



Prayer Works Series Pt. 1

1 Chronicles 16:11 ESV

Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!

- The Late E. M. Bounds once said this about prayer: "Our praying needs to be pressed and pursued with an energy that never tires, a persistency which will not be denied, and a courage that never fails."
- The Late St. Therese of Lisieux said this about prayer: "Prayer is a surge of the heart, it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy."
- The Late baseball legend Satchel Paige said it like this: "Don't pray when it rains if you don't pray when the sun shines."
- As we think about prayer, and as we look at prayer there is something that we should not forget about prayer, and that is prayer is our open communication to the Lord. When we have open communication to the Lord, that is when we have an open conversation, a candid expression, and an honest moment with the Lord about what we face, what we need, and what we deal with.
- However..... When we pray to the Lord, we should examine ourselves and really get to the truth about why we are praying to the Lord! What makes you pray to God, because as you go to the Lord, and as you seek the Lord there should be a reason why you are praying, and the reason that we are should have the right heart, the right spirit, and the right motivation!

- When we are praying to the Lord, our prayers to the Lord should have an attitude of thankfulness, humility, and consecration! When we pray to the Lord there is something about approaching the Lord with a spirit of consecration, and the reason that is the case is because prayer is an intimate experience with the Lord!
- Prayer should be treated as a sacred engagement with the Lord, and when we are praying to the Lord there are times that we need to make sure that we are wanting an intimate relationship with God, and that we desire to have the importance of God in us. Prayer is making us understand the value of what it means to be close to God, prayer makes us realize how important it is to be close to the Lord, because **before we ask God for things we should thank God for Him!**
- When we are praying to the Lord it is a personal encounter with the Lord, and in that encounter with the Lord it should be something that is so valuable and sacred that nