to the people. I developed a fondness for the open-hearted, humor-loving, sea-faring Amsterdamer. It was out of these many months of walking her streets that I grew to love the city of Amsterdam. In fact, now I not only love her, I like her.

Floyd McClung, *Seeing the City with the Eyes of God.*

- B. You may pray silently or pray aloud.
 - 1. Praying aloud does not mean praying loudly.
 - 2. Most prayerwalking takes place in a quiet, unobtrusive way.
- C. Pray together.
- D. Pray with Scripture.
 - 1. Lack of a practical prayer vocabulary may hinder some.
 - 2. Start with some of the prayers of the Bible.
 - 3. Take along Scripture verses or a small Bible.
 - 4. Praying the Word of God is praying the Will of God.
- E. Pray with relevance.
 - 1. Allow the community you are prayerwalking to reoccupy your prayer.
 - 2. Pray with sensitivity to the people and places you are actually encountering.

IV. After the Walk: Reporting.

- A. Some prayerwalkers maintain a journal to keep track of prayers offered.
- B. Those inclined to systematically prayerwalk their city often trace accomplished routes on a master plan.
- C. Evaluate your prayerwalking session.
- D. Consider what your prayers and insights might mean for various ministry efforts.

CONTENDING FOR THE NATIONS

Part I

The Four Fold Function of a World Intercessor

I. A World Contender is a Forerunner. Isaiah 62:1-7, 10-12.

Forerunner: A person sent before or going before to announce or prepare the way for another or for something to follow; herald.

- A. The intercessor prepares the way for the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. The intercessor prepares the way for the Message.
- C. The intercessor prepares the way for the Messenger.

II. A World Contender is a Weapon of War. Jerm. 51:20.

- A. Battle Axe; A broad and large axe used in war.
 A disagreeable woman.
- B. War Club: A weapon of war.

There were different types. An Egyptian war club was 2 to 3 feet long with a single blade of steel or bronze.

The Persian battle axe had a short handle and a large head. Some had two heads.

The intercessor is one that smashes the works of Satan.

The intercessor is a weapon of war against Satan and for the nations of the world.

III. A World Contender is a New Sharp Threshing Instrument. Isaiah 41:15.

- A. Threshing Instrument: A sledge-hammer with teeth.
- B. Today, a threshing machine may perform four functions:
 1. Separates the head of seed or seed from the stalk.
 2. Separates the seed from the chafe and the straw.
 3. Knocks or cleans the outer husk off of seed.
 4. Stacking or storing of seed in a bin, container, truck, or warehouse.
- C. Mountains: In scripture, mountains many times speak of the strongholds of Satan.
Matt. 17:20; 21:21, 22; Mark 11:23, 24; II Cor. 10:4; Micah 4:12, 13; Isaiah 21:8-10.
 1. The intercessor is an instrument for God.
 2. The intercessor brings down the authority and power of the enemy.

IV. A World Contender is a Ruling Authority. Jerm. 1:10.

- A. Jeremiah was not a king or political leader. Yet, he was ordained to rule over both *nations* and *kingdoms*. It is significant that there are two spheres of authority - nations and kingdoms. Nations refer to physical leadership over visible areas. Kingdoms refer to spiritual rulers over invisible areas.
- B. Jeremiah was called of God and put over nations and kingdoms. Jerm. 1:10a.
 - 1. The first assignment of Jeremiah was to *root out*. Jerm. 1:10b. To be an effective intercessor means going to the very source of a problem - its roots. Roots are the hidden supply source of a plant. *To root out* in prayer is to penetrate so deeply into a spiritual circumstance that we are able to deal directly with the primary source of that condition.
 - 2. Beyond that, Jeremiah is commanded to *pull down* obstacles that have been raised up in opposition to God's best for His people. Jerm. 1:10c. To pull down means to remove from a fixed position.
 - 3. Jeremiah next is instructed to *destroy* these obstacles. Jerm. 1:10d. To destroy means to *subdue or to defeat someone or something utterly*. The intercessor is entrusted with awesome power, including the capacity to remove the influences of Satan *utterly*.
- C. Jeremiah is commanded to *throw down* that which Satan enthrones. Jerm. 1:10c. Throw down is even stronger than pull down. To throw means *to discard or remove something quickly with great force*.

Illustration: Dick Eastman, on a visit to China, secured Mao Tze-Tung's *Little Red Book*, prayed over it for two years, commanded it to be removed as a factor in Chinese society. Later, a front page newspaper story in Hong Kong said, *And as far as Mao Tze-Tung's Little Red Book is concerned, it is as if it has disappeared from the face of the earth.*

- D. Still, Jeremiah's calling is not complete. Two vital responsibilities remain. What began in the negative suddenly becomes positive. Jeremiah now is told *to build and to plant*.
 - 1. To build means to give form to something according to a definite plan or process, or to establish and strengthen.
 - a. Intercessors must not only remove obstacles through their prayers, but they must help put something in place of what has been removed.
 - b. Thus, the intercessor not only prays that an evil leader be removed; he must also pray that the right leader will be raised up.
 - 2. Planting likewise is an essential ingredient to effective intercessory prayer. To plant means *to put something into a place where it has the capacity to grow*.
 - a. Intercession here rises above praying for a need.
 - b. *Planting* intercession is involved with doing, with implementing the answers to our very own prayers.

CONTENDING FOR THE NATIONS

Part II

Ezekiel 4:1-3

William Carey made his living by repairing shoes. He took discarded scraps of leather and fashioned a globe with the continents of different shades and colors. The leather globe was placed before him on his cobbler's bench and he began to intercede for various countries of the world. The Spirit of God began to increase more and more his burden and one day called him to India. God still today is answering the prayers of William Carey.

Clay tablets were used to write and draw on. Ezekiel was commanded to make a drawing of the City of Jerusalem and portray it. This was to be a graphic object lesson.

Maps, globes, and pictures with facts and statistics might help us pray for peoples, languages, and nations.

I. Lay Siege Against It. Verse 2a.

Siege: To surround or blockage a city or fortress by an army bent on capture.
Any persistent attempt to gain control or overcome opposition, usually involving a prolonged period of time.

- A. To lay siege to something usually suggests a strategy.
- B. The strong man must be bound. Luke 11:21, 22.
- C. The intercessor must be ready to pay the price of a lengthy duration. Luke 18:1, 8; Isaiah 62:1, 6.

II. Build a Fort Against It. Verse 2b.

- A. To build speaks of preparation.
 - 1. The strengths and weaknesses of the enemy must be known.
 - 2. Past victories will not suffice for the present.
 - 3. To build something takes systematic, deliberate exertion.
- B. A fort is a permanent post, as distinguished from a temporary training camp. Isaiah 64:1-3.
- C. Against does not speak of defense but aggression.
 - 1. The enemy has been in control of countries and vast areas of this world since the fall of man.
 - 2. It is time to challenge his position and attack. Luke 11:21, 22.
 - 3. Bind territorial spirits by a hedge of prayer. Hosea 2:6.

III. Cast a Mount Against It. Verse 2c.

- A. Prepare a weapon for attack. (To place a weapon in proper position for use.)
- B. Walk the perimeter of the city. Joshua 1:3; Deut. 11:24.

- C. Appropriate the promises of God in relation to battle. Ex. 14:13, 14; Deut. 1:29, 30, 31; 31:6-8; 20:1, 3, 4; Josh. 23:10; II Chron. 20:15, 17; Isaiah 41:10; II Chron. 32:7, 8; Num. 14:9.

IV. Set the Camp Also Against It. Verse 2d.

- A. Encircle the enemy and situate the camp so all tent doors face the enemy or the city.
- B. The enemy understands he is totally surrounded and continually is reminded there are no gaps in the line.
- C. Our God puts fear in the hearts of the enemy.

V. Set the Battering Rams Against It Round About. Verse 2e.

(An ancient military machine having a heavy wooden beam, sometimes with an iron ram's head at its end, for battering down gates, walls, etc.)

(Any bar, log, etc., used to force entrance.)

- A. The New Testament Church with the Word of God can become a battering ram against the gates of Hell. Matt. 16:18.
- B. Strongholds of the enemy are to be attacked. II Cor. 10:3, 5; Jerm. 1:10; Jerm. 18:6-10

VI. Take Thou Unto Thee an Iron Pan and Set It for a Wall of Iron Between Thee and the City. Verse 3a.

- A. Personal protection is necessary in spiritual warfare. Eph. 6:11-18.
- B. Must have the protection of the blood.

DELEGATED DEMONS TERRITORIAL SPIRITS HOSTILE ENVIRONMENTS

Ephesians 6:12

Satan delegates high ranking members of the hierarchy of evil spirits to control nations, regions, cities, tribes, people groups, neighborhoods, and other significant social networks of human beings throughout the world. Their major assignment is to prevent God from being glorified in their territory, which they do through directing the activity of lower ranking demons.

C. Peter Wagner

I. Old Testament Examples.

- A. High mountains were the locales for specific gods and spirits. Deut. 12:2.
- B. The different nations all possessed specific gods and evil spirits which had specific names such as *Baal* and *Ashera* (Judges 3:7) and *Ashtaroths* (I Sam. 7:3-4).
- C. Each national group made its own gods in the several towns where they settled. II Kings 17:29.
- D. Deuteronomy 32:17 reveals clearly that the foreign gods were devils.
- E. Certain Syrians recognized that there were spirits that had power over certain limited areas. I Kings 20:23.
- F. Elisha instructed Naaman to wash in the Jordan - not in the Damascus rivers of Abana and Pharpar which were the domain of the god Rimmon. II Kings 5:1-19.
- G. David recognized God was in Israel but was not the god of other lands. I Sam. 26:19.
- H. The *host of heaven* could speak of all those who serve Satan. Deut. 4:19; 17:3; II Kings 21:3; 17:16.
- I. Daniel's prayer was hindered for 21 days by the Prince of Persia. Dan. 10:13.
- J. Daniel also mentioned the Prince of Grecia. Dan. 10:20.

II. New Testament Examples.

- A. Rule or rulers, principalities - archai - I Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16; 2:10, 15.
- B. Authority or authorities, powers - ex ousiai - I Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16; 2:10, 15.
- C. Power or powers - dunameis - Rom. 8:38; I Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21.
- D. Dominion or dominions - kuriates - Eph. 1:21; Col 1:16.
- E. Thrones - thronoi - Col. 1:16.
- F. Princes - archontes - I Cor. 2:6.
- G. World rulers - kosmos kratores - Eph. 6:12.

III. Testimonies From the Present.

A. Argentina.

Back in the days when Juan Peron ruled the country, he used as his chief advisor a male witch, Jose Lopez Rega, who was a high priest of the Macumba strain of spiritism. Lopez Rega became the de facto power of the government, infiltrating the media, the business world, and the military. A wave of demonic activity swept the country. People were giving testimonies on national television as to how they were helped by Macumba. Unfortunately, the evangelical community was not equipped to deal with all of this. Edgardo Silvoso said, *We had sound doctrine, but we were powerless to combat demonic forces.* Churches had not grown significantly in decades. Since the Falkland Islands war in 1982, changes have been made. There is growth in churches and areas are being evangelized. Apparently someone focused in on Argentina through intercessory warfare. Three thousand a day are coming to Christ now in Argentina.

B. Canada.

Not too long ago, a missionary was about to move into an Indian village. A veteran missionary told him that he had better be prepared to do battle with the demon of the village on his arrival. The young missionary's training had not prepared him for such concepts, and they just moved in. It was not long, however, before his wife became ill and had to be flown out. The missionary was standing alone in his cabin with his back to the stove to keep warm when he heard an awful noise that seemed to be coming from the stove pipe. Suddenly, something jumped on his back; and, although he could not see anything, he was barely able to stagger to a chair to sit down. The "thing" identified itself as the demon of the village and a battle was begun. The missionary did know enough to claim his position in Christ, and he said, *All right Satan, you guardian angel of Borchet, let's have it out. Jesus Christ sent me here. I might die, but I am not leaving, and with the Lord are the issues of death.* After thirty minutes of warfare, praying in the name of Christ, binding the power of the evil one, he commanded the demon to depart. The demon left as it had come, and the missionary stayed on to carry out his ministry.

C. Brazil - Uruguay.

There is a town on the border between Brazil and Uruguay in which the main street is the international border. A missionary was in the town passing out tracts. On the Uruguay side of the street, people were very unresponsive, but when he crossed over to the Brazil side, a person who had refused a tract on the Uruguay side of the street now received the tract and even thanked him profusely. With his curiosity aroused, he tested several more people and found the same pattern. Someone had prayed on the Brazilian side while the Uruguayan side had been neglected. Mark 3:27.

D. Argentina.

In 1985, Edgardo Silvoso took a map and drew a circle with a 100-mile radius around his leadership training center near Rosario. He discovered that there was 109 towns within the circle with no evangelical church. They then found that in a town called Arroyo Seco a warlock named Merigildo had long exercised great power, and when he died, he transferred his power to a spring of water. A number of Christian leaders were called together for prayer - a prayer meeting to do spiritual warfare. They took dominion over the area in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Six went to the Arroyo Seco and parked their car near the headquarters of Merigildo and claimed victory by the blood of Jesus Christ and prayed for a breaking of the

evil power in the name of Christ. In less than three years, 82 of the 109 towns had had an evangelical church planted.

E. Colombia.

A Baptist preacher from Oregon went to Colombia in 1988 to teach a group of missionaries at a jungle compound. On the first evening, a crushing weight of oppression closed in on him. He felt unusually vulnerable and threatened. It was not the heat or humidity of the jungle climate nor was it problems with cultural adjustment. He put forth many questions and discovered four major militant influences: (a) armed Marxist guerrillas, fighting to control the country; (b) routes for the transfer of raw coca out of the jungles and into the hands of cocaine drug lords; (c) tribal Indian groups that practiced witchcraft; and (d) militant groups who were vehemently opposed to missionaries. He also discovered that a year before a local Colombian had murdered a missionary woman and had vowed to kill again as soon as he could get out of prison. The conference speaker, after three or four days, was overwhelmed by the oppressive confusion and could hardly function. He concluded that he was a particular target for spiritual attack because he was there to instruct the missionaries in discernment and spiritual authority.

F. Israel.

A pastor went to Israel for some weeks of ministry to struggling congregations. While meeting with a Jewish congregation in Tel Aviv, he asked the question, *What is it really like being a Jewish believer in this place?* He was shocked at the length and intensity of the response. All of the social, political, and economic discrimination imaginable was a part of daily life for them. He sought to discover the deeper spiritual dynamics that make Christian life in Israel difficult. He began to get some insight and isolated what he felt to be principalities and powers at work: (a) a militant, spiritual rejection of Jewish Christians by Orthodox groups that is rooted in the rejection of Yeshua as Messiah; (b) a curse of destruction spoken by Muslims committed to the Intifade, the uprising against Israel; (c) a powerful influence of secularism among the non-religious Jews, especially in Tel Aviv; and (d) the influx of New Age thought and occultism that seek to fill the need of the Jews for spiritual meaning.

IV. How are Delegated Demons-Territorial Spirits to be Defeated?

- A. Bind - Matt. 12:29; 16:19; 18:18; Mark 3:27; Luke 11:21, 22.
- B. Command in the name of Jesus Christ. Acts 16:18.
- C. Claim the protection of the blood of Christ. Rev. 12:11; Ex. 12:13.
- D. Appropriate the Victory of Christ. I Cor. 15:57; Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14; I John 3:8.
- E. Recognize weapons provided for warfare.
 - 1. Faith. I John 5:4.
 - 2. Intercession of Christ. Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25.
 - 3. Prayer. Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6.
 - 4. Word. Eph. 6:14; Matt. 4:4, 7, 10.
 - 5. Knowledge. II Cor. 2:11.
- F. Prayerwalking - Gen. 13:14-17; Josh. 1:3; 6:2-20.
- G. Get a word or a promise from the Lord. Examples: Isaiah 14:5; 43:4-7.

CONTENDING FOR THE NATIONS

Part IV

II Cor. 4:10
Mark 11:22-24
Isaiah 45:11

Prayer is not begging God to do something which He is unwilling to do. It is not overcoming reluctance in God. It is enforcing Christ's victory over Satan. It is implementing upon earth heaven's decision concerning the affairs of men. Calvary legally destroyed heaven's decisions concerning the affairs of men. God placed the enforcement of Calvary's victory in the hands of the Church. Matt 18:18; Luke 10:17-19. He has given to her power of attorney. She is His deputy. But this delegated authority is wholly inoperative apart from the prayers of a believing Church. Therefore, prayer is where the action is. Any Church without a well-organized and systematic prayer program is simply operating a religious treadmill.

Paul Billheimer, *Destined for the Throne.*

In the fields of the world, there are multiple barriers that limit evangelistic outreach. Throughout the world, Satan raises up specific strongholds designed to hinder the work for world evangelism. When praying for a nation or a city, we should try to determine which satanic strongholds exist there. It is then necessary to exercise our God-given spiritual authority to confront these bastions. Removing these barriers must be a part of our systematic prayer program.

Several general categories of strongholds need attention.

I. Government Strongholds.

- A. Intercessors should pay special attention to the political characteristics of a nation.
- B. Laws decreed by evil governments hinder the spread of the Gospel.
- C. Three different political ideologies especially need to be targets of intercession.
 - 1. Communist nations.
 - a. Communism is not dead and buried.
 - b. North Korea, Mongolia, Cuba, Red China, etc.
 - 2. Muslim nations.
 - a. No separation of religion and state.
 - b. Over 40 nations have a Muslim majority.
 - 3. Strongly nationalistic nations.
 - a. Nations that have gained independence in the last 20 years.
 - b. Emerging third-world nations.

We must pray against the spiritual mountain of satanically inspired laws.

II. Cultural Strongholds.

- A. Every nation possesses behavioral characteristics.
- B. Collectively we refer to these as the culture of a people.
- C. In many cultures, there are attitudes that restrict the spread of the Gospel and resist the Gospel.

1. Our way of life is superior to yours.
2. Xenophobia - a fear of outsiders.
3. Racism.

We must pray against satanically inspired attitudes.

III. Religious Strongholds.

- A. This focus touches the spiritual characteristics of a land.
- B. In many countries, it is virtually impossible to engage in open evangelism because of religious restrictions.
 1. Muslim nations have already been mentioned.
 - a. Islam is militant and violent in many countries.
 - b. *Jihad - holy war* is considered by some as a sixth fundamental pillar of Islam.
 - c. It is not unusual for new believers to be killed in some Moslem countries.
 - d. Islam has grown over 200% in the last 50 years.
 - e. There are 713 million Muslims who have not one time heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 2. Hinduism is the majority religion in three nations and a significant minority in eleven other lands.
 - a. Hinduism has made notable inroads in the English speaking world through the wide acceptance of transcendental meditation, yoga, New Age thinking, and eastern sects.
 - b. Hinduism enslaves souls in a horrifying heart-rendering manner.
 - c. Hinduism has grown by 117% in the last 50 years.
 - d. There are 507 million Hindus who have not one time heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 3. Buddhism is the state religion of five nations in Asia, the majority in a further four, and a significant minority in yet another eleven.
 - a. Over half of the follower of Buddhism are followers also of Taoism, Confucianism, and Shintoism.
 - b. There is a resurgence of these religions in China, Mongolia, Cambodia, and Vietnam.
 - c. Buddhism has grown 63% in the last 50 years.
 - d. There are 255 million Buddhists who have not one time heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 4. Animist, spiritist, tribal, and traditional religions of the world are the major religion in over five thousand languages of the world.
 - a. Over three thousand of these languages have not one single verse of scripture in their tongue.
 - b. Tribal religions are slightly on the decrease while spiritism worldwide is increasing.
 - c. In the animistic world, every aspect of life is controlled and affected by fear and superstition.
 - d. There are 135 million tribal people who have never one time heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We must pray against satanically inspired beliefs.

IV. Material and Secular Strongholds.

- A. Some nations appear to be free and have experienced prosperity that turns into a curse.
- B. The danger for the churches in these countries is lukewarmness.
- C. Soon apathy toward spiritual things moves a people toward humanism, which puts the emphasis on human development and rejects spiritual values.
- D. The result is that evangelism is more difficult in materialistic countries than poverty stricken or restricted countries.
- E. This materialistic spirit greatly hinders the spread of the Gospel in societies that consider themselves free.

We must pray against satanically inspired ideals.

RESEARCHING A CITY

1. What place does this place have in the nation's history?
2. Was there ever the imposition of a new culture or language through conquest?
3. What were the religious practices of ancient peoples on the site?
4. Was there a time when a new religion emerged?
5. Under what circumstances did the Gospel first enter the city?
6. Has the national or city government ever disintegrated?
7. What has been the leadership style of past governments?
8. Have there ever been wars that effected this city?

Wars of conquest

Wars of resistance to invasion

Civil War

9. Was the city itself the site of a battle?
10. What names have been used to label the city, and what are their meanings?
11. Why was the city originally settled?
12. Did the city have a founder? What was his motive? What was his dream?
13. As political, military and religious leaders have emerged, what did they dream for themselves and for the city?
14. What political, economic, and religious institutions have dominated the life of the city?
15. What has been the experience of immigrants to the city?
16. Have there been any traumatic experiences such as economic collapse, race riots or natural calamity?
17. Has there ever been the sudden opportunity to create wealth, such as the discovery of oil or minerals or some technology?
18. Has there ever been major religious conflict, persecution, deaths because of religion or loss of religious freedom by any group?
19. Has any cult or denomination been founded in the city?
20. Does the city have fame for some vice, perversion, or evil?
21. Have conventions, conferences, retreats, or centers of learning been conducted or existed that majored on the occult, vice, perversion, or religion?
22. How many places or sights exist related to the following?
Centers of pornography
Places of prostitution
Bars, Discos, Clubs, Singles Bars
X rated theaters
Gambling - Bingo, Racing, Casinos, etc.
Places of worship - Occult shrines, Mosques, Temples, etc. Abortion clinics

PRAYER PRECEPTS

Unanswered yet? Nay, do not say unanswered,
Perhaps your part is not yet wholly done,
The work began when first your prayer was uttered,
And God will finish what He has begun.

Keep incense burning at the shrine of prayer,
And glory shall descend sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Faith cannot be unanswered;
Her feet are firmly planted on the Rock;
Amid the wildest storms she stands undaunted,
Nor quails before the loudest thunder shock.

She knows Omnipotence has heard her prayer,
And cries, It shall be done sometime, somewhere.

Ophella Guyon Browning

Blest, when assaulted by the tempter's power,
The Cross my armor, and the Lamb my Tower,
Kneeling I triumph - and issuing from the fray
A bleeding conqueror - my life a prey.

Adolphe Monod

Faith, mighty faith the promise sees,
And looks to God alone; Laughs at
impossibilities,
And cries, It shall be done!

Charles Wesley

ANGELS OF GOD

1. There are many millions of angels. Rev. 5:11; Heb. 12:22; Ps. 68:17.
2. They are immortal spirit beings created by God to represent and guard His interests. Ps. 148:5.
3. Angels were created before the creation of human beings. Job 38:7.
4. Angels have been able to manifest themselves in human form, as occurred in the story of Lot and Sodom. Gen. 19, Acts 10:30.
5. Occasionally an angel has been revealed in his full heavenly glory. Dan. 10:6; Matt. 28:3.
6. They are spoken of in the masculine gender, but do not marry or reproduce. They are a company rather than a race. Matt. 22:30; Luke 20:34-36.
7. Different categories of angels represent different functions and levels of authority, including thrones, dominions, seraphim, cherubim, archangels and guardian angels. Col. 1:16; Jude 9.
8. Angels worship before the throne of God and serve Him obediently. Ps. 148:2; Heb. 1:6
9. Guardian Angels are assigned to each child at birth and minister to that person throughout life Matt. 18:10. (Except in the event that the person hardens his or her heart against God and gives themselves over to evil or perversion. Romans 1:24, 26, 28.)
10. Angels celebrate before the throne of God every time a sinner comes to God in repentance. Luke 15:10.
11. Angels escort the soul of a Christian to the presence of God at death. Luke 16:22.
12. Angels record the deeds of our lives in a book which may be opened at the Bema of Christ, and most definitely will be opened at the Great White Throne judgment. Mal. 3:16; Rev. 20:12.
13. Angels are commissioned to execute divine judgment upon persons, cities, and nations. Ecc. 5:6; Ezek. 9:1-6; Ps. 35:4-6; II Kings 19:35; Acts 12:23.
14. Angels were used by God to bring messages to people. Zech. 1:9, 13-14, 19.
15. Encounters with angels were usually brief and formal, designed to enhance a relationship with Christ, rather than distract from Him. Rev. 22:8, 9.
16. The Bible warns not to worship angels. Col. 2:18; Rev. 19:10.

17. Angels now enjoy a superior position to human beings, but they will eventually serve under redeemed humans. The bride of Christ will be in a privileged position near the Son and the Father, becoming the elite of all creation. Rev. 21:9-14; 2 Tim 2:12.
18. Redeemed people will one day judge angels. 1 Cor. 6:3.
19. Angels and Christians are allies in the conflict in which they fight to eject Satan from his position in the earth's atmosphere. Prevailing intercessory prayer brings more powerful angels to hinder Satan's work. Heb. 1:4; Dan. 10:12-13.
20. The work of angels is distinct from that of the Holy Spirit. Angels administer material affairs, while the Holy Spirit reveals the mind of God. Jesus Christ was led by the Spirit, taught of the Spirit, and filled with the Spirit, but He was defended and fed by angels. Matt. 4:11.
21. Some angels are assigned to a specific earthly territory. The Bible states that Israel and its cities were under angelic guardianship. In Daniel 12:1, Michael is represented as the prince of Israel. The prophet Ezekiel records hearing God speak to angels with these words: "Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near." Ezek. 9:1.
22. Since Israel is a forerunner used to demonstrate God's truth to all the earth, it follows that all nations, cities, and subcultures have guardian angels assigned to them. The direction that Paul received to Macedonia in Acts 16:9, was evidently communicated by an angel operating in that territory. Peter had a parallel experience with an angel in Acts 10:30

FALLEN ANGELS

1. Isaiah 14:12-15, refers to the devil, the "shining one." From the Latin translation of that title we get the name Lucifer.
2. God divided responsibility among several high-ranking angels. One of those angels was called Lucifer. He was a cherubim with a special position. Ezek 28: 12-19.
3. Through rebellion, Lucifer fell from heaven taking one-third of the angels with him, Rev. 12:4. Lucifer chose self. 1 Tim. 3:6; Ezek. 28:16-17. Every free moral creature in the universe must at one time make a final decision whether to give allegiance to God or to self. Rom. 6:16.
4. Lucifer became the adversary, which is the meaning of the name Satan. He is the enemy of both God and man. Satan is filled with vindictive rage against the redeemed children of Adam, who will rule with Christ in glory. 1 Peter 5:8.
5. Some of the fallen angels have been cast down to hell and are chained, waiting for judgment (2 Peter 2:4), while others are free to oppose God, the redeemed and the Kingdom of God.
6. High-ranking fallen angels (delegated demons), referred to as principalities and powers, seek to dominate geographic areas, cities, peoples, and subcultures. Eph. 6:12; Ezek 28:12; Dan. 10:12, 20.
7. Satan and his fallen angels were defeated at the cross and will finally be condemned. Col. 2:15; Matt. 25:41.
8. Satan and his demons are in a state of continual war against the churches of the Lord and all believers are exhorted to combat all levels of evil spiritual force in the unseen realm. Eph. 6:10-15.
9. While God's Word tells believers to treat such beings with respect, it also commands us to take captivity captive, to bind the strong man, to plunder his goods and to tear down the rule and authority of the evil one. 2 Cor. 10:4; Matt 12:29; Mark 3:27; Luke 11:21-22.
10. We, as believers, are given authority to overcome the enemy as a result of the victory of our Lord. Rom. 8:31-32.
11. We must strategically follow Biblical principles and precepts based on discernment of the unseen realm.
12. We need to overcome, dethrone, bind and defeat the enemy before we enter into his territory for ministry.

CONTENDING FOR THE NATIONS

Part V

A Four-Fold Prayer Focus

Revelations 5:8-10

We Must Pray for the Penetration of the Gospel into These Areas.

I. Every Kindred.

- A. *Kindred* comes from the Greek word "phulees" which is most frequently translated *tribe*.
- B. Because a tribe is not usually a full nation, we may conclude that this word is a reference to smaller groups within a nation, such as *cultural groups*.
- C. Culture means *the totality of socially transmitted behavior or patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community or population*.
- D. Some ethnic groups within a nation have clearly defined patterns of behavior or beliefs that differ greatly from the general beliefs of the nation in which the group exists.
- E. At least 17,000 people groups have now been identified.
- F. It is possible that there are perhaps as many as 12,500 hidden people groups without a Gospel preaching Church.
- G. *The kindred objective* provides us with the following prayer focus: frontier evangelism.
- H. We must pray into existence missionaries and ministries to *hidden peoples*.

II. Every Tongue.

- A. *Tongue* comes from the Greek word "glossa" which refers to the languages of the world.
- B. There are around six thousand different, distinct languages on planet earth today.
- C. Over three thousand four hundred of these languages do not possess a single verse of Scripture in them.
- D. *Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God*. Rom. 10:17.
- E. *The every tongue objective* provides us with the following prayer focus: translation evangelism.
- F. Every tongue and every language has the right to have the Word of God.
- G. We must pray for laborers into the languages of the world.
- H. We must pray for pioneer missionaries who will be willing to pay the price and *endure hardness* as soldiers of Jesus Christ.

III. Every People.

- A. *People* comes from the Greek word "laos" which appears 143 times in the New Testament and refers to human beings.
- B. The emphasis is upon the individual.

- C. *Preach the Gospel to every creature.* Mark 16:15b.
- D. Whole nations are not evangelized until people are evangelized, one at a time.
- E. The *every creature objective* provides us with the following prayer focus: racial saturation evangelism.
- F. This will not be possible until some missionaries get desperate about finding God's key of evangelism for a nation.
- G. We must pray for existing missionaries in countries to be intensely convicted by the Holy Spirit and broken for real true evangelization of their country.
- H. We must pray for the calling of nationals and for the Spirit of God to impart to them as well a strategy for their people.

IV. Every Nation.

- A. *Nation* comes from the Greek word "ethnos" which appears 164 times in the New Testament and is most commonly translated *Gentiles*.
- B. It refers to the nations of the world other than Israel.
- C. Some mission leaders believe it is another reference to the multiplied thousands of hidden people groups.
- D. Others believe it refers to the total population living within geographic boundaries at any given time.
- E. Regardless of the viewpoint, Rev. 5:8-10 clearly reveals that redeemed mankind will emerge from all tribes, languages, people, and nations of the earth.
- F. Our *nation objective* provides us with the following focus: systematic evangelism.
- G. We must pray for God to place or raise up in every nation someone to prepare Christian nationals to systematically reach all the people (kindred, tongue, people, nation) of every nation with the Gospel.
- H. We must pray for a transforming of minds and hearts on the part of the missionaries so that they will have God's perspective of mission - rather than building empires, reputations, and comfortable nests.
- I. We must pray for a *realistic facing of the facts in world missions* by pastors first and then churches.
- J. Perhaps 85% of that which is done in the name of missions misses the mark and is not Biblical missions.
 - 1. Missionaries with a *pastor's mentality* rather than a *work mentality*. Acts 13:2
 - 2. Consequently, missionaries can only see one congregation at a time - a process of addition instead of multiplication.
 - 3. The *pastor's mentality* pervades all ministry - only involved in outreach that will result in visible results for their one congregation.
 - 4. The average missionary only has an outreach to 5,000 people during his career - which is sinful, selfish, and sending souls to Hell.
 - a. It is possible to reach that many in one hour.
 - b. We must now do in a short time frame what generations have failed to do.
 - c. Someone always has to pay for the failure of others.
 - d. It will cost time, money, blood, sweat, tears, and lives.
 - 5. It is impossible to improve on Bible methods.
 - 6. Our Lord majored on men - the *with Him* principle. Mark 3:14.
 - a. These men were the first Church.

- b. They were trained to be missionary-evangelists-church planters - not pastors.
 - c. He sent them out two-by-two.
7. *The team principle* was practiced by Paul, the first missionary.
 8. One team in a country can *finish the work*.
 - a. Each member with different gifts.
 - b. Complementing each other and the whole.
 - c. Not in competition.
 - d. Serving - not satisfying themselves.
 - e. With an understanding of mission.
 - f. Possessing a plan and strategy.
 - g. Working that plan.
 - h. Can complete the Great Commission.
 9. Only pastors and churches can bring about the necessary influence to change the course of missions.
 - a. As long as we continue to support missionaries without demanding certain guidelines be followed - things will continue as usual.
 - b. When churches decide to only support certain missionaries, there will only then be changes made and progress realized.
 - c. Perhaps it would help to commit support only for 12 months - with the understanding the missionary is to examine and evaluate his own ministry in conjunction with his pre-developed strategy statement - which the church will also evaluate when submitted in writing annually.
 - d. Accountability is absolutely necessary.
 - e. As Independent Baptists, we have allowed ourselves to conform to unhealthy, stagnated, non-fruitful missions.
 10. It is time to believe God and beseech the throne of Grace for world-changing ministries.

FASTING DOWN STRONGHOLDS

Matthew 17:21

On all the levels of intercession, fasting seems to terrify the enemy the most. It seems to saturate our petitions with an authority that comes in no other way.

To combine fasting with intercession is to add special power to our prayer. It is authoritative praying that allows us to "fast" down enemy strongholds.

Authority is defined as power to influence or persuade from knowledge or experience. It is also the legal or rightful power to command or act in specific situations.

Intercession is the denial of self in prayer so that our praying is focused on others; and fasting is a physical form of humility and self-denial for which scripture indicates special power.

Fasting is the practice of deliberately and voluntarily abstaining from usual nourishment. Its meaning can be expanded to include temporary abstinence from anything in order to give more concentrated attention to spiritual matters.

I. Brokenness in Intercession.

- A. Fasting is a personal, voluntary humbling of the heart before God that increases spiritual brokenness. Ps. 56:10.
 1. Humility is at the heart of fasting.
 2. It is to lower one's estimate of self by elevating one's estimate of others.
 3. Fasting carries this quality of humility into the physical realm and brings about a brokenness before God that can come in no other way.
 4. Such brokenness not only honors God but makes the intercessor's heart more pliable to hear from Him.

II. Control in Intercession.

- A. Fasting is a commitment to self-control that enables the believer to die to self.
 1. Paul spoke of temperance (self-control) as a fruit of the spirit. Gal. 5:23.
 - a. Temperance is the quality of moderation in one's appetite and passions.
 - b. It is to take control over one's flesh by not allowing anything to grow to the point of excess.
 2. The psalmist spoke of humbling his soul. Ps. 35:13.
 - a. The word humble here is the Hebrew word "anah" which means to afflict.
 - b. Some commentators have written that it also carries the impression of torture.
 - c. Anyone that has fasted for any period of time or with regularity can attest to the fact that it is humbling to the flesh, affliction for this old nature, and torture to our body.
 3. In a time when many believers are succumbing to the works of the flesh (prominent leaders falling), a fresh call to fasting and prayer surely is in order.

4. Paul understood the need to keep his body in subjection. I Cor. 9:27. Paul was not speaking of some form of penance but of maintaining self-control when confronting fleshly desires.

III. Receptivity in Intercession.

- A. Fasting is a worship activity that increases spiritual receptibility by creating a climate for the Holy Spirit to speak.
 1. Fasting often brings a heightened sensitivity of those making personal or corporate decisions. Acts 13:2-3.
 - a. In the Church of Antioch, there was the combination of a spirit of worship with a spirit of fasting.
 - b. During their fast, they received specific guidance from the Holy Spirit.
 - c. It is possible that had they not fasted, the Holy Spirit might not have spoken.
 2. Ezra recognized the power in fasting in seeking guidance. Ezra 8:21-23.
 - a. He called the people to humble themselves before God and seek of Him a right way for us.
 - (1) Guidance was clearly the first focus for their fast.
 - (2) They sought God with fasting regarding the care of their little ones.
 - (3) God's people sought the Lord with fasting for the protection of all their possessions.
 - b. Ezra and his companions found themselves in a predicament.
 - (1) They needed protection.
 - (2) Possible attack from the enemy was very real.
 - (3) Ordinary prayer was not enough.
 - (4) They needed to get desperate and it was a time to fast and pray.

IV. Power in Intercession.

- A. Fasting is concentrated spiritual preparation for Holy Spirit empowered service that increases the believer's spiritual power.
 1. Our Lord was "led" by the spirit into a season of fasting. Luke 4:1.
 - a. God's Spirit must always be our Guide as we encounter any level of spiritual warfare.
 2. The Lord returned in the power of the spirit into Galilee. Luke 4:14.
- B. Christ is our supreme example of an intercessor.
 1. The use of the Word and fasting was involved in His victory in the wilderness.

V. Ministry in Intercession.

- A. Fasting is a specialized service ministry that increases spiritual usefulness for the totally committed believer. Luke 2:36, 37.
 1. There was one Anna. Luke 2:36.
 - a. Of the Bible's 2,989 characters mentioned by name, there is indeed only one Anna.
 2. She had a ministry no one else is pictured as possessing. Luke 2:37.
 3. Note that Scripture refers to Anna's fastings and prayers in the plural.

- a. This suggests that Anna experienced recurring and repeated occasions of sustained fasting and prayer.
- b. Anna was sensitive to the Holy Spirit's direction - even if it meant sustained vigils of prayer at night.
- 4. Fasting and prayer was Anna's specialized ministry as a committed believer.
- B. It is a calling available to any believer who would begin their ministry of prayer with periodic appointments with the Lord.

VI. Fruitful Fasting.

- A. We should fast sensibly.
 - 1. Realistic goals need to be set.
 - 2. When Israel was about to do battle against rebellious Benjamin, they viewed the circumstances and went unto the house of God and fasted until even. Judges 20:26.
 - 3. David fasted until the sun went down. II Sam. 3:35.
 - 4. Cornelius fasted until the ninth hour which was mid-afternoon. Acts 10:30.
 - 5. Begin simply, perhaps with the denial of one or two meals each week.
 - 6. To fast until 3:00 p.m. would mean to deny oneself breakfast and lunch for the day.
 - a. It may not seem like much when considering seven day, twenty-one day, or forty day fasts, but the stomach and body will start screaming and lying within moments of missing a single meal.
- B. We should fast secretly. Matt. 6:16-18.
 - 1. Christ was not suggesting we never tell anyone we intend to fast.
 - 2. Neither do I imply that we are to broadcast our intention to fast.
 - a. Family members need to know why we do not come to meals.
 - b. Friends may need to know why we are not available for fellowship.
 - 3. The Lord was chiding people who tried to appear more spiritual than they really were by pretending to fast.
- C. We should fast sensitively.
 - 1. Israel inquired of the Lord during their fast prior to the battle with Benjamin. Judges 20:26, 27.
 - a. One of the most important results of fasting is that it increases our sensitivity to guidance.
- D. We should fast systematically.
 - 1. Christ taught His disciple about fasting.
 - a. When ye fast. Matthew 6:16. He did not say if you fast. He was inferring that fasting was normal.
 - b. To fast systematically is to set aside time on a regular basis for the purpose of drawing near to God with fasting and prayer.
 - c. It may involve one day a week, or one day a month, or even a portion of a day.
 - 2. The key is that there be a fast on a regular basis.
- E. We should fast sacrificially.
 - 1. Fasting helps to express, to deepen, and to confirm the resolution that we are ready to sacrifice anything, to sacrifice even ourselves, to attain what we seek for the Kingdom of God. Andrew Murray

- a. For the person who normally skips breakfast, to offer to miss breakfast would hardly be a sacrifice.
 - 2. The hunger pains we feel during a fast serve to remind us that self-denial is indeed taking place.
 - 3. Fasting costs us something we can feel.
- F. We should fast specifically.
- 1. Apparently, there was a time that Israel fasted but not a fast chosen by God. Isaiah 58:6.
 - 2. God must choose the focus of our fast.
 - a. The church at Antioch fasted specifically before sending out Barnabas and Saul. Acts 13:2, 3. (It was a focused fast.)
 - b. Ezra had clear direction as he fasted before leading the people from captivity back to Jerusalem. Ezra 8:21-23.
 - 3. We must be directed by the Lord concerning His purpose for a fast.
- G. We should fast supernaturally.
- 1. A special characteristic of fasting is that which requires trust and confidence in God.
 - 2. The very nature of fasting requires dependence on God's supernatural power to see us through.

PRAYER PRECEPTS

Pray, always pray, though weary, faint, and lone;
Pray, nestling in the Father's sheltering Throne;
 Pray, always pray; amid the world's turmoil,
Prayer keeps the heart at rest, and nerves for toil.
 All earthly things with prayer shall fade away,
 Prayer grasps Eternity; pray, always pray.

Bishop Bickersteth

More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me night and day;
 For what are men better than sheep or goats
 That nourish a blind life within the brain
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer Both
for themselves and those who call them friends? For
 so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

Alfred Lord Tennyson

Be not afraid to pray - to pray is right. Pray, if
thou canst, with hope; but ever pray, Though
hope be weak, or sick with long delay; Pray in
the darkness, if there be no light.

Hartley Coleridge

ORDERED WARFARE

Establishing Battle Strategies for Intercession

Satan has a strategy. Unseen satanic forces are very real. They are well-ordered and seek to remain in control over areas of the world. Intercession is their greatest threat. If Satan has a strategy, then the people of God will have to have one if the enemy is to be defeated and put down. General non-specific, non-focused prayers will do little for the cause of world evangelism.

I. Order: A Key Tool of the Intercessor. Psalms 5:3,

If we merely read our English version of this text, and want an explanation of these two sentences, we find it in the figure of an archer - I will direct my prayer unto Thee. In other words, I will put my prayer upon my bow, I will direct it toward heaven, and then when I have shot up my arrow, I will look up to see where it has gone. But the Hebrew expression here has a much fuller meaning than I will direct my prayer. It is the word that is used for the laying in order of the wood and the pieces of the sacrifice upon the altar, and it is used also for the putting of the showbread upon the table. It means just this: I will arrange my prayer before Thee. I will lay it out upon the altar in the morning just as the priest laid out the morning sacrifices. I will marshal up my prayers. I will put them in order. I will call upon all powers available, and I will pray with all my might, acceptably.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

- A. The Hebrew word employed in Ps. 5:3 for direct is "arak," from which we derive our English word arrange.

Arak - establishing order at some level or degree.

1. The most frequent use of *arak* in Scripture concerns the order that priests brought to their daily sacrifices. Ex. 40:3, 4.
2. The Scripture says that wisdom sets things in order before coming to the Lord with our intercession. Prov. 9:2c.
 - a. Furnished means arrange.
 - b. Just as a table is furnished or arranged for a meal, so wisdom sets things in order.
3. *Arak* is used to picture an ordered preparation prior to establishing a watchman in the tower. Isaiah 21:5, 6.
4. Jeremiah employs *arak* in a warfare context. Jerm. 46:3.
5. The word *arak* is used in a battle setting in a confrontation between Israel and the rebellious children of Benjamin. Judges 20:20.
 - a. To establish a "battle array" (*arak*) means to develop an ordered strategy prior to entering the conflict.
6. We must be prepared before our going into each battle. Job 13:18.
 - a. I have prepared my case.
 - b. The primary definition of *arak* in the Hebrew lexicon is to set in order a cause in a court of justice.

7. We must work out a plan of attack prior to engaging the enemy in warfare prayer.

II. Strategies for Victorious Warfare.

Strategy is a plan of action.

- A. First, as Intercessors, we should consider Peter's call to vigilance. I Peter 5:8-9.
 1. "Sober" used here means we are to be self-controlled in the light of our enemy's continuing designs to destroy us through varied temptations.
 2. Vigilant means watchful, a reminder that we are to be alert.
 3. The use of the word resist also is especially important..
 - a. It is from the same Greek word translated "stand" in Paul's exhortation to the Ephesians. Eph. 6:14.
 - b. To resist simply means to take a stand.
 1. It is not merely a passive, defensive stand.
 2. It is an offensive stance that seeks to send the devil running.
- B. Second, as Intercessors, we should consider James' call to resistance. James 4:7, 8.
 1. Here the word resist is from the Greek "anthistemi," meaning to stand against or oppose.
 2. It is from the same root Paul used in the warfare chapter to the Ephesians. Eph. 6:11b.
 3. Note carefully James' challenge in linking submission and prayer to victorious warfare. James 4:7, 8.
 - a. "Resist the devil" is placed between submission (submit to God) and prayer (draw near to God).
 - b. The closer we get to God, the further the enemy has to flee.
 - c. Satan most fears the presence of God.
- C. Third, as Intercessors, we should consider Paul's call to preparation. Eph. 6:10, 11.
 1. "Be strong in the Lord." Eph. 6:10.
 2. "Put on the whole armor of God." Eph. 6:11.
(Prayer is not so much another weapon on our list of weaponry as it is the actual battle itself. Eph. 6:18, 19.)

III. A Call for "Continual" Intercession. I Thess. 5:17.

- A. The expression "without ceasing" is from the Greek word "adialeiptos," a word commonly used in ancient Greece to describe someone with a hacking cough.
 1. A person cannot plan his coughs throughout the day but coughs whenever necessary. The need occasions the response.
 2. Like the cough that comes when the urge arises, prayer is offered for each need encountered.
- B. The account of the hundred-year prayer meeting established by the Moravians in 1727 is an example.
 1. Within 15 years, one congregation provided over three hundred missionaries.
 2. Many other lives were touched because of their example.

3. Eleven years after beginning, a young man entered a Moravian prayer meeting and was converted. The man's name was John Wesley.

IV. A Call for "Complete" Intercession. Eph. 6:18.

With all prayer

- A. We are to include all manner of Biblical prayer as a part of our spiritual warfare. (The following list comes from Dick Eastman and his book, *The Hour That Changes The World.*)
1. Praise - a time of exaltation. Ps. 63:3.
 2. Waiting - a time of adoration. Ps. 130:5-6.
 3. Confession - a time of examination. Ps. 32:5; II Cor. 7:1.
 4. Scripture praying - a time of appropriation. John 15:7.
 5. Watching - a time of observation. Col. 4:2.
 6. Intercession - a time of intervention. Rom. 15:30-31.
 7. Petition - a time of expectation. Mark 11:24.
 8. Thanksgiving - a time of appreciation. Ps. 100:4; Col. 4:2.
 9. Singing - a time of edification. Ps. 71:23; Eph. 5:19; II Chron. 20:20-22; Acts 16:25-26.
 10. Meditation - a time of investigation. Ps. 143:5; 1:2.
 11. Listening - a time of meditation or mental absorption. Eph. 1:17.
 12. Praise - a time of jubilation. Matt. 6:9, 13; Ps. 71:14; Isaiah 65:24.

V. A Call for "Energized" Intercession. Eph. 6:18; James 5:16; Heb. 5:7.

- A. Supplication represents an intense form of intercession. Eph. 6:18.
1. "Deesis," the Greek word for supplication, refers to continual, strong, incessant pleading.
- B. *The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* James 5:16.
1. The Greek word translated effectual here is "energeo," from which we derive our word energy.
 2. James was speaking of prayer energized by the Holy Spirit.
 3. Paul referred to such when he used the term "supplication in the Spirit." Eph. 6:18.
 4. It is fervent intercession "supernaturalized" by the Holy Spirit.
- C. The author of Hebrews tells us *Christ offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears.* Heb. 5:7.
1. Here the word supplications is plural.
 2. Christ's prayer intensity was not a one-time emotional display in Gethsemane.
 3. His intercessions were filled constantly with the energy and intensity of the Holy Spirit.

VI. A Call for "Sensitive" Intercession. Eph. 6:18b.

(Watching in intercession is to develop a sensitive alertness to the Holy Spirit's promptings. The intercessor must know what to pray for.)

A. *The Spirit helps our infirmities.* Rom. 8:26.

1. The Greek word translated helps is one of the longest new Testament Greek words - "sunantilambanomai."
2. The word means "joint help."
3. It describes the strength and assistance afforded by any two persons who are working together.
4. Another definition - the mutual bearing of the same load by two people.
5. This suggests that the Holy Spirit does not do all the work for us in prayer but works with us.
 - a. It is a joint effort.
 - b. As we depend on God's Spirit in prayer, He will show us how and what to claim in prayer.

VII. A Call for Persistent Intercession. Eph. 6:18c.

("All perseverance" - this two word expression from the Greek "proskartero," means "to adhere firmly" or "to be in close pursuit of an object sought." It also means "to be always intent on the goal before you."

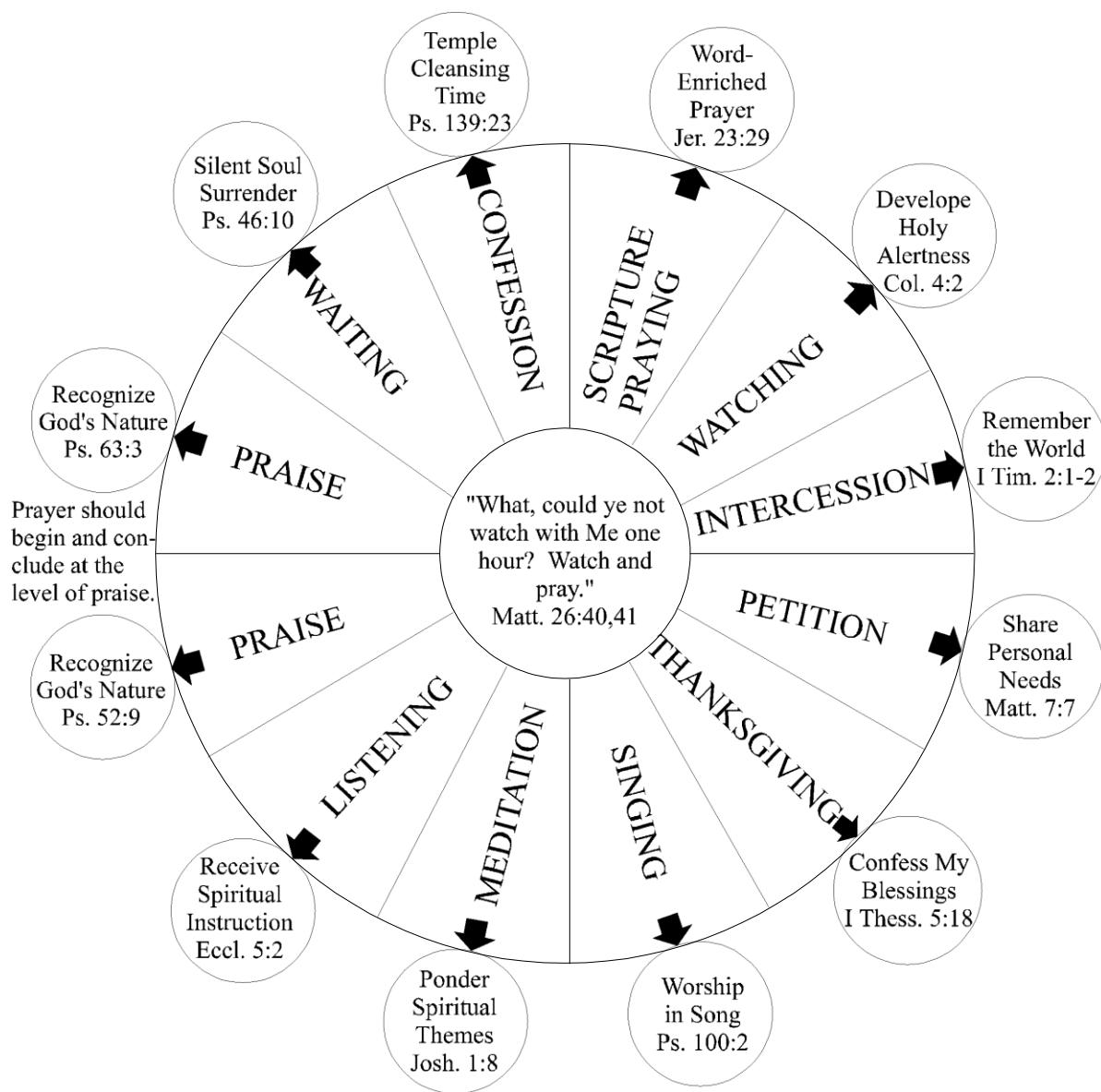
- A. The combination of these meanings suggest a spirit of intercession that never forgets its true purpose.
 1. It is not just praying to be praying.
 2. It is not praying just to receive some blessings.
- B. The intercessor is reaching out in prayer with the supreme purpose of seeing Christ's Kingdom ultimately established throughout the earth.
- C. Intercessors will develop a quality of faithful persistence. Dan. 10:2, 12-13.

VIII. A Call for "Focused" Intercession. Eph. 6:18, 19, 20.

- A. Paul taught both a general focus ("for all Saints") and a specific focus ("for me").
- B. Note when Paul appealed personally for prayer, he did not request finances or health.
- C. Paul's primary prayer priority - glorify Christ and thereby "bringing many sons unto glory." Heb. 2:10.
- D. Prayer that scarcely mentions missions is prayer that misses the heartbeat of God.

PERSONAL PRAYER DEVELOPMENT

PART I



PERSONAL PRAYER DEVELOPMENT

PART II

Eph. 6:18

I. Regularity - *Praying Always.*

(Mark 1:35; Matthew 14:23; Luke 6:12)

- A. Pray systematically.

II. Variety - *With All Prayer.*

- A. Look at all the types of prayer in Scripture.
- B. Must develop all types of prayer.
- C. Model prayer - Matt. 6:9-13.
 - 1. Doxology.
 - 2. 57 Words in Greek text.
 - 3. Cover themes of worship, gratitude, intercession, submission, petition, repentance, and aspiration.
 - 4. They seek God's honor, rule, will, provision, forgiveness, guidance, and protection - for self and for world.
- D. Must stay out of ruts in prayer.

III. Intensity - *Supplication in the Spirit.*

- A. Rom. 8:26
- B. Like to pray with Pastor Pennington.
- C. Testimony of David Brainerd: *My soul was exceedingly enlarged and I was in such anguish that I pleaded with much earnestness and importunity. When I rose from prayer I was extremely weak and overcome. I could scarcely walk straight. My joints were loosed, the sweat ran down my face and body, and nature seemed as if it would dissolve.*

IV. Sensitivity - *Watching There Unto.*

Heightened spiritual sensitivity to that which is happening around us.
Matt. 6:7.

V. Tenacity - *With All Perseverance and Supplication.*

- A. Two qualities combined make for bull-dog stubbornness and determination.
 - 1. Tenacity is the quality of holding onto a goal or promise regardless of the circumstances of a given situation.
 - 2. Absolute persistence. Refusal to quit.

B. *At home and abroad, in this country and in foreign lands, in health and in sickness, however much occupied, I have been enabled, day by day, by God's help, to bring this matter before Him, and still have not the full answer yet. Nevertheless, I look for it. I expect it confidently. The very fact that day after day, and year after year, for 29 years, the Lord has enabled me to continue patiently, believingly, to wait on Him for the blessing, still further encourages me to wait on, and so fully am I assured that God hears me about this matter, that I have often been able to praise Him beforehand for the full answer which I shall ultimately receive to my prayers on this subject.*

George Mueller

THOUGHTS ON PRAYER

I. The Neglect of Prayer.

Survey:

The average Christian prays 60 seconds a day.

The average minister prays 90 seconds a day.

This grieves the heart of God. Jerm. 2:32b.

Note the penalty for neglect of prayer in Biblical times. II Chron. 15:13.

Assure yourself of failure - just don't pray!

- A. To neglect prayer is self-centered.
 - 1. Ps. 10:4. One of the highest forms of spiritual selfishness and pride. 2. Manner of informing God we do not need His help.
- B. To neglect prayer is slothful.
 - 1. Jerm. 48:10. Unfaithfully - slackness - slothfully.
 - 2. Slothfulness is laziness.
 - 3. Ecc. 10:18.
- C. To neglect prayer is a sin. I Sam. 12:23.

II. Prayer Excuses.

Excuse-making is as old as the human race. An excuse is a lie that has been skinned and stuffed with a reason.

Paul was anointed. Felix troubled. Acts 24:25.

Often whole crowds made excuses. Luke 14:18.

Know, convinced, will agrees - prayer most important - but have our excuses.

- A. Weariness. I'm too tired.
 - Eph. 5:14. Perhaps majoring on minor. Doing 1001 good things but not major; instead secondary. Changes may be necessary. Also, give God your best time of the day.
- B. Busyness. I'm too busy.
 - 1. Too busy to spend time with the Lord.
 - 2. Luther - "I am so busy - so much to do - must pray an extra hour today. Only way to get everything done."
- C. Emptiness. I'm too dry.
 - 1. Ps. 63:1. Natural - face it but do not cover up.
 - 2. When prayer delights thee least, then prayer demands our best.
 - 3. Not justifiable - I don't feel like it today.
- D. Dreariness. I'm too preoccupied.
 - 1. Spirit of weariness causes a wandering mind. Easy to be so preoccupied with everyone's problems that we are unable to pray effectively.
 - 2. Our hearts can become divided - great temptation for a minister of God. Hosea 10:2 - headed for burn-out.

- E. Laziness. I'm too lazy.
 - 1. Matt. 20:6.
 - 2. Easier to read a book.
 - 3. Easier to watch something.
 - 4. Prayer costs something.
 - 5. We give ourselves to unimportant endeavors that do nothing to strengthen us spiritually.
- F. Moodiness. I'm too bored.
 - 1. Just can't get in the mood. Mood must not be allowed to dictate us in prayer.
 - 2. I Cor. 9:24, 26.

PRAYER PRECEPTS

Don't Forget to Pray

Ere you left your room this morning,
Did you think to pray?

In the name of Christ our Savior
Did you sue for loving favor As
a shield today?

When you met with great temptation,
Did you think to pray?

By his dying love and merit,
Did you claim the Holy Spirit
As your guide and stay?

When your heart was filled with anger,
Did you think to pray?

Did you plead for grace, my brother,
That you might forgive another Who
had crossed your way?

When sore trials came upon you,
Did you think to pray?

When your soul was bowed in sorrow,
Balm of Gilead did you borrow
At the gates of day?
Oh, how praying rests the weary!
Prayer will change the night to day;
So in sorrow and in gladness,
Don't forget to pray!

Mrs. M. A. Kidder

CORPORATE PRAYING

Part I

In most of our churches, more is said about prayer than is ever done.

An illustration is given that may set forth the unconscious attitude of the average Christian. A church's pastor resigned and its leaders were anxious about who the church should call to be its new pastor. Most of the leaders were professional people who were used to deciding on a plan of action and acting on the plan, even though prayer was not involved. Finally, after several months, a new minister accepted the call and the leaders of the church were overjoyed. Half jokingly, they remarked, *As luck would have it, providence was with us!*

It is a sad fact that few of our Baptist churches have any form of prayer ministry outside of the regularly-scheduled services and events.

George Barna, one of today's most astute observers of trends in churches and society, researched what he calls *user-friendly churches*. He identified a number of churches that stood out from others because of the extraordinary vitality of the congregation and its positive impact on the surrounding community. Then, he lists the features these churches have in common. Prayer, he found, was a foundation stone of ministry for them all. *The call to prayer*, Barna says, *was the battle cry of the congregation: it rallied the troops. These people understood the power of prayer.*

A pastor in California, John Maxwell, leads workshops for pastors and has a session entitled *Six Keys to Church Growth*. Key number one is prayer. He says, *Every time I have had a breakthrough in the growth and life of my church, it has been because of intentional prayer.*

Bob Logan, a church planner, who saw a congregation mushroom, as well saw many new churches start, now gives full time to researching, consulting, teaching, and supervising church planting. When he speaks to church leaders, he outlines *The Seven Most Important Things I have Learned About Church Planting*. Number one is prayer. He says, *I agree with E. M. Bounds who said, "Prayer is not preparation for the battle; it is the battle."*

The ministry of prayer is the most important of all the ministries in the church. Prayer creates the atmosphere and binds the powers of darkness so the Gospel of Jesus can go forward and the church can prosper. This is the area that the majority of our churches talk about the most and practice the least.

Waymon Rogers, Christian Life Center.

In 1965, there were 50 million Pentecostals/Charismatics.

In 1975, there were 96 million.

In 1985, there were 247 million.

In 1991, there were 392 million.

In all human history, there has never been a non-political, non-militaristic, voluntary human movement that has grown as rapidly as the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement has grown in the last 30 years.

Ralph Winter.

One survey reveals the following:

Liberal pastors average 18 minutes a day in prayer.

Evangelical pastors average 17 minutes a day in prayer. Pentecostal/Charismatic pastors average 46 minutes a day in prayer.

The Assemblies of God denomination has become the largest or second largest denomination in more than 30 nations of the world. In one city alone, Sao Paulo, Brazil, there are 2,400 Assembly of God Churches. We cannot deny that they back up their words with their knees. Maybe instead of justifying ourselves by picking others apart, we just need to get on our face before God.

Regardless of the denomination, the theology, the evangelism methods, and the worship services, the majority of churches that are reaching souls and changing lives are those with major emphasis on prayer. *Prayer was never short-changed. Several pastors indicated that they would rather reduce the time allotted to their sermons than to minimize or abbreviate the time in which the congregation was in conversation with God*

George Barna.

I. God's Priority Ministry for All Believers.

- A. It was His plan that Israel be a nation of priests. Ex. 19:6; Isaiah 61:6.
- B. In this age of the church, all believers are priests. I Peter 2:5,9; Rev. 1:6.
- C. Apparently, there will be a ministry of intercession even in the millennium. Rev. 20:6.

II. God's Plan of Prayer for His Church.

- A. God's plans for Solomon's Temple included a place for all from all nations to hear the Word and pray. I Kings 8:22-61 (verses 41-43); Isaiah 56:7; Matt. 21:12, 13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46.
- B. The first church had to prepare themselves through prayer for their empowering for the task before them. Luke 24:49; Acts 1:13, 14.
- C. Those saved on the Day of Pentecost continued in an environment of prayer. Acts 2:42.
- D. When Peter and John were threatened by the authorities, the church prayed. Acts 4:21-31.
- E. Sustained, corporate prayer was practiced when crisis arose. Acts 12:5, 18.
- F. The Church at Antioch was in prayer when the Spirit of God indicated that it was time to separate Barnabas and Saul for work beyond their local area. Acts 13:2.
- G. The first missionaries were sent out in prayer by a praying church. Acts 13:3.
- H. The context of Hebrews 10:25 indicates that it should be applied to corporate gatherings for prayer. Hebrew 10:1-25.

III. Paul in his New Testament letters instructed Christians to make corporate prayer a regular and consistent part of their lives.

- A. To the church at Rome - be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Rom. 12:12.
- B. To the church at Ephesus - pray in the Spirit on all occasions, with all kinds of prayers and requests. Eph. 6:18.
- C. To the church at Phillipi - do not be anxious but pray about everything. Phil. 4:6.
- D. To the church at Colosse - devote yourselves to prayer, be watchful and thankful. Col. 4:2.
- E. Paul requested churches to pray for him.
 - 1. To the Romans. Rom. 15:30-33.
 - a. For deliverance from enemies in Judaea. V. 31a.
 - b. For acceptance in Jerusalem. V. 31b.
 - c. For joyful arrival in the will of God. V. 32a.
 - d. For refreshing while with them. V. 32b.
 - 2. To the Corinthians. I Cor. 1:10, 11.
 - a. *That for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons.* V. 11b. Paul was a responsible, sensitive steward.
 - b. *Thanks may be given by many on our behalf.* V. 11c. II Cor. 9:11-14.
 - 3. To the Philippians. Phil. 1:19-21.
 - a. Their prayer would result in his deliverance. V. 19a.
 - b. That he might not be ashamed. V. 20a; I Peter 4:16.
 - c. That he might have boldness. V. 20b.
 - d. That Christ might be magnified - whether by life or death. V. 20c.
 - 4. To the Colossians. Col. 4:2-4.
 - a. *That God would open unto us a door of utterance.* V. 3a.
 - b. *To speak the mystery of Christ.* V. 3b. Paul was not presumptuous but conscious of his continual need for dependence on the Lord.
 - c. *That I might make it manifest.* V.4a. Near the end of his ministry and still concerned about presenting the Gospel.
 - d. *As I ought to speak.* V. 4b. Paul was conscious of the need not to present a rote formula but a presentation that would make the message understandable and meaningful to each person
 - 5. To the Thessalonians. II Thess. 3:1, 2.
 - a. *That the Word of the Lord may have free course.* V. 1b. (May be openly and unhinderedly available freely, without restraint.)
 - b. *That the Word be glorified.* V. 1c. (May be extolled, effectual, victorious, triumphant.)
 - c. *That we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men.* V. 1d. (Perverse and actively malicious.)
 - 6. To the Hebrews. Heb. 13:18.
 - a. *A good conscience.* V. 18b. Revelation of a sensitive heart and spirit. Acts 24:16; II Cor. 1:12; I Tim. 1:19.
 - b. *In all things willing to live honestly.* V. 18c. (Integrity) II Cor. 7:2; Rom. 12:17, 13:18; II Cor. 8:21.

PRAYER PRECEPTS

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will avail to make;
What heavy burdens from our bosom's take!
What parched ground refreshed as with a shower.
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear.
We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong
Or others, that we are not always strong -
That we are sometimes overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled - when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee!

Archbishop Trench

Then let us earnest be,
And never faint in prayer;
He loves our importunity,
And makes our cause His care.

John Newton

CORPORATE PRAYING

Part II

The Method - Six S's
Matthew 6:7-8

The shy, self-conscious, inexperienced pray-ers must be encouraged and shepherded into group prayer sessions. Others, through some unfortunate experience, are reluctant to pray with others. Because of the manner in which some prayer meetings were conducted, others just got plain bored and now have negative attitudes toward corporate praying. All of these people must be taken into consideration, understood, and gently challenged to participate. These six S's may be helpful.

I. Subject by Subject.

- A. Praying in one accord about only one subject at a time.
- B. As one prays audibly, the others pray silently on the same subject, not planning their own prayers in advance.
- C. A leader is necessary who announces one subject for prayer at a time.
- D. It may be necessary for the leader to set the example by praying first and praying a one, simple-sentence prayer, sticking to the one specific request.

II. Short Prayers.

- A. The secret of success of small group praying is short prayers.
- B. Short prayers should allow for each person to pray audibly.
- C. May experienced pray-ers guard against the attitude that God hears because of much praying.
- D. Many requests will go unremembered when someone dominates the group with lengthy prayers.

III. Simple Prayers.

- A. High-sounding, theological expressions should be left at home in the prayer closet.
- B. New pray-ers must be made comfortable and unnatural conversation in prayer does not do that.
- C. Prayer is not apt to be spontaneous when long, beautiful-sounding prayers, couched in lofty theological phrases are spoken.
- D. Simple, uncomplicated, natural and every-day vocabulary worded prayers will help to keep people returning time after time.

IV. Specific Prayer Requests.

- A. Specific requests listed and specific answers noted are a great encouragement to continuing and expanded prayer.
- B. Thanksgiving should be practiced for answered prayer.
- C. Use a notebook or file folder.

- D. By keeping records, the individuals who are praying start to see the worth of themselves in prayer, and this is important.
- E. Date the requests and date the answers.
- F. As we keep track of time, we will see that God's answers and timing are always perfect.

V. **Silent Periods.**

- A. Silent periods between prayers must not be considered an embarrassment - rather a privilege and blessing.
- B. Remember that prayer is a two-way conversation with the Lord.
- C. Usually some get nervous when a time of silence passes and someone will clear their throat and another will shuffle and maybe change positions.
- D. We must not think we have to talk to God all the time - there are marvelous things God also wants to say.
- E. Many times we are not quiet long enough to listen to what the Lord has to say. I Kings 19:11, 12.
- F. Because silence has become a lost art, many times we are not quiet long enough to hear the Lord.

VI. **Small Groups.**

- A. Small groups make it easier for the shy, the inexperienced, and new comers.
- B. It just may not be possible for some to stand and pray publicly before 50 or 100 people.
- C. When there are several participants, divide into small groups of four or five.
- D. How it must bless the heart of God when there are many small groups, praying one by one, lifting their hearts and voices earnestly to Him!
- E. May we never underestimate the value of small group praying. Matt. 18:20.

INTERCESSION

Intercession comes from two Latin words - inter - ceder.

Inter - meaning "between," "many," "involved," "intervention."

Ceder - meaning "to go," "to yield," "to move," or "to pay the price of."

Roots suggest :

1. "To go between" as when stepping between two in a fight.
2. One who "yields himself to someone in need of assistance."
3. Intercession is "moving in the direction of involvement regarding the needs of others." Matt. 9:37; Luke 10:33,34.
4. Intercession means "to pay the price of intercession." Christ set the example - He went to the cross to pay the price of intervention for our sins.
5. Intercession is more than an aspect of prayer - it is a lifestyle. Our Lord's life was characterized by a spirit of intercession. He gave His life a ransom for many. Our greatest gift to a lost world is intercession.

DETERMINING THE DESTINY OF NATIONS

Genesis 20:7

Our supreme "purpose" is to glorify God, our supreme "task" is to evangelize the lost.

"When we pray for others, we do not stand with outstretched hands hoping to receive something for ourselves. We stand at God's side working together with Him in the task of redeeming souls."

Edward Bouman

"Many people grieve because they have been denied service on the mission field or in some chosen endeavor, but through faithful intercession, they may accomplish as much and reap as full a reward as though they had been on the field in person."

Paul Billheimer

"Every step in the progress of missions is directly traceable to prayer. It has been the preparation for every new triumph and the secret of all success."

A. T. Pierson

How can we be consistent in praying for others? Consistency is defined as "purposeful regularity." How do we develop purposeful regularity?

I. Find the Very Best Time For Purposeful Prayer?

- A. It is necessary to experiment to find the best time for you
Example: Set a goal of rising 60 to 90 minutes early and do it for at least 5 mornings.
- B. Set a specific time for prayer. Those who have no set time for prayer do not pray."
- C. The secret to getting up is going to bed.

II. Declare Your Commitment Verbally Each Day.

- A. "The most important appointment I have today is my appointment with Jesus in prayer," must be a conviction.
- B. State your commitment vocally upon arising each morning.

III. Fight All Interruptions Fiercely. Eph. 4:27

- A. Consistent, daily prayer demands an all-out spiritual battle.
- B. Interruptions cannot be tolerated.
Recognize their source. Eph. 4:26

IV. Develop A Practical Prayer Plan.

- A. Seek to establish prayer goals that provide incentives for entering the prayer closet.
- B. Invite the Holy Spirit to help you develop your program of prayer.

V. Recognize the Overwhelming Importance of Your Daily Hour With God.

- A. Only as we become convinced that "believing" prayer truly changes things will we give ourselves to the daily exercise of prayer.
 - B. "John Knox grasped all Scotland in his strong arms of faith and his prayers terrified tyrants."
- Dwight L. Moody
- C. "Whitefield, after much bold faithful closet pleading, went to the devil's playground and took more than a thousand souls out of the paws of the lion in one day."
- Moody
- D. David Brainard - died at 29 - 4 years ministry - 40 to 50 persons converted - was an intercessor - prayed at times days and nights - in snow - touched lives - Edward Payson, John Wesley, Robert McCheyne, Andrew Murray, Jonathan Edwards, William Carey.

PRAISE

The Act of Divine Adoration

Matt. 6:9-13 - Luke 11:2-4

The Act of Divine Magnification

Luke 1:46-49

I. The God of All Praying. Matt. 6:9

"Hallowed be thy name."

Hallowed is a New Testament expression used only in reference to the name of God. The Greek word for our word hallow is hagiazo, meaning "to revere or to sanctify." Since sanctify means "to set apart," our prayer time should include several moments, at the very beginning, when God's name is set apart strictly as the object of our divine worship. During these moments of praise, our sole purpose is to bring glory to God with our words.

Ps. 50:23

"The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever."

-An old Presbyterian catechism

"The end we ought to propose to ourselves is to become, in this life, the most perfect worshipers of God we can possibly be, as we hope to be through all eternity."

E. M. Bounds The Necessity of Prayer

II. What is Praise?

Praise is the vocal adoration of God. Adoration is the act of rendering divine honor, esteem, and love. The word adoration is derived from an ancient expression that meant "to apply the hand to the mouth," or "to kiss the hand." There are many countries yet where a kiss of the hand is still a symbol of deep respect and submission.

"Since adoration brings man into immediate and direct contact with God, in the role of servant to Master, or the created to the Creator, it is foundational to all other kinds of prayer."

Charles Spurgeon Twelve Sermons On Prayer

III. Why Is Praise So Important?

- A. Only praise puts God in His rightful position in our praying.
In praising, we declare His sovereignty and recognize His nature and power.
- B. Praise, in its very nature, is unselfish.
"Here is one of the greatest values of praise: it decentralizes self. The worship and praise of God demands a shift of center from self to God. One cannot praise God without relinquishing occupation with self. Praise produces forgetfulness of self - and forgetfulness of self is health."

Paul Billheimer Destined For The Throne

Praise is practical. It changes our focus. As a believer recognizes God for all He is, he soon realizes it is this all-powerful God to whom he will be presenting all of his prayer.

- C. Praise opens our prayer time to an outpouring of God's glory. II Chron. 5:13,14 Solomon prevailed much with God in prayer at the dedication of the temple, but it was the voice of praise which brought down the glory that filled the house."

D. L. Moody Prevailing Prayer

- D. Praise causes Satan to withdraw or distance himself.

In Psalm 22:3 we are reminded that God inhabits "the praises" of His people. God manifests His living presence in the praise - saturated chamber of prayer. Adoration is the antidote to the poison of satanic oppression. To develop the "praise life" is to develop a certain immunity to the evil one's attacks.

"Satan is allergic to praise, so where there is massive triumphant praise, Satan is paralyzed, bound, and banished."

IV. Some Scriptural Suggestions For Ministering Unto the Lord Through Praise.

Praise is the act of expressing ones esteem of a person for his virtues or accomplishments. It is to pronounce that person "worthy of honor."

The full meaning of praise can be captured only in its old French origin, "preiser," which means "to prize." To praise is to prize God. The word prize means "to value, esteem, and cherish something." During our time of praise, we cherish and esteem God with our words of adoration."

Prize also means "to estimate the worth of." In "praise" we mentally gather together all the facts we know about God and we put these facts into words. Praise literally becomes "the fruit of our lips" unto God. (Heb. 13:15).

Because praise is to verbalize our esteem for God, it is highly unlikely we will exhaust any potential list of possibilities for praise.

- A. We should praise God for His Name. Ps. 115:1

Many various titles describing God are revealed throughout the Old Testament. The actual "name of the Lord" is not specifically given until the New Testament. His "name" is the Lord Jesus Christ.

It greatly honors God when we take time during prayer to "prize" the name of the Lord Jesus Christ with words of praise. Someone once said, "If you want to get in good with God, just brag on His Son."

An independent personal study should be made on the names of God. We may use expressions from Scripture, such as those used by Isaiah: "And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."(Isaiah 9:6).

- B. We should praise God for His righteousness. Ps 35:28

Righteous means "meeting the standards of what is right and just." God does more than meet certain standards; God is the standard. All that one can imagine concerning God's faithfulness, justice, and mercy may become the theme for these moments of praise.

C. We should praise God for His infinite creation. Ps. 150:2

Because we are challenged to praise God for His "mighty acts," there is no limit to praise. God created countless species of plant and animal life, each serving as an individual basis for praise. The scope of praise ranges from the microscopic to the telescopic - from the particles of the atom to the galaxies of the universe. All of creation is a treasure house of praise.

D. We should praise God for His Word. Ps. 56:10

An example of praising the Word of God is in Psalm 19:7-10.

1. "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul:"
2. "The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple."
3. "The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart:"
4. "The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes."
5. "The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever:"
6. "The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether."

Because God has no limit, our praise is limitless.

Early in prayer take time to recognize all that God is. Express these thoughts audible vocally. It is not possible to be in a hurry to go beyond praise. Adequate time must be taken to adore God with words of worship.

WAITING THE ACT OF SOUL SURRENDER

"If we read the biographies of the great and wise, we shall find they were people of long silences and deep ponderings. Whatever of vision, of power, of genius there was in their work was wrought in silence. And when we turn to the inner circle of the spiritual masters - the men and women, not necessarily gifted or distinguished, to whom God was a living, bright reality which supernaturalized their everyday life and transmuted their homeliest actions into sublime worship - we find that their roots stuck deep into the soil of spiritual silence."

Bridget E Herman Creative Prayer

"Waiting upon God requires our entire being. It is not drifting into daydreaming, but is rather an exercise that demands our keenest attention, our most alert frame of mind, and all of our soul's attention to the Heavenly voice."

John Bisagno The Power of Positive Praying

Ps. 52:9; 62:1; Isaiah 40:31;

Waiting Is A Time Of Silent Love!

"The elevation of the mind to God." An ancient Greek Theologian

"The highest worship of Almighty God consists in being wholly taken up with Him. It is the most intimate form of communion in which the creature adores His Creator, the finite before the Infinite, the powerless before the Powerful, the nothing before the All."

Harold Lindsell When You Pray

"The point of prayer is to get God. Answers are most meaningful when they are thought of least. Prayer is most meaningful when God is thought of most."

Donald E Demarcy Alive To God Through Prayer

Psalm 46:10

All attention must center in God, our Heavenly Father. We come to know the Lord only at this most intimate level. The knowledge of God is best revealed in silent waiting.

Far more important than the answer to our prayer is the focus of our prayer. Waiting on God is especially essential to prayer because it strengthens our knowledge and concept of God. To focus attention entirely upon God places God on the throne of our praying.

"Only a sovereign God can inspire prayer, and only a sovereign God can answer it. A man's concept of God, therefore, determines the depth of his prayer life. Real prayer begins and ends with God enthroned."

Ralph Herring The Cycle of Prayer

Knowing someone intimately is impossible with limited attention. Intimacy takes time and concentration. This is why the earliest moments in our prayer time need a careful silencing of the mind, with all thoughts directed toward the person of God alone.

"A great part of my time is spent in getting my heart in tune for prayer. It is the divine light that connects earth with heaven."

Robert Murray McCheyne

Here is the secret of a life of prayer. Take time in the inner chamber to bow down and worship; and wait on Him until He unveils Himself, and takes possession of you, and goes out with you to show how a man can live and walk in abiding fellowship with an unseen Lord."

Andrew Murrey

"The one fact we forget is that the saints of old were capable of spiritual silence simply because they had not contracted our modern habit of ceaseless talk in their ordinary life. Their days were silence, relieved by periods of conversation, while ours are wildness of talk with a rare oasis of silence."

Bridget E. Herman Creative Praying

Zech. 2:13; Ex. 33:11

Building a friendship relationship takes time. It is no wonder that Moses came down from the mountain with his face shining. He had met God "face to face." He learned much from his forty years in the wilderness.

Oh, to see our Saviour's face!
From sin and sorrow to be freed!

To dwell in His divine embrace -
This will be sweeter far indeed.

The fairest form of earthly bliss
Is less than naught compared with this.

PAUL, MAN OF POWER

Ephesians 6:18

Of all men of all ages, few if any, have excelled the Apostle Paul in the depth and the effectiveness of their prayer lives. He was at his best in his prayers. In no area of life did he set a more noble and stimulating example. We must be grateful for the self-revelation and insight into prayer with which his letters are studied.

J. Oswald Sanders.

Paul saw prayer as flowing naturally from the relationship of fatherhood and sonship that exists between God and His children. Because we are sons, he has sent His Spirit into our hearts, as a result of which we cry with great naturalness, "Abba! Father!" Gal. 4:6 This sense of fatherhood provides a rational basis for prayer, for it is perfectly normal for children to have uninhibited interaction with their father.

Paul knew no circumstances for which prayer was not appropriate. It was his conviction that nothing was beyond the reach of prayer except that which was out of the Will of God.

Paul's prayers did not just happen. A study of the prayers scattered through Paul's letters will show that they were anything but careless and haphazard.

Study your prayers, said Robert Murray McCheyne. *A great part of my time is spent in getting my heart in tune for prayer.*

I. Paul's Prayers Were Full of Christ.

Rom. 1:8, 15:30; I Cor. 1:4-9; Eph. 1:15-23; Phil. 1:3-11; Col. 1:3-22; I Thess. 1:2-3; II Thess. 1:3-12; II Tim. 1:3; Philemon 1:4-6.

II. Paul's Prayers Were Unceasing.

Eph. 1:16; Phil. 1:4; Col. 1:9; Rom. 9:1-3, 10:1.

It is not possible for us to spend all our time with the words of prayer on our lips, but it is possible for us to be all our days in the spirit of prayer, realizing something of His presence with us wherever we may be, and yielding ourselves continually to Him for the doing of His Will. Where there is such an inward state, it will find outward expression in verbal prayer, and in this connection we should notice the frequent ejaculatory prayers throughout Paul's letters. Prayer was so natural and so continual with the great Apostle that it found its way inevitably into his correspondence.

Leon Morris, Heart-Cry for Revival.

III. Paul's Prayers were filled with Thanksgiving. I Thess. 5:18.

A. Widespread knowledge of the faith of the Roman Christians. Rom. 1:8.

- B. The enlarged faith and deepening love of the Thessalonians. II Thess 1:3.
- C. The faith, hope, and love of the Colossian believers. Col. 1:3-5.
- D. God's deliverance of him from *the body of his death*. Rom. 7:24, 25.

IV. Paul's Prayers were Unselfish.

(His prayers for his converts not only evidenced his deep pastoral concern but revealed what he discerned to be their paramount needs.)

- A. For the Philippians - that their love would abound in knowledge. Phil. 1:9-11.
- B. For the Colossians - that they would be filled with the knowledge of His will. Col. 1:9-12.
- C. For the Thessalonians - that they would prove worthy of their calling. II Thess. 1:11-12.
- D. For the Corinthians - that they would be kept clean from sin. II Cor. 13:7.
- E. For the Colossians again - that they would be united in love and encouraged. Col. 2:2. (Paul carried his converts in his heart.)

V. Paul's Prayers were Affectionate and Sincere. Phil. 1:8; Rom. 9:2, 3.

VI. Paul's Prayers were Covetous.

(He craved prayer for himself. He was in no sense self-sufficient. He regarded prayer as a joint operation.)

II Cor. 1:11; Eph. 6:18-20; Col. 4:2-4; II Thess. 3:1, 2; Philemon 22.

VII. Paul's Prayers were Strenuous. (The word here is agonia.) Col. 2:1.

- A. It is used of a laboring man at his daily work. Col. 1:29.
- B. It is used of an athlete competing in the arena. I Cor. 9:25.
- C. It is used of a soldier fighting on the battlefield. I Tim. 6:12.

THE PRIORITIES OF THE GREAT INTERCESSOR

John 9:4

I must - Jesus Christ

Christ did not say, "I hope to," or, "I intend to try to." Rather, He declared forcefully, "**I must.**"

The word must expresses absolute determination to carry out a task. Must, when used as a verb, for example, suggests insistence or a fixed resolve, or in the statements "I must eat" or "I must sleep." And when used as a noun, must pictures an absolute requirement or unavoidable responsibility, such as, "Eating is a must."

There are 83,848 words in the King James text of the Gospels; yet in describing His own purposes, Christ used the imperative must only eight times. These "musts" portray specific priorities in the life of Christ.

I. A Commitment to Suffering Mark 8:31

- A. Christ is saying that all who would become intercessors must recognize the relationship between intercession and suffering.
- B. Committed intercessors are often misunderstood because of their tendency to believe things very deeply and because they often hear from God in matters of serious concerns.
- C. Intercessors are not exempt from physical suffering.
 - 1. I Cor. 12:25-26; Rom. 12:15
 - 2. An intercessor does not inflict himself but rather understands that warfare can leave some battle scars.
 - 3. II Cor. 1:3-6

To be like Christ, I must make a commitment to suffering.

II. A Commitment to Duty. Luke 2:48-49

- A. Christ's first recorded words include a divine absolute.
- B. The "Father's business" was the redemption of humanity.
- C. Intercessors committed to doing the Father's business will keep world evangelization high on their list of personal prayer priorities.

To be like Christ, I must be about the Father's business.

III. A Commitment to Mission. Luke 4:42-43

- A. Christ emphasizes His commitment to the ultimate mission of His life - establishing the Kingdom of God everywhere.
- B. Every church is called to the same commitment - a mission into all the world.
- C. Every believer is commissioned to become involved in the Great Commission.
- D. Everybody everywhere must be evangelized.

- E. In order for a church to go everywhere, every believer must go somewhere.

To be like Christ, I must go somewhere with the Gospel.

IV. A Commitment to Endurance. Luke 13:32-33

- A. When Christ spoke of His being perfected on the third day, He was referring to His encounter on the cross that would take place three days later.
- B. The word "perfected" in Luke 13:32 means to complete or finish a task or assignment, or bring something to a desired end.
- C. Christ was showing us that ultimate victory required a commitment to endurance.

To be like Christ, I must refuse to quit.

V. A Commitment to Relationship. Luke 19:5

- A. This may seem to be a passing remark but it contains another priority for would-be intercessors.
- B. Christ cares about people.
 - 1. One cannot be an intercessor without this quality.
 - 2. The intercessor who touches just one person with the Gospel where he or she lives may be touching an entire generation with the message of Christ.
- C. Christ went straight to the house of Zaccheus.
 - 1. In Christ's encounter with Zaccheus, the tax collector's entire household was affected by Christ's visit. Luke 19:9
 - 2. How much more effective modern-day evangelism would be if we returned to the New Testament pattern of ministry.

To be like Christ, I must care about people.

VI. A Commitment to Sacrifice. John 3:14-15

- A. Christ made this statement in reference to His being lifted on the cross
 - 1. A parallel was made to Moses' day when a plague swept God's people and Moses was instructed to lift up a serpent on a tree.
 - 2. This was a clear picture of the future power of the cross to destroy the serpent's plans.
- B. The cross is a perfect picture of intercession.
 - 1. Christ would soon take up His position as eternal Intercessor.
 - 2. Yet here He was hanging first between heaven and earth as a go-between or mediator.
- C. We stand between a hurting humanity and a loving Father, carrying their concerns to God in prayer.
- D. The cross represents a commitment to sacrifice, a quality vital to intercession. Phil. 3:7-8

To be like Christ, I must pick up my cross daily.

VII. A Commitment to Opportunity. John 9:3, 4

- A. Here is expressed a commitment to opportunity and a sense of divine urgency.
- B. Christ recognized the value of the moment.
- C. He never missed an opportunity to minister.

To be like Christ, I must do something today.

VIII. A Commitment to Finishing the Race. John 10:16

- A. It is a commitment to consummation, consummation being the completion or fulfillment of a plan or goal.
- B. This is the spirit of the intercessor.
- C. We must become partners with Christ, "our eternal Intercessor," in carrying out the completion of His "other sheep" commitment.
- D. We will give, we will go, we will weep, we will work until "every kindred, every tribe, on this terrestrial ball, to Him all Majesty ascribe, and crown Him Lord of all."

To be like Christ, I must finish my assigned task.

PRAYER PRECEPTS

An old Jewish mystic says that
Prayer is the moment when heaven and earth kiss each other.
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright.
Prayer is a correspondence fixed with heaven.

Robert Burns

Prayer is the soul drawing near to God . . .
Whatever form it takes,
It is that solemn moment when the soul in need turns to God.

Hugh McLellan

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Come to the morning prayer,
Come, let us kneel and pray;
Prayer is the Christian's pilgrim staff,
To walk with God all day.

Prayer Hymns of James Montgomery

Prayer was not meant for luxury
Or Selfish pastime sweet;
It is the prostrate creature's place
At his Creator's feet!

Author Unknown

THE NEED OF VISION IN INTERCESSION

Ephesians 1:15-23

Paul understood the importance of vision for believers. In verse 18, he prayed about "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened." He was concerned with the inward eyes being illumined.

Too many followers of Christ accomplish little because they lack vision. Their focus is usually scattered. A singular vision is needed.

"When you reduce the scope of an activity or life, you increase the force of that activity or life."
Jack Hayford

Helps for Developing Clarity of Vision

I. Proverbs 4:23-26 Will Help Determine Direction

- A. Our eyes must focus on those issues closest to the heart of God.
- B. Who specifically has God asked me to pray for today?
- C. What nations or groups will be touched by my time with God today?

II. Job 27:6 Will Help Believe in Victory.

- A. In the midst of his intense suffering, Job held securely to his belief that a sovereign God was working out something far beyond any human capacity to comprehend.
- B. We must become fanatics who say with Job, "I will never give up."
- C. Winston Churchill once was accused of fanaticism.
"I plead guilty," he said.
His definition of fanatic, "Someone who cannot change his mind and will not change the subject."

III. Philippians 3:13-14 Will Help Receive the Prize.

- A. Paul speaks of "the prize" that is set before believers as "the high calling of God."
- B. There is no greater call than that of intercession.
- C. Humility is a vital requirement to receive our prize as intercessors. "I count not myself to have apprehended." Verse 13a
- D. Single mindedness is another requirement of effective intercession. "But this one thing I do." Verse 13b
 1. So many people attempt so many things that they end up accomplishing little.
 2. Maybe we need to pray for an overwhelming conviction from the Holy Spirit about the need for proper focus.
- E. We must learn from our failures but we need to forget as well those things that are behind and reach forward toward those things God has prepared for us.
 1. Some are defeated in their prayer life because of past failures.
 2. When something is confessed to the Lord, leave it there and don't allow Satan to bring it to mind again.

IV. I Corinthians 9:26 Will Help Establish the Goal.

- A. Runners in races cannot look at other runners but keep their eyes focused on the finish line.
 - 1. We must have a clear goal and go straight toward it with purpose in every step.
 - 2. Ephesians 5:16-17

THE FUNCTIONS OF INTERCESSION

Ephesians 5:2

Compassion is at the heart of intercession. Compassion is derived from the two Latin words com and pati; com meaning "with" or "together" and pati meaning "to suffer" or "to hurt." Combined, these expressions describe one who "suffers with" someone in need or "hurts together" with those experiencing pain.

Compassion is more than mere pity. It is love in action. It is a life of involvement in the struggles of others. Christ gave us the fullest expression of active compassion when He went to the cross to remove the suffering brought on mankind through sin. Jesus Christ was not an intercessor just when he prayed. He lived the life of intercession. The Lord Jesus is compassion. When He prayed, it was compassion praying.

I. Intercession is Serving. It is Making Oneself Available.

Mark 10:44-45.

- A. Servanthood is at the very heart of intercession.
- B. The Greek word for "serve" in Mark 10:45 is *doules*, which means "in bondage by choice." It means to subject oneself voluntarily to the ministry of caring.

II. Intercession is Fighting. It is engaging in battle.

- A. It is a feature best portrayed by Christ in His Gethsemane "warfare" experience. Luke 22:39-44.
- B. It is especially noteworthy to study the intensity of the description by Luke the physician. Luke 22:44. The word "agony" used here by Luke comes from the Greek word *agonia*. It refers to a "place of contest" or "a battlefield." It was not uncommon for people to fight to the death in these contests.
- C. Paul uses this fighting theme when he requests the prayers of Roman believers. Romans 15:30. Here, the Greek word for strive is *suragonizomai* - from the root *agonia*.
- D. When we intercede for others, we are engaging in battle on their behalf.

III. Intercession is Identifying.

- A. Both a spirit of serving and a spirit of fighting are linked to the spirit of identification.
 1. To serve is to submit to and to assist others.
 2. To fight on behalf of others is to enter into warfare, deflecting the attacks of Satan.
- B. What does it mean to identify in intercession? It is to become increasingly sensitive to the needs of others, even to the point of denying oneself whatever is necessary to help alleviate those needs.
- C. Intercessors learn to listen "between the lines" wherever they go.

IV. Intercession is Sharing. It is Making Possessions Available.

Matthew 10:8b

- A. One simple assignment of the overall series of commands outlining the basics of the disciples' ministries was, "Freely ye have received, freely give."
- B. God did not practice reserved generosity in the giving of His Son.
- C. True intercessors learn the secret of unhindered giving.

V. Intercession is Ruling. It is Commanding with Authority.

Jeremiah 1:10

Jeremiah was not a king or a political leader. Yet, he was ordained to rule over both "nations" and "kingdoms." It is significant that there are two spheres of authority - nations and kingdoms. Kingdoms here refer to spiritual rulers over the invisible arena, whereas, nations refer to physical leadership over the visible arena. Jeremiah's role as an intercessor is clearly outlined.

- A. To "root out" in prayer is to penetrate so deeply into a spiritual circumstance that we are able to deal directly with the primary source of that condition.
- B. To "pull down" means to remove from a fixed position. It suggests the removal of an object that has been elevated and fixed in a high position. To an intercessor, this could refer to political leaders who have been elevated to power and have become entrenched in that high position.
- C. "To destroy" means to "subdue or to defeat someone or something utterly." The intercessor is entrusted with awesome power, including the capacity to remove the influences of Satan "utterly."
- D. "To throw down" means "to discard or remove something quickly with great force." Jeremiah is commanded to "throw down" that which Satan enthrones.
- E. "To build" means to "give form to something according to a definite plan or process," or "to establish and strengthen." Intercessors must not only remove obstacles through their prayers, but they must help put something in place of what has been removed. Thus, the intercessor not only prays that an evil leader be removed, he must also pray that the right leader will be raised up.
- F. "To plant" means "to put something into a place where it has the capacity to grow." "Planting" intercession is involved with doing, with implementing the answers to our very own prayers.

VI. Intercession is Weeping. It is Brokenness Before God.

Ps. 126:5-6.

- A. Tears are mentioned often in Scripture.
- B. There are tears of sorrow and suffering. II Kings 20:5.
- C. There are tears of joy and compassion. Gen. 33:4; John 11:35.
- D. There are tears of desperation. Esther 4:1, 3.

- E. There are tears of travail. Isaiah 42:14.
- F. There are tears of repentance. Joel 2:12-13.
- G. God treasures the tender-hearted; He gathers the tears of His Own in a bottle. Ps. 56:8.
- H. "Tears are liquid prayer." Charles Spurgeon.

VII. **Intercession is Dying. It is Death to Self.**

Rom. 6:11.

The word translated *reckon* here means "to approach something as if." Dead means "being without feeling." Note significance of the word *indeed* in the text. Indeed means "in reality, in truth or to be sure."

PRAYER PRECEPTS

Ah, dearest Lord! I cannot pray,
My fancy is not free;
Unmannerly distractions come
And force my thoughts from Thee.

My very flesh has restless fits;
My changeful limbs conspire
With all these phantoms of the mind
My inner self to tire.

I cannot pray; yet, Lord! Thou knowest
The pain it is to me
To have my vainly struggling thoughts
Thus torn away from Thee.

Yet, Thou are oft most present, Lord!
In weak distracted prayer;
A sinner out of heart with self
Most often finds Thee there.
My Savior! Why should I complain
And why fear ought but sin?
Distractions are but outward things;
Thy peace dwells far within.

F. W. Faber

SPECIFIC PRAYING IS SCRIPTURAL

I Timothy 2:1-8

I. Bible Examples

- A. Moses.
 - 1. Num. 11:1, 2 - prayed for God not to consume.
 - 2. Num. 14:19 - "Pardon the iniquity of His people."
- B. Samuel.
 - 1. I Sam. 12:23-25 - Praying was important.
 - a. Not praying was sin.
 - b. If failed to pray, they would be consumed in their wickedness.
 - 2. I Sam. 7:3 - Call to repentance, put away.
 - 3. I Sam. 7:5 - "I will pray for you."
- C. Jeremiah.
 - 1. Jerm. 7:13-16 - Major part of ministry of Jeremiah was crying to God on behalf of his people.
 - 2. Jerm. 14:10-13 - Only God could stop Jeremiah from praying for his people.
- D. Hezekiah.
 - 1. II Chron. 30:17, 18 - A gathering in Jerusalem for the passover had not properly cleansed themselves. Impure people practicing external and hypocritical religion.
 - 2. II Chron. 30:18, 19, 20 - King of Judah interceded.
- E. Daniel.
 - 1. Dan. 9:17-19 - Pleaded for forgiveness for himself, the people, the city.
- F. Stephen.
 - 1. Acts 7:60 - Prayed for their forgiveness and salvation.
- G. Paul.
 - 1. Rom. 9:2, 3 - Great heaviness and sorrow.
 - 2. Rom. 10:1 - Prayed for salvation of Israel.
- H. Christ.
 - 1. Matt. 23:37 - Isaiah 53:12
 - 2. Luke 23:34 - Acts 2:41; 4:4

II. Reluctance in Praying for Lost.

Consider I Tim. 2:1-8. Paul presents a case to Timothy. The letter was written from Macedonia to Timothy at Ephesus. I Tim. 1:3. Church at Ephesus was praying incorrectly.

- 1. May not have been praying at all.
 - 2. May not have been convinced that God wanted all people to be saved.
 - 3. May have been praying with soiled hands - sin unconfessed and not righted.
 - 4. May have been praying with dissension in the Church.
- A. Exclusiveness.
 - 1. Ephesus had a Judaizing element - limited salvation to those who kept law. I Tim. 1:7-11

2. Some in Ephesus believed salvation only belonged to an elite who reached a certain degree of knowledge. I Tim. 6:20, 21
3. Others had mystical experiences with angelic beings which Paul addressed as demons. I Tim. 4:1
4. This led to the belief that salvation was not available to all. I Tim. 2:4, 6, 8

PRAYER PRECEPTS

No Time to Pray

No time to pray!
O, who so fraught with early care
As not to give a humble prayer
Some part of day?

No time to pray!
What heart so calm, so pure within,
That needeth not some check from sin,
Needs not to pray?

No time to pray!
'Mid each day's dangers, what retreat
More needful than the mercy sent?
Who need not pray?

No time to pray!
Must care or business' urgent call
So press us as to take it all, Each
passing day?
What thought more dear
Than that our God His face should hide,
And say, through all life's swelling tide,
No time to hear!

Anonymous

WRESTLING IN PRAYER

Gen. 32:24-29

Wrestling: The Greek word speaks of agonize.
Highest level of prayer intensity. Intense prayer burden. Prayer effort so strenuous it becomes an agony. It is a spiritual form of an all-out attack on the strongholds of Satan.

Examples: Jesus in Gethsemane.
Three hours where his sweat became like great drops (Gk - clots) of blood. Luke 22:44
Epaphras - agonized again and again for those he loved of Colosse. Col. 14:12-13.

WRESTLING PRAYER IS SPIRITUAL LABOR

Can be the most difficult work you do!

The highest energy of which the human heart is capable.

Coleridge

Includes labor, effort, and perseverance. Will demand all of one's spiritual experience and spiritual and physical energy plus all of one's mental, emotional and spiritual resources.

Wrestling in prayer has a spiritual importunity that refuses to be denied. Jacob's experience produced a new boldness in him.

The wrestling quality of importunate prayer does not spring from physical vehemence or fleshly energy. It is not an impulse of energy, not a mere earnestness of soul; it is an in-wrought force, a faculty is planted and aroused by the Holy Spirit. Virtually, it is the intercession of the Spirit of God, in us.

E. M. Bounds

Eph. 6:12 - Literal.

WHY IS IT NECESSARY TO WRESTLE?

I. To Help Us Realize Our Dependence Upon God.

II. To Help Us Share Christ's Heart.

Wrestling helps us share His Vision, His hatred of sin, and His holy determination to oust Satan.

III. To Teach Us Spiritual Alertness.

- A. Satan constantly tries to deceive and outwit us.
 - 1. Must beware of his schemes. II Cor. 2:11
 - 2. Tries to sift us like wheat. Luke 22:31
 - 3. Masquerades as an angel of light. II Cor. 11:14
 - 4. Prowls as a roaring lion. I Peter 5:8, 9
- B. A wrestler has to be alert to every move of an opponent - so do we.

IV. To Teach Us Spiritual Passion and Vehemence.

V. To Teach Us the Secret of Triumphant Overcoming.

- A. Learn the deceits of Satan.
- B. Learn the use of spiritual weapons.
- C. Learn the spiritual warfare.
- D. Victory requires skill as well as might.

VI. To Strengthen Our Faith.

- A. Our faith is made purer.
- B. Our faith is made stronger.
- C. Faith must become more than mere confidence in Jesus. It must become a strong shield in battle and a mighty weapon of attack.

VII. To Enable Us to Amass Prayer Resources.

An army has to stockpile weapons, munitions, and reserves before an all-out attack - like a bank reserve or a spiritual treasure.

Example: Daniel prayed, Gabriel fought three weeks. Dan. 10:2-3, 12-13.

Disciples - Mark 9:29.

PRAYER PRECEPTS

Make Time to Pray

"No time to pray!" How sad the thought:
What gross dishonor here is brought
To Jesus Christ, who died to save,
And for us all His life He gave!

"No time to pray," we often hear.
Oh, stop this lie! and persevere;
Make time to pray, and you will know
His presence with you where you go.

"No time to pray; there is so much work."
So we communion this way shirk, And
opportunities go past
For which we must account at last.

O child of God, make time to pray!
And go apart from Him each day!
Thus only you can render Him
A joy which never will grow dim.
Watch and pray, watch and pray, And
cheer some weary heart each day. This
was the blessed Savior's way. He'll
give you wisdom what to say. Watch
and pray, watch and pray,
Go, seek for some who've gone astray.

Margaret Spencer Johnson

STRATEGIC LEVEL PRAYING

I. What is "Strategic-Level" Prayer?

It can be defined as "warfare prayer." Yet it is more.

Strategic That which counts the most. Also, essential to the fulfilling of a plan or objective. Something of greater value.

Level: Speaks of a place or position of a person, object, or concept in relation to another similar person, object, or concept.

Strategic-level prayer is prayer at a higher level, or prayer of a more eternally critical focus.

II. Qualities of Strategic-Level Prayer.

Strategic-level praying might be defined as prayer possessing seven Biblically- based qualities. They include:

- A. First, strategic-level praying is authoritative. Jeremiah 1:10
Authoritative prayer is praying with similar authority as that given Jeremiah.

Root out, pull down, destroy, throw down - then - build and plant.

John 14:13, 14.

- B. Secondly, strategic-level praying is combative.

We are involved in a real war and a real war means combat. Romans 15:30 - "strive together with me" - pictures someone locked in a combat posture. "To define prayer one must use the language of war. Peace language is not equal to the situation. The earth is in a state of war and is being hotly besieged. Thus one must use war talk to grasp the facts with which prayer is concerned." S. D. Gordon.

- C. Third, strategic-level praying is intensive.

James 5:16 speaks of praying that definitely is different than ordinary prayer. "effectual, fervent prayer" suggesting a praying that is divinely energized by the presence of the Holy Spirit manifesting Himself in fervent intensity.

Effectual: Producing effectively

Fervent: Hot, burning, glowing, intensely earnest, ardent

Intense: Fully absorbed in a task or force. Total concentration.

- D. Fourth, strategic-level praying is confrontive.

We need to identify the obstacles. Mark 11:22, 23 "This mountain." Must do homework - research, stay abreast - look at news with discernment - means to pray more intelligently. "Understanding of times."

- E. Fifth, strategic-level praying is comprehensive. Matt. 21:22.
Sensitive to "whatsoever."
Focused in "whatsoever."
Knowledgeable as to "whatsoever" on the heart of God.
- F. Sixth, strategic-level praying is creative. Jeremiah 1:10.
Pulling down, rooting out, destroying a stronghold is not the end or enough. Must build and plant.

Must Creatively Pray Into Place Forces that Follow Victory. Example: Former Soviet Union. Islam is as great and as dangerous. Other isms.

- G. Seventh, strategic-level praying is decisive.
Decisive means "resolute, determined, unmistakable, and unquestionable." It represents that which is conclusive and definitive. Actually a sum of the previous six points. The most basic definition of decisive is "having the power or quality of deciding."

Intercessors recognize that their authority enables them to participate directly in the outcome of the **FINAL BATTLE OF HISTORY = DETHRONE SATAN FROM BEING OVER NATIONS = ENTHRONE CHRIST OVER THE NATIONS.**

Rev. 12:7-12 - Satan banished - will not take place until Rev. 8:3. Seven angels then sound trumpets - last trumpet heralds coming of King, i.e., totality. Rev. 11:15.

Not a time to become weary. Gal. 6:9.

Note a prayer. Psalms 67:1, 2. Awakening - dead Church will not win the world.

1. Hunger for God.
2. Hunger for Souls.

To know Christ and make Him known.

STRATEGIES IN PRAYER WARFARE

INTRODUCTION

Put on the armor God provides. Only that which He provides is adequate for spiritual warfare.

I. The Belt of Truth.

The truth about God - His power, His sovereignty, His presence, His unchangeableness, His total opposition of Satan, His judgment of Satan - this is absolute truth. We can stake our lives on it. We can gird ourselves with truth for instant battle.

II. Breastplate of Righteousness.

The breastplate protected the vital organs extending from neck to thighs. Sometimes called heart protector. Cannot have unguarded vulnerability, only pure in heart - hates evil and can move freely and unencumbered into enemy territory.

III. Army Boots.

In Paul's day, Roman soldiers wore strong leather boots with the soles thickly studded with nails.

Gospel of peace - peace with God - peace with men - gives a sure foundation - one will not slip or slide. Again, it reminds us that a successful fight depends on character.

IV. Shield of Faith.

Saving faith is absolutely essential but this goes beyond. Faith that is used in conquest and spiritual warfare.

Faith for action.

Faith for attacking strongholds of Satan.

Faith for offensive - faith that seizes the promise and wields it like a weapon.

Stand Against Satan. James 4:7.

Greek - oppose. This is a command! You do not defeat Satan by being passive. As much a command as it is to witness, to give, to pray. Phil. 1:28 - Satan is a bluffer, a loud-mouth - cannot go beyond limits God sets - is on a chain.

II Cor. 10:4, 5.

In any situation where Satan dominates and threatens, God looks for a man through whom He may declare war on the enemy. He proposes that through that man Satan be served notice to back up, pack up, and clear out

Arthur Mathews

Satan knows he has been defeated but he bluffs and roars. His hatred of God and of mankind causes him to keep on. In Christ, it is time to stand and not give ground.

Eph. 6:11-14.

V. Helmet of Salvation.

Man's mind is guarded by the assurance of salvation. We have present deliverance from the power of sin. Our head - vitally important in warfare - is protected. Salvation equips us to fight, to pray wisely, courageously, effectively. The protected head can see as God sees - needs, sins - from God's viewpoint.

VI. Sword of the Spirit, WORD OF GOD.

The Word of God is a mighty weapon - defensive and offensive. We must know it and we must use it. We must have it available for the Holy Spirit to bring it to mind in our hour of need. Satan cannot stand against the Word when wielded in the power of the Spirit. Matt. 4:1-10.

THE ROLE OF THE NAME

I. The Name of Jesus Gives Instant Access to God's Throne.

Six times in the New Testament, Jesus instructed to pray in His Name. The authority of that Name unlocks heaven's door. The only right of access is through that Name.

II. The Name Identifies You with Who Jesus Is.

There are said to be 143 names and titles given to Jesus in the Bible. Each name and title is another ray of God's light illuminating, revealing who Jesus is and what He does. Using the name of Jesus identifies you with all that the Scripture reveals of our Lord.

Praying in His Name identifies you as having been redeemed by Christ. His Name empowers your plea with His shed blood.

It identifies with His resurrected Lordship.

It unites our prayer with His prevailing mediation and intercession at the right hand of the Father.

III. The Name of Jesus Sanctifies Your Prayer.

Unworthy prayer cannot penetrate to Christ's intercessory throne. Jesus will never say "amen" to such a prayer. He will never command it to the Father.

IV. The Name Unites With His Will.

You cannot ask in Jesus' Name what is contrary to His Will, what Jesus would ask if He were praying. I John 5:14, 15. Will of God?

Order of Prayer:

- Confession
- Praise
- Thanksgiving
- Intercession
- Petition

How?

- Word of God
- Spirit's Guidance
- Mind of Christ

Secondary:

- Providence
- Conscience
- Common sense
- Counsel of God's people

V. The Name Gives You His Authority.

When you pray in His Name, you come as His representative, you come for His sake. All the authority of heaven backs prayer that is made in Jesus' Name. It is as if He were praying.

VI. The Name Gives Jesus' Endorsement.

Jesus is the Amen of all prayer prayed in the Spirit. He is called the Amen in Rev. 3:14. He says Amen to the Father when we pray in His Name

MILITANT USE OF THE NAME

1. Use the Name to Clear the Spiritual Atmosphere.

Spiritual oppression is real.
It may darken your outlook.
It may cripple your faith.
Heaven may seem closed.
Satan suggestion - Doubt - Fear.

2. Use the Name to Claim Protection.

3. Use the Name to Express Your Longing.

The Holy Spirit, who knows our deepest heart-cry, will interpret it aright.

4. Use the Name to Enforce the Honor of Christ.

Where His Name is being blasphemed
Emotions may be enraged

5. Use the Name in Militant Faith. II Chron. 14:11

Righteous indignation.

6. Use the Name in Holy Determination. Ps. 44:5.

7. Use the Name in the Command of Faith. Acts 3:6; 16:18.

THE MILITANT USE OF THE WORD

A major reason for weak prayer is a neglect of God's Word.

I. God's Word is Basic to a Militant Life of Prayer.

- A. Prayer and the Word are related.
- B. Praying people love God's Word.
- C. Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4.
- D. John 15:7, 8
 - 1. Prayer answers are closely related to remaining.
 - 2. Abiding in the Word is the secret of much fruit.
 - 3. Prayer fruit is what really brings glory to God.
 - 4. Prayer fruit is a proof of genuine discipleship.
- E. Scriptures must be our prayer Book.
- F. Jonathan Goforth: Saturated his soul with the Word.
 - 1. It is appalling how God and souls are defrauded because we know so little of His saving Word.
 - 2. Read the Chinese Bible 35 times.
 - 3. Read the Chinese New Testament 60 times.
 - 4. Read the English Bible 73 times.

II. God's Word Should Initiate Prayer Time.

- A. Devotional reading brings a sense of God's nearness.
- B. Devotional reading helps shut out distractions.
- C. Devotional reading prepares your heart's attitude for prayer. Ps. 27:8. George Mueller testified that often he could not pray as he desired until he focused his heart on a scripture verse or passage.

III. God's Word will Guide Your Militant Prayer.

- A. God's Word reveals His Purposes.
- B. God's Word exposes Satan's methods.
- C. God's Word guides as He has led His people to victory over the centuries.
- D. God's Word will exhort and command specifically - A word behind you saying.
- E. God's Word is our manual of prayer warfare.

IV. God's Word Arms with Faith for Prayer Warfare.

Eph. 6:16. Shield plus a weapon.

- A. Faith arms militant prayer by grasping hold of the purposes of God.
 - 1. All God's purposes are divinely possible.
 - 2. Faith "amens" the purpose of God.
- B. Faith arms militant prayer by focusing on God's Power.

1. Faith believes God's Power.
 2. Faith knows specifics - God is Able.
Eph. 3:20.
- C. Faith arms militant prayer with specific promises.
God has a promise that is exactly appropriate for use in prayer. Whatever the need or the request - there is a promise.

V. God's Word is Our Powerful Prayer Weapon.

Using scripture militantly means we take the initiative. We dare to claim His Promises.
Quote - Insistences and Believing Perseverance.

- A. Use the Word to remind God.
 1. Moses - Num. 14:19. Humbly, reverently hold God to His promise.
- B. Use the Word to silence Satan. Quote the Word of God.
- C. Quote scripture phrases to strengthen your prayer.

VI. God's Word will Refresh and Renew During Battle. Eph. 6:13

DANGERS IN PRAYER WARFARE

Any individual or group that enters into prayer warfare will be opposed by Satan. He is terrified of prayer. Satan takes your prayer warfare very seriously. He does not leave lives, situations, places unless he is driven out. He will attack on every level - physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.

Must Claim Protection:	Body	Accident, disease, weakness
	Mind	Carelessness, indifference, or lack of watchfulness, forgetfulness, distraction.
	Spirit	Passivity, weariness, temptation

Claim Protection:	Through the Word of God
	Through the Blood of Christ
	Through the Name of Jesus
	Through the ministering angels.

I. Danger of Being Engrossed in Your Work.

- A. Most are more comfortable working than praying.
- B. Easier to be absorbed in the demands of daily life.
 - 1. Pressures of ministry
 - 2. Needs of family
 - 3. Restlessness
- 4. Nervousness when unoccupied.
- C. Spend no quality time so become shallow and powerless.
- D. Become victims of the tyranny of our work.
- E. Lack discipline.
- F. Lost sense of true priorities.
- G. Do not put prayer first - must be planned, reserved, seized for God.
- H. We must see it as sin.
- I. Confess it.
- J. Repent.
- L. Seek forgiveness.
- M. Come aside and start over.

II. Danger of Fear. Is. 35:4; 41:10; 41:13; 43:1, 5; 44:8; 54:4.

- A. Satan is limited in authority. Jer. 1, 2; Luke 22:31.
- B. Satan is limited in knowledge. He is not God. He does not know all.
- C. Satan is limited in power. I John 4:4.
- D. Satan is limited in presence. He is not omnipresence - he is not God. He cannot be in all places at the same time - only one place at a time.

III. Danger of Unfocused Prayer.

- A. Indefinite, generalized prayers do not bring definite, specific answers.
- B. Take a definite need, find a specific promise, focus clearly, exactly.

IV. Danger of Unguided Prayer.

Two elements should be before us in intercession and prayer warfare - human need and divine plan.

S. D. Gordon writes, prayer is finding God's purpose and insisting that that should be done here.

We must know the will and mind of God. We cannot expect God to bless that which is not His Will. The Holy Spirit will not cooperate in that which is not God's Will.

Never will man pray as he ought unless the Master guide both his mouth and his heart.
Calvin

The Christian learns that the soft, gentle touch of the Spirit is very sensitive. No liberties can be taken, or the sense of the abiding presence is withdrawn.

Andrew Murray

Paul was sensitive to Spirit when he prayed about ministry. Acts. 16:6, 7.

V. Danger of Wrong Motives.

Self-generated zeal can cause one to pray for personal desires rather than what the Spirit desires.

Subtle motive for success more than failure - rather than glory of God - can be incorrect motive.

Personal desires for children, church, or nation can be wrong. Do we want answered prayer for God's sake - do we want salvation of souls to satisfy us or God. Do we want growth for our own boasting or because it is the Will of God.

VI. Danger of Giving Up Too Soon.

Luke 18:1 - Lack of persistence is a danger. Keep on until God gives assurance of answer.

PRAVING FOR GOVERNMENT LEADERS

I Timothy 2:1, 2

It is difficult for a people to focus on spiritual needs when their nation is at war and its people are suffering greatly. In many countries, restrictive laws hinder the preaching of the Gospel. Corruption, graft, bribery in high places make for hard times also for Christians. I Chron. 12:32 (Men of Issachar were men of understanding of the times). Prov. 28:2; Ezekiel 22:30, 31; II Chron. 16:9; Jerm. 5:1; Isaiah 41:28; 59:16; 63:5; 60:22.

I. Pray that Ungodly and Tyrannical Leaders Will Fall by Receiving Unsound Advice.
Psalms 5:10.

We have every right to pray for the downfall of an ego-mad leader directing a nation away from God and killing thousands of people. We can pray that the snares they have set for others will in turn be used against them.

II. Pray that Unjust Leaders Will Make Mistakes that Will Benefit the Gospel.
Ps. 109:29.

We can pray for their failure in all that they do. We can pray that they will be clothed in disgrace.

III. Pray that Leaders in Troubled Nations Will Grow Weary and Tired of the Continuing Bloodshed in Their Lands.

I Kings 5:3-4; Jerm. 29:7

David could not build the Temple as he did not have the time because of wars.

IV. Pray that Corrupt Leaders Will Recognize Their Evil Ways and Turn to God.

II Chron. 33:11-13.

When Manasseh was carried captive into Babylon, the suffering caused him to humble himself and turn to the Lord.

We can pray that corrupt leaders will encounter circumstances that will draw them to the Lord.

V. Pray that All Leaders Will Realize that God Alone Gave Them Their Positions of Authority.

Dan. 2:20-21, 37; II Chron. 9:8; Rom. 13:1, 2, 4.

We can pray that these men will realize that they must give an account to God - must answer to Him. II Chron. 19:6, 7.

VI. Pray that All Leaders Will Receive a Personal Message of God's Love.

Claim Isaiah 52:15 to become a reality.

VII. Pray that All Godly Leaders Will Receive the Necessary Wisdom to Govern Their Nation. Prov. 28:2.

PRAYER PRECEPTS

The Power of Intercession

Away in foreign fields, they wondered how
Their simplest words had power;
At home some Christians, two or three, had not forgot
To pray an hour.
We are always wondering - wondering how
Because we do not see
Someone - perhaps unknown and far away
On bended knee.

Author Unknown

There is a place where thou canst touch the eyes
Of blinded men to instant, perfect sight; There is
a place where thou canst say, "Arise!" To dying
captives, bound in chains of night; There is a
place where thou canst reach the store Of
hoarded gold and free it for the Lord;
There is a place - upon some distant shore -
Where thou canst send a worker or the Word;
There is a place where heaven's resistless power
Responsive moves to thine insistent plea;
There is a place - a silent, trusting hour, Where God
Himself descends and fights for thee. Where is that
blessed place? Dost thou ask "Where?" Oh soul, it is
the secret place of prayer.

China Inland Mission Leaflet, Author Unknown

PRAYING FOR AUTHORITIES

I Timothy 2:2
(Proverbs 28:2)

I. Pray the Micah Plan. Micah 6:8.

- A. Pray that a particular leader will do justly.
 - 1. This is to pray that that person will govern truthfully, with a spirit of sincerity.
 - 2. The word "just" means ethical, equitable, and fair.
 - 3. We can pray that a leader will be drawn toward that which measures up to these important qualities.
- B. Pray that a leader will love mercy.
 - 1. This means that that person will govern compassionately, with a spirit of generosity.
 - 2. To love mercy is to conduct oneself humanely.
 - 3. We can pray that God will cause leaders to be flooded with a spirit of unselfishness mixed with much loving-kindness toward their subjects.
- C. Pray that a specific leader will walk humbly with God.
 - 1. This means that they will govern modestly, with a sense of sensitivity.
 - 2. A haughty spirit caused Lucifer to fall and a haughty spirit will cause leaders to fall. Prov. 16:18.
 - 3. Our prayer for leaders, then, should include specific intercession against all forms of pride and arrogance that might diminish that leader's effectiveness.

II. Intercede for Areas of Influence.

There are at least eight distinct areas of influence in modern society for which we can find authority figures needing prayer.

- A. The political arena.
 - 1. This area of influence includes elected or appointed officials involved in every aspect of government.
 - 2. Under this category would come presidents, prime ministers, dictators, and all political advisors who might help shape decisions regarding a nation.
- B. The judicial arena.
 - 1. This focus includes those responsible for interpreting and enforcing the laws that govern a land.
 - 2. We should pray for judges, courts, and law enforcement agencies.
 - 3. In some countries, military leaders might come under this category, because they also have responsibility for maintaining law and order.
- C. The spiritual arena.
 - 1. The Bible does command us to pray for all in authority.
 - 2. Pastors, priests, rabbis, mullahs, ayatollahs, gurus, and other religious leaders are to be prayed for.
 - a. We should contend for the salvation of all.
 - b. For those that are saved, we should pray for their growth and integrity.
 - c. Do not forget the tremendous influence that some religious leaders have.

- d. Any disgrace in the religious (regardless of who it is) is used by Satan to produce more skepticism and distrust among the world and the unsaved.
 - e. This does effect the cause of our Lord and does bring reproach on His Name (among blinded minds, etc.).
- D. The educational arena.
 - 1. This area of influence includes teachers at every level, from grade school to graduate school.
 - 2. It is at the earliest level of teaching that children begin to form concepts that will dictate how they will think and live in later years.
 - 3. Parents who believe in the power of prayer ought to maintain a regular prayer list of the teachers instructing their children.
- E. The cultural arena.
 - 1. This vast area of influence includes such categories as the entertainment industry, the arts, and sports.
 - 2. Entertainers attract the attention of millions of people throughout the world and ought to be the focus of intelligent, systematic prayer by committed intercessors.
- F. The commercial arena.
 - 1. Business and the media, which are combined in the commercial category, desperately need concerted intercession.
 - 2. The commercial arena includes influential people in advertising and the media, including television, radio, and newspapers, as well as all who may be involved in leadership positions related to the industrial complex of a nation.
 - 3. Key corporate executives and television news personalities ought to be included on the prayer lists of those intercessors called to concentrate on this arena.
- G. The civic arena.
 - 1. Although closely related to the first arena, there are so many influential leaders serving civic government that a special category is reserved just for them.
 - 2. These leaders do occupy political positions, but because they are not what most consider primary political roles, such as high level government positions, we often neglect to pray for them.
 - 3. They are essential to the health and morality of a community and need continuing prayer.
- H. The social arena.
 - 1. This final category touches all leaders of influence over any kind of group that might not be included under the previous seven.
 - 2. It includes leaders over social groups, clubs, and organizations.
 - 3. Even a family unit, with the head of that household, would come under this classification.

PRAYER AND THE GREAT COMMISSION

HOW TO PRAY EFFECTIVELY

I. Pray Scripturally. I John 5:14

According to Scripture, when we offer a petition in line with God's will, God promises to hear us. Some definite prayer commands in the Word of God are without question.

- A. Pray for workers in the Harvest. Matthew 9:38
 - 1. Be specific.
 - 2. Claim workers for specific countries.
 - 3. Pray on behalf of those workers already in the harvest by Name.
- B. Pray for open Doors in the Harvest. Colossians 4:2 ,3
An abundance of workers would be of little value if no doors were open for their effort.
- C. Pray for Fruit to Remain in the Harvest. II Thessalonians 3:1
It is not just any kind of fruit that glorifies the Lord, but fruit that remains. John 15:16
- D. Pray for the Stronger Base of Support for the Harvest. Psalms 2:8
The promise was originally made by God to His Son; it becomes our promise because we are "joint heirs" with Christ. Romans 8:17. There are hidden implications involved with Psalms 2:6. We can claim in prayer "the uttermost parts of the earth." However, a price must be paid to make it happen. This price is much higher than most believers might expect. We need to pray that more Christians will see the need and become involved in spreading God's Word around the world. It will mean vast improvement and sacrifice by Christians currently unaware of the need. It is expensive to send out Missionaries and workers into the harvest. The responsibility rests on the Lord's churches. "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of who they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Romans 10:14, 15

II. Pray Intelligently. Colossians 4:2

"Watch" implies alertness. Alertness is defined as the ability to anticipate right response to that which is taking place around me. How much awareness do I have concerning world evangelism? Only as I become aware of needs about me, can I pray intelligently for those needs!

Three suggestions will help the intercessor:

- A. Read materials on world evangelism that help you to pray intelligently.
- B. Reflect on news events of the day.
- C. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you pray more intelligently.

III. Pray Patiently. Romans 12:10-12; Psalms 37:7; 40:1; Ecclesiastes 7:8

One of the main reasons why so many prayers go unanswered is because too many focus on answers, rather than on God. Our supreme goal in prayer is to bring God into a situation so He can operate in that situation as He knows best.

We should always remember that God answers prayer in several ways. Someone has wisely said that God answers prayers in four ways:

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Wait
- D. Get to work

IV. Pray Intensely. 2 Chronicles 15:15

We would emphasize praying with "all the heart." Throughout the Psalms, we see a similar focus. Psalms 119:10, 58

James spoke of the power of intense prayer when he mentioned the example of Elijah. James 5:17, 18. Intense is defined as "exceptionally great concentration."

How can you develop an "intense prayer habit?"

- A. Be rested when you pray.
Seek to give your best moments to prayer when you are most rested.
- B. Follow a guide for prayer.
It is very common, after awhile, for your mind to wander and it is very difficult to continue with your attention focused on the needs before you. Interrupt your praying during these dull moments for a time of reflection and worship. If necessary, get up and walk around a few minutes. A "spiritual song" can bring new life into a dull prayer time. Ask God to show you what is necessary to develop concentration in your habit of prayer.

V. Pray Faithfully. Psalms 101:6

All the insights concerning prayer will be of little value if we do not develop the practice of prayer daily. Proverbs 28:20

How can I strengthen my faithfulness in daily prayer?

- A. I must recognize my need for daily prayer.
Until I come to a continual recognition of the importance of prayer, my prayer habit will not be consistent. To be faithful in prayer requires an overwhelming conviction that all spiritual growth is the outflow of a consistent prayer life.
- B. I must recognize the world's need for my prayer.

A person is faithful when he feels he is needed. We are needed by the millions of unevangelized of the world who have yet to receive a single word about a risen Lord and Saviour. Our prayers do make a difference..

- C. I must recognize God's need for my daily prayer.
God is eternally self-sufficient and needs nothing or no one. On the other hand, God created man "in His image," which means we are like God, especially in the qualities of emotion, the ability to reason, and the capacity to know. God is love and desires to be a lover. God also can be jealous and can show wrath. This indicates that God also has feeling. He desires that we would fellowship with Him daily. To realize that God actually longs to be with us should add an entirely new dimension to prayer. We should go to God, not only because we have needs, but because we also wish to bless Him with our fellowship, conversation, and love.

Conclusion:

Have you ever considered giving God a time gift daily? Prayer can be exactly that - a time gift to the Lord! Maybe it would help you to make a written commitment to prayer at a specific time every day.

THE PRAYER HABIT

I. The Prayer Habit Defined.

What is a habit? A habit is an act that is repeated so often it becomes involuntary.

Examples: Ps. 55:17; 5:3. Daniel knew prayer had been outlawed, but he could not break the prayer habit. Dan. 6:10. As he did a foretime.

II. The Prayer Habit Developed.

Prayer is the heart of spiritual growth. II Peter 3:18 - commanded. Eph. 4:15 grow up into Him.

There is not in the world a kind of life more sweet and delightful than that of a continual conversation with God. Those only can comprehend it who practice and experience it.

Devotional prayer only comes about through practice and experience.

It takes 21 consecutive, similar experiences to form a habit. It will take you 21 days to establish the habit.

- A. Establish a time-goal for prayer.
 - 1. Realistic.
 - 2. Specific.
 - 3. Consistent.
- B. Establish a set time for prayer.
 - 1. He who has no set time for prayer does not pray. Andrew Murray
 - 2. Make an appointment with God for prayer. For 21 days strive to meet with God at the same time daily.
- C. Establish a daily affirmation to pray.
 - 1. Restate verbally your prayer commitment each day.
 - 2. Conviction = My most important appointment today is my appointment with God. Must continually remind ourselves - remember the importance of prayer.

III. The Prayer Habit Sustained.

Sustaining commitment is our weak link. Spirit is willing - flesh is weak. Prayer has a cost. Prayer has a price tag. **SELF-DENIAL.** Luke 9:57-62.

How do we keep from turning back - looking back?

- A. Determination. Firmness of purpose - settle something conclusively in the heart. Must wage a determined fight.
- B. Duty. An inward compulsion to meet an obligation. To be faithful in carrying out one's duty is a quality of spiritual loyalty.

1. Prayer is a delight - also responsibility.
 2. Prayer will change the world.
 3. Souls can be saved through prayer.
 4. Doors prayed open.
 5. Strongholds conquered, overcome.
 6. Footholds in tribes - nations - languages.
 7. Keys discovered through prayer.
 8. Men can be called.
 9. Moving of Spirit of God.
 10. Without our prayers millions will never know the love of Christ.
- C. Discipline. *A systematic method designed to obtain obedience. Training that develops self-control.*
1. Discipline is a habit.
 2. Self-control must be maintained.
 3. There must be prayer consistency.

IV. The Prayer Habit Shared.

- A. You have not learned a concept until you transfer them to someone else.
II Tim. 2:1, 2.
- B. Group or corporate prayer.
Matt. 18:19, 20; Acts 4:31.
 - 1.. Enlist others to pray.
 - 2.. Lead others to pray.
Perhaps prayer pact or covenant - same time every day - mutually sharing burdens - covenant to pray daily over them.
 - 3.. Inspire your family to pray.
Meal time - family time.

PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE INTERCESSION

- I.** Praise God for who He is and for the privilege of engaging in the same wonderful ministry as the Lord Jesus. Heb. 7:25. Praise God for the privilege of cooperating with Him in the affairs of men through prayer.
- II.** Make sure your heart is clean before God, by having given the Holy Spirit time to convict, should there be any unconfessed sin. Ps. 66:18; 139:23-24
- III.** Acknowledge you can't really pray without the direction and energy of the Holy Spirit. Rom. 8:26. Ask God to utterly control you by His Spirit, receive by faith that He does, and thank Him. Eph. 5:18
- IV.** Deal aggressively with the enemy. Come against him in the all-powerful Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and with the "sword of the Spirit" - the Word of God. James 4:7
- V.** Die to your own imaginations, desires, and burdens for what you feel you should pray. Prov. 3:5, 6; 28:26; Isaiah 55:8
- VI.** Praise God now in faith for the remarkable prayer meeting you are going to have. He is a remarkable, awesome God and will do something consistent with His character.
- VII.** Wait before God in silent expectancy, listening for His direction. Ps. 62:5; Micah 7:7; Ps. 81:11-13
- VIII.** In obedience and faith, articulate what God brings to your mind, believing. John 10:27. Keep asking God for direction, expecting Him to give it to you. He will. Ps. 32:8. Make sure you do not move to the next subject until you have given God time to discharge all He wants to say regarding this burden; especially when praying in a group. Be encouraged by the lives of Moses, Daniel, Paul and Anna, knowing that God gives revelation to those who make intercession a way of life.
- IX.** If possible, have your Bible with you should God want to give you direction or confirmation from it. Ps. 119:105
- X.** When God ceases to bring things to your mind to pray for, finish by praising and thanking Him for what He has done, reminding yourself of Rom. 11:36, "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever! Amen."
- XI.** A WARNING: God knows the weakness of the human heart towards pride. If we speak of what God has revealed and done in intercession, it may lead to committing this sin. God shares His secrets with those who are able to keep them. There may come a time when He definitely prompts us to share, but unless this happens, we should remain silent. Luke 9:36

FOUR TRUTHS RELATED TO INTERCESSION

I. We must understand our privilege as Intercessors.

Privilege of the highest level. Access before the very throne of God. Partner with Christ in the supreme ministry of reconciling all humanity to God.

II. We must understand our position as Intercessors - not one's physical posture - kneeling, sitting, standing, lying prostrate - seated with Christ. Eph. 2:16

How do we get to this position?

- A. Energized by Christ when we were dead. Eph. 2:4,5
- B. Christ elevates us. "Raised up together."
- C. Enthroned with Christ in intercession. Not observers, but partners. Implying authority - throne room commanders. Isaiah 45:11 Using His authority - name power.

III. We must understand our "Promise" as intercessors. Objective - see His name proclaimed - A people saved and called out by His name. Matt. 6:10; John 14:12.

IV. We must understand our power as Intercessors. Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:19,20; II Cor. 9:8; Eph. 3:20.

HOW TO PRAY FOR SOMEONE HARASSED BY DEMONS

From the book: Demon Possession and the Christian by C. Fred Dickason

1. Pray that the demons may be cut off from all communication and help from other demons and Satan.
2. Pray that the demons would be confused and weakened in their hold on the person.
3. Pray that the person would be strengthened in his faith to understand his position in Christ and to trust and obey God's Word.
4. Pray that the person may be able to distinguish between his thoughts and feelings and those of Satan.
5. Pray that the person might recognize the demonic presence and not be confused, but willingly seek Godly counsel and help.
6. Pray that God would protect and guide His child and set angelic forces at work to break up every scheme of the enemy.

SPIRITUAL WARRIOR'S PRAYER GUIDE

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHILDREN

1. Dedicate them to the Lord. Ps. 127:3; Mark 10:13-16; Matt. 19:13; Luke 2:22
2. Pray for their salvation. Acts 2:39; Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:1; Isaiah 49:25
3. That Jesus Christ be formed in our children. Galatians 4:19
4. That our children, the seed of the righteous, will be delivered from the evil one. Prov. 11:21; Matt. 6:13
5. That our children will be taught of the Lord and their peace will be great. Isaiah 54:13
6. That they will train themselves to discern good from evil and have a good conscience toward God. Heb. 5:14; I Peter 3:21
7. That God's laws will be in their minds and on their hearts. Heb. 8:10; I Chron. 29:19
8. That they will choose companions who are wise, not fools, nor sexually immoral, nor drunkards, nor idolaters, nor slanders, nor swindlers. Prov. 13:20; I Cor. 5:11
9. That they will remain sexually pure and keep themselves only for their spouse, asking God for His grace to keep such a commitment. Eph. 5:3; 31-33
10. That they will honor their parents. Eph. 6:1-3
11. For God's choice and perfect will in a spouse and life partner. Gen. 24:7,40; James 1:17
12. For the calling of God upon their lives. Matt. 9:38
13. That they will not be adversely influenced by peers.

David prayed that Absalom's conspirator might have his counsel turned to foolishness. II Sam. 15:31

Pray for deliverance "from unreasonable and wicked" people and that the Lord would strengthen, stablilish and keep from evil. II Thess. 3:2,3

God may want us to pray for the salvation of some person rather than their removal. Job 42:10

Scriptures to claim: Neh. 4:14; Ps. 102:28; 103:17; Isaiah 54:17; Deut. 7:9; Isaiah 44:3; Prov. 14:26; Isaiah 59:21; Mal. 4:6

EFFECTUAL PRAYER FOR THE SICK AND AFFLICTED

James 5:13-14

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Affliction | Greek word kakopatheia is used which refers to anything that causes distress, generally referring to intense suffering caused by circumstances other than illness. |
| Sick - | Greek word asthenes is used, an expression referring to the weak, feeble, or sick. |

Thus in speaking of interceding for the sick and afflicted, we include those who are bound by physical infirmities, but also those oppressed or afflicted mentally, physically, socially and spiritually.

May we consider an example of the Supreme Intercessor. Luke 4:18-19.

The first example of intercession for the sick is seen in Abraham's confrontation with Abimelech when Abraham was in Gerar (Gen. 20). Abraham lied to Abimelech about Sarah because he feared their lives might be taken so the king could have Sarah. Abimelech took Sarah to his quarters intending to marry her. That night, however, God came to Abimelech in a dream and pronounced a curse on him and his household because he had taken a married woman. Gen. 20:2-18

Abimelech complained bitterly about Abraham's deception (vs. 8-10). He had not touched Sarah and God said he had acted with integrity (vs. 4-6). However, an intercessor was needed, if the curse against Abimelech was to be lifted. God gave instructions which Abimelech followed (vs. 7).

There are many Bible examples of intercession for the sick and afflicted. From them we can develop a strategy of intercession for the sick and afflicted.

I. We Must Seek The Mind of God For Wisdom. Prov. 4:7

Many times it is difficult to determine the will of God in matters regarding physical healing. God is not concerned about "band-aid" solutions that may lead to worse conditions but rather healing that lasts.

- A. Some sick need prayer for discipline for the proper care of their bodies rather than healing for something caused by neglect.
 1. Example: High blood pressure caused by excessive weight.
 2. Example: Uncontrolled diabetes because a person cannot control their diet.
 3. Example: Mother's whose three year old daughter was hit by a car. The doctor said she would probably die and if she lived would be a "vegetable" as long as she lived. The mother prayed that her daughter would be spared regardless. For forty years the mother had the care for her daughter as an infant, changing diapers and never having a day of rest.

4. God does know what is best in these very difficult matters and His wisdom must be sought.
- B. Consider the example of Peter when he was told of the death of Dorcas (Acts 9:39-41).
 1. Before Peter commanded Dorcas to rise from the dead, he prayed (vs. 40a). Could it be he prayed for wisdom?
 2. Peter then exercised authority, but did not ask God to do anything for Dorcas; rather he commanded her to rise (vs. 40b).

II. We Must Determine the Willingness of the Person to be Restored

- A. Some people who suffer do not genuinely want healing.
- B. Some may enjoy the attention their infirmity brings.
- C. Others may secretly reject restoration because such healing might require more responsibility on their part.
- D. We must pray that the person will use their healing wisely. Luke 17:10-19

III. We Must Carefully Examine Ourselves to Uncover Secret Sins or Spiritual Weakness That May Hinder Our Prayers. Is. 59:1,2

- A. James linked the confession of sins with physical healing. James 5:16
- B. We should pray for revelation of secret sins. Ps. 19:12,13; 44:21; 90:8
- C. The sick and afflicted must be exhorted to deal with all unconfessed sin. Ps. 32:5; Prov. 28:13
- D. Healing and forgiveness go hand in hand. Matt. 9:5; 13:15; Acts 3:16; 4:10-12; 28:27
- E. God promised healing to Israel on condition of obedience. Lev. 26; Deut. 28; Ex. 15:26; Ps. 91:9,10; Is. 58:6-12
- F. God may permit Satan to afflict someone to bring them to repentance. Job. 33:27-30; Ps. 38:3-8, 17-18; 103:2-5; Num. 12:9-15
- G. The person that does not have a correct attitude toward the Word of God cannot expect God to heal. II Sam. 12:9-14; Prov. 13:13; Lev. 26:15-16; II Chron. 36:16; John 15:7; Prov. 3:1-8

IV. We Must Learn to Use the Power of God's Word as Our Supreme Weapon When Praying for the Sick or Afflicted. Ps. 107: 19,20

- A. Scripture should be read before praying.
- B. Promises of God should be reviewed.

V. We Must Recognize the Importance of Saturating Our Prayers with Praise and Worship in Interceding For the Sick and Afflicted. II Chron. 20:20-22; Ps. 149:5-8; Acts 16:25,26

VI. We Must Apply Principles of Spiritual Warfare Regarding A Person's Condition When Praying For the Sick and Afflicted.

- A. The intercessor functions from a position of authority. Eph. 2:4-7

- B. It may be necessary to confront the mountain of infirmity in prayer. Mark 11:23
- C. Peter prayed authoritatively at the Gate Beautiful, using the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 3:1-6
- D. Our stand is not defensive; it is offensive. Eph. 6:10-12

**VII. We Must Never Forget That God's Supreme Purpose is to Bring Glory to Himself.
John 9:2,3; Acts 3:7,8; 4:4; II Chron. 6:32,33; II Kings 19:19**

- A. Sickness may be for God's glory.
- B. Death may be for God's glory.

IN THE CONFLICT FOR SOULS

ISAIAH 60:1-5

- I. The Desire of the Lord is to See Every Person on Earth Provided Access to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. II Peter 3:9,15; I Tim. 2:1-4,6**
- II. It is Satan's Plan to Prevent Every Unbeliever From Receiving Access to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. II Tim. 2:25,26; Eph. 2:1,2; II Cor. 4:3,4; Mark 4:14,15**
 - A. An intercessor can prevent the Seed from being snatched away.
 - B. An intercessor can have a part in the germination of the Seed and its taking root.
- III. It is Every Church's Duty to Take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Every Person on Earth. Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:16; 10:9-17; I Cor. 1:23-31; II Cor. 5:14-21; Gal. 6:9; Eph. 1:15-23**
- IV. It is the Intercessor's Responsibility to Hold Back the Unseen Forces of Satanic Darkness Wherever The Gospel of Jesus Christ is Proclaimed. Eph. 6:10,12; II Thess. 3:1,2**

I CAN PRAY

I cannot do all that I'd like
To serve my Lord today,
But I can do the best I can
And I can pray.

I cannot go across the sea
To lands so far away, But I
can tell of Jesus' love And
I can pray.

I cannot preach the Word of God,
But His Word I'll obey
Because I want to serve my Lord,
And I can pray.

Then, though it seems I don't do much
I'm sure my God will say, "Well
done!" if I but love and work And
trust and pray.

Selected

THE CALL

Do you hear the Master saying,
"Serve Me in this special way?"
Are you ready now to listen
And His loving voice obey?

There will many trials meet you; To
you will come both toil and care;
But the Lord Himself will help you;
He will all your burdens share.

There will be reward most precious
Richer far than earthly gain
Through the joy of loving service
You will lighten sin and pain.
Yours may be the highest honor,
Joy that with you angels share,
Knowing souls have found their Saviour
Through your life and by your prayers.

Florence Armstrong

EXPECT SIFTING

Luke 22:31,32

"Satan hath desired to have you." vs. 31b

Desired - hath demanded, to obtain by asking. Job 1:6; 2:1

"That he may sift you as wheat." vs. 31c

Sift - as to thresh grain; it was trodden on by animals and then it was thrown into the air by forks so that the wind could carry away the chaff.

I. Sifting Is Those Difficulties Caused by Satan to Rob Christians of Their Power and Effectiveness for the Lord.

- A. Peter was going to be a threat to the kingdom of Satan.
- B. Intercessors are a threat to Satan.
- C. The believer that is truly "sold out" to the Lord is a threat also to Satan.
- D. Sifting may take various forms.
 - 1. There is the danger of pride and arrogance.
 - 2. Due to success and results, there is the danger of receiving "credit" that belongs to the Lord.
 - 3. Sifting may be through opportunities to sin in ways never experienced.
 - 4. Special attacks may come upon the family.
 - 5. Consider Satan's sifting of Job.
- E. Satan will try every tactic possible to hinder, thwart, and make ineffective our efforts to rescue captives from his evil power and kingdom.

II. "But I Have Prayed For Thee." vs. 32a

- A. The Lord prayed for us. John 17:9,11,15,20
- B. The Lord is praying for us. Rom. 8:34
- C. The Lord will be praying for us. Heb. 7:25,26; 13:8

III. In Times of Sifting, it is Essential to Believe the Facts - Not Feelings.

- A. Faith is the victory. I John 5:4
- B. We are commanded to have faith. Mark 11:22-24
 - 1. Think on Bible examples. Example: II Chron. 32:7,8
 - a. Be strong and courageous. v.7a
 - b. Be not afraid or dismayed. v.7b
 - c. There are more with us. v.7c; II Kings 6:16; Heb. 12:22,23
 - d. With us is Jehovah. v.8b
 - e. He will help us. v.8c
 - f. He will fight our battles. v.8d
- C. Our faith can and must grow. II Thess. 1:3
- D. Only faith can please God. Heb. 11:6
 - 1. Works of faith. Heb. 11:33-38
 - a. Subdued kingdoms. Josh. 12:1

- b. Wrought righteousness. Gen. 15:6
 - c. Obtained promises. Num. 14:30
 - d. Stopped mouths of lions. Dan. 6:20-23
 - e. Quenched fire. Dan. 3:22-29
 - f. Escaped swords. I Sam. 17:45-51
 - g. Were made strong. Heb. 11:11; Rom. 4:19,20,21
 - h. Waxed valiant in fight. II Sam. 23:8-23
 - i. Put armies to flight. I Sam. 17:51
 - j. Women had children resurrected. I Kings 17:17-24; II Kings 4:18-37
 - k. Endured torture. Gen. 39:20; Judges 16:21-31
 - l. Endured mockings, scourgings, bonds and imprisonment. v.36; Gen. 39:20; Jerm. 37:16; 38:6; I Kings 22:27
 - m. Suffered stonings. II Chron. 24:21
 - n. Endured death by sawing. vs. 37
 - o. Suffered temptations. Gen. 39:1-17
 - p. Suffered martyrdom by the sword. I Sam. 22:18; I Kings 19:10
 - q. Suffered wanderings and afflictions. vs. 37,38; II Kings 2:8,13
- E. Faith can be built up. Jude. 20,21
1. There are both positive and negative aspects involved. vs. 20; I Tim 1:4
 2. Pray in the Holy Ghost. vs. 20; Eph. 6:18; Rom. 8:26
 3. Keep yourselves in the love of God. vs. 21; II Tim. 1:14; Rom. 8:35-39
 4. Look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. Vs. 21; Heb. 12:15
- F. Faith can be increased. Luke 17:5
- G. Faith comes through the Word of God. Rom. 10:17
- H. Faith gives boldness, access and confidence. Heb. 10:22; Eph. 3:12; Heb. 4:14-16
- I. The person of faith sees and experiences the glory of God. John 11:40
- J. The Bible describes different kinds of faith.
1. Venturing faith. Matt. 14:28-31
 2. Great faith. Matt. 8:5-10
 3. Unfeigned faith. I Tim. 1:5

IV. "That Thy Faith Fail Not." vs. 32b (Falter Not).

- A. People will betray us.
- B. Solutions will not work out.
- C. Strength will turn to weakness.
- D. It may appear that God has deserted us

CHRIST IS PRAYING FOR US ALL THE TIME AND THROUGHOUT EVERYTHING THAT COMES UPON US..

V. Peter Did Fail. Luke 22:54-62

- A. First of all, Peter did not know himself and trusted in himself. Matt. 26:31-35; Jerm. 49:16; Prov. 16:18; I Cor. 10:12
- B. Peter reacted to the arrest of Christ in the flesh. John 18:10
- C. Peter followed at a distance. Luke 22:54b
- D. Peter denied the Lord three times. Luke 22:56-60

E. Peter cursed while he was denying the Lord. Matt. 26:74

VI. The Lord Knew That Peter Would Fall and Then Be Stronger Afterwards. Luke 22:32b

- A. Peter needed to change his mind about himself ("converted"). vs.33; Matt. 26:33,35
 - 1. Convert - to change or turn.
 - a. In Peter's case, it was to change his mind about himself and his ability to stand in his own strength.
- B. Peter was to learn much from this sorrowful experience. II Cor. 1:3-6 (God never wastes time nor experiences).
- C. Peter was especially prepared for a ministry of edification and strengthening of believers. John 21:15-17

VII. Peter's Fall Was Not Inevitable Under Sifting.

(Peter was the exception and not the norm)

- A. There is a way of escape in every situation, trial, or temptation. I Cor. 10:13
- B. God has provided all the armor we will ever need for standing and withstanding. Eph. 6:11-18
- C. All the hard things, including Satan's sifting, are for our good. Rom. 8:28
 - 1. Satan may intend the sifting for our harm and destruction.
 - 2. God will turn it to good.
 - a. Things will be learned that cannot be learned by any other means.
 - b. Our faith will be strengthened.
 - c. We will be able to help others because of it.
 - d. We will be made more Christ - like.
 - e. We will be better equipped for future battles.

DON'T TAKE US FROM YOUR PRAYER LIST

Don't take us from your prayer list!
We need your prayers today. The
devil's power is greatest When
Christians cease to pray. Prayer
brings us needed courage, And
shields us from the wrong.
It builds a hedge about us,
Invisible and so strong.

Please keep us on your prayer list,
Each time you offer prayer; Thru
it we sense the presence
Of our greatest Burden-Bearer.
Oh, what a blessed privilege
Each Christian can embrace Of
praying for each other
Till we see Him face to face!

NATIONS OF THE WORLD

Afghanistan	Brunei
Albania	Bulgaria
Algeria	Burkina Faso
American Samoa	Burundi
Andorra	Belarus (formerly USSR)
Angola	Cambodia
Anquilla	Cameroon
Antigua and Barbuda	Canada
Argentina	Cape Verde Islands
Armenia (formerly USSR)	Cayman Islands
Aruba	Central African Republic
Australia	Chad
Austria	Chile
Azerbaijan (formerly USSR)	China, Peoples Republic
Bahamas	China, Taiwan
Bahrain	Columbia
Bangladesh	Comoros
Barbados	Cook Islands
Belarus	Costa Rica
Belgium	Croatia (formerly Yugoslavia)
Belize	Cuba
Benin	Cyprus
Bermuda	Czech Republic
Bhutan	Denmark
Bolivia	Djibouti
Bosnia (formerly in Yugoslavia)	Dominica
Botswana	Dominican Republic
Brazil	Ecuador
British Indian Ocean Territory	Egypt
British Virgin Islands	El Salvador

NATIONS OF THE WORLD

Equatorial Guinea	Iceland
Eritrea	India
Estonia (formerly USSR)	Indonesia
Ethiopia	Iran
Faeroe Islands	Iraq
Falkland Islands`	Ireland
Fiji	Israel
Finland	Italy
France	Ivory Coast
French Guiana	Jamaica
French Polynesia	Japan
Gabon	Jordan
Gambia	Kazakhstan (formerly in USSR)
Georgia (formerly in USSR)	Kenya
Germany	Kiribati
Ghana	Korea (North) Democratic Peoples Republic
Great Britain	Korea (South) Republic of
Greece	Kuwait
Greenland	Kyrgyzstan (formerly in USSR)
Grenada	Laos
Guadeloupe	Latvia (formerly USSR)
Guam	Lebanon
Guatemala	Lesotho
Guinea	Liberia
Guinea-Bissau	Libya
Guyana	Liechtenstein
Haiti	Lithuania (formerly in USSR)
Honduras	Luxembourg
Hong Kong	Macao
Hungary	Macedonia (formerly in Yugoslavia)

NATIONS OF THE WORLD

Madagascar	Niger
Malawi	Nigeria
Malaysia	Northern Marianas
Maldives	Norway
Mali	Oman
Malta	Pakistan
Marshall Islands`	Panama
Martinique	Papua New Guinea
Mauritania	Paraguay
Mauritius	Peru
Mayotte	Philippines
Mexico	Pitcairn Islands
Micronesia, Federated States of	Poland
Midway Islands	Portugal
Moldova (formerly in USSR)	Puerto Rico
Monaco	Qatar
Mongolia	Reunion
Montenegro (formerly in Yugoslavia)	Romania
Montserrat	Russia (formerly in USSR)
Morocco	Rwanda
Mozambique	Samoa
Myanmar	San Marino
Namibia	Sao Tome & Principe
Nauru	Saudia Arabia
Nepal	Senegal
Netherlands	Serbia (formerly in Yugoslavia)
Netherlands Antilles	Seychelles
New Caledonia	Sierra Leone
New Zealand	Singapore
Nicaragua	Slovenia (formerly in Yugoslavia)

NATIONS OF THE WORLD

Solomon Islands	United Arab Emirates
Somalia	United States of America
South Africa	Uruguay
Spain	Uzbekistan (formerly in USSR)
Sri Lanka	Virgin Islands of the U.S.
St. Helena & Ascension	Vanuatu
St. Kitts & Nevis	Vatican City State
St. Lucia	Venezuela
St. Pierre & Miquelon	Vietnam
St. Vincent	Wallis & Futuna Islands
Sudan	Yemen
Suriname	Zaire
Swaziland	Zambia
Sweden	Zimbabwe
Switzerland	
Syria	
Tajikistan (formerly in USSR)	
Tanzania	
Thailand	
Togo	
Tokelau Islands	
Tonga	
Trinidad & Tobago	
Tunisia	
Turkey	
Turkmenistan (formerly in USSR)	
Turks & Caicos Islands	
Tuvalu	
Uganda	
Ukraine (formerly in USSR)	

SPIRITUAL WARRIOR'S PRAYER GUIDE

Some prayer warriors find it helpful to pray for the needs of spiritual leaders by targeting specific areas each day of the week.

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Sunday | Favor with God: Spiritual revelation, anointing, holiness. Psalms 90:17 |
| Monday | Favor with man: Congregation, staff, those who don't know Christ. Acts 2:47 |
| Tuesday | Increase vision: Wisdom, enlightenment, motives, guidance. Hab. 2:2 |
| Wednesday | Spirit, soul, body: That we would be complete in every way. I Thess. 5:23 |
| Thursday | Protection: Against temptation, deception, plans of the enemy. Psalms 91 |
| Friday | Finances: Priorities, blessings. Prov. 8:17, 18, 21; Luke 6:38 |
| Saturday | Family: Unity, spiritual life, spouse, children. Acts 16:32; Joshua 24:15; Matt. 6:31-34; Psalms 25:12-15 |

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THE IMPORTANCE OF VISION IN INTERCESSION

Proverbs 29:18

Definitions:

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Vision | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The act or power of seeing with the eye; sense of sight.2. Something supposedly seen by other than normal sight; something perceived in a dream, trance, etc. Or supernaturally revealed.3. A mental image.4. The ability to perceive something not actually visible, as through mental acuteness or keen foresight. Biblically, vision has to do with spiritual enlightenment and insight into divine things. |
| Pioneer | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A member of a military unit that precedes the main body and builds bridges, roads, trenches, etc.2. A person who goes before, preparing the way for others, as, an early settler or a scientist doing original work. |

There is one common thread among all of those in Hebrew 11 - God's Hall of Fame - The Faith Chapter of the Bible - they trusted God more than their circumstances.

How did our forefathers accomplish something so great in the face of such overwhelming opposition? **They Had A Vision.**

"The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see. The act of faith is what distinguished our ancestors, set them above the crowd.

The Message Eugene Peterson

"The most pathetic person in the world is someone who has sight but no vision."

Helen Keller

How did a handful of misfits, uneducated, weak problem ridden men manage to "turn the world up-side down" in less than 40 years after the death, resurrection and ascension of their founder and leader? **They had a VISION.**

"At the time Luke wrote, Christianity was, to use one of his phrases, 'everywhere spoken against' (Acts 28:22). There was widespread suspicion that it was a subversive movement, a menace to imperial law and order. And indeed in the eyes of those who set some store by imperial law and order, Christianity started off with a serious handicap. Its founder had admittedly been condemned to death by a Roman governor on a charge of sedition. And the movement thus inauspiciously inaugurated seemed to be attended by tumult and disorder wherever it spread, both in Roman Provinces and Rome itself."

The Book of Acts F.F. Bruce

WHAT IS VISION?

I. The Ability To See - Awareness.

Heb. 11:24-27 - "For he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible." If anyone had a right to turn back, Moses did.

He gave up position and wealth to defend his people. He was mistrusted and misunderstood. He got a job he did not ask for. In the morning he would be on the verge of being worshipped by the people and in the afternoon they were picking up stones to stone him.

Murmured - against Moses 11 times.

Murmuring - 8 times

Complained - to sigh habitually.

Moses overcame the hazards of commitment because his vision was clearly defined.
(Note the intercession of Moses - Deut. 9:23-29)

"As though He heard them not" (John 8:6)

A principle is described for seeing the unseen.

"Ignore what people say. Block them out. Turn them off. Close your ears. And, if you have to, walk away. Ignore the ones who say it's too late to start over. Disregard those who say you'll never amount to anything. Turn a deaf ear toward those who say that you aren't smart enough, fast enough, tall enough, or big enough - ignore them. Faith sometimes begins by stuffing your ears with cotton. Jesus turns immediately to Jairus and pleads: 'Don't be afraid, just believe.' Jesus compels Jairus to see the unseen, when Jesus says, 'Just believe,' He is imploring, Don't limit your possibilities to the visible. Don't listen only for the audible. Don't be controlled by the logical. Believe there is more to life than meets the eye.' 'Trust me,' Jesus is pleading. 'Don't be afraid; just trust.'

He Still Moves Stones Max Lucado

Note the events in John Chapter 4 leading up to John 4:35.

Paul prayed specifically for "the eyes of their understanding" of the Ephesians to be opened. Eph. 1:18.

In order to learn to see, saturate your mind with Scripture. Ps. 103:7.

The people of Israel got to see what God did, but Moses got to understand why God did it. This is the difference between knowledge and perspective. Knowledge is learning what God has said and done. Perspective is understanding why God said or did it.

Ps. 121:1

The way each day looks to you, all starts with who you are looking to.
“People generally see what they look for and hear what they listen for.”

Harper Lee

II. The Faith To Believe - Attitude.

Rom. 4:18-21

When everything was hopeless, Abraham believed anyway - deciding not to live on the basis of what he saw he couldn't do, but on the basis of what God said He would do. Abraham didn't focus on his own impotence and say, “It's hopeless. This hundred-year-old body could never father a child.” Nor did he survey Sarah's decades of infertility and give up. He didn't tiptoe around God's promise, asking cautiously skeptical questions. He plunged into the promise and come up strong, ready for God, and sure that God would make good on what He had said.

The Message Eugene Peterson

Never tell a person that something cannot be done. God may have been waiting for centuries for somebody ignorant enough of the impossible to do that very thing.

There are many factors in life which we have no control over: background, nationality, age, gifts. These were determined by the sovereignty of God. But there is one important factor that you do have control over: how much you choose to believe God.

“According to you faith, be it unto you.” Matt. 9:29

To grow your faith, study the attributes of God. Once we understand how great and awesome is our God, we will not hesitate to believe great things for God.

Gen. 18:14

Be promise conscious, not problem conscious. Be power conscious - choose to believe there is something the Holy Spirit is ready to do today.

Never tell a person something cannot be done. God may have been waiting for centuries for somebody ignorant enough of the impossible to do that very thing.

“Saying, ‘it is impossible,’ is not an excuse. Today we are doing thousands of things our grandparents knew to be impossible.”

John Maxwell

In sports, world records are only temporary.

Dictionaries usually define conviction as “a fixed or strong belief,” but it is really much more than that. Your convictions include your values, commitments, and motivations.

“A belief is something you will argue about. A conviction is something you will die for.”
Howard Hendricks

III. The Courage To Do - Action. James 1:22-25

“Some people say, ‘God will never ask me to do something I can’t do.’ I have come to the place in my life that, if the assignment I sense God is giving me is something that I know that I can handle, I know it probably is not from God. The kind of assignments God give in the Bible are always God - size. They are always beyond what people can do because He wants to demonstrate His nature, His strength, His provision, and His kindness to His people and to a watching world. That is the only way the world will come to know Him.”

Experiencing God Henry Blackaby

A 12 year study of successful entrepreneurs conducted by Babson College concluded that the entrepreneur’s only common trait was a willingness to launch out, to step out in faith. Once they had started, entrepreneurs learned the lessons they needed to succeed, many of them ending up successful in a completely different business from where they started.

There comes a special moment in everyone’s life, a moment for which that person was born, that special opportunity, when he seizes it, will fulfill his mission, a mission for which he is uniquely qualified. In that moment, he finds greatness. It is his finest hour.”

Winston Churchill

Courage rises when the cause is greater than the circumstances.

Courage falls when the circumstances are greater than the cause.

Our flesh encourages us to live in the comfort zone. God encourages us to live in the courageous zone.

Courage begins with fighting the battles over our own character, self-discipline and will.
“The first and best victory is to conquer self.”

Plato

“All the significant battles are waged within self.”

Sheldon Kopp

The biggest Goliath in our lives is self.

“If you could kick the person responsible for most of your troubles, you would not be able to sit down for a week.” A saying on a plaque.

SEE IT!.....SAY IT!.....SEIZE IT!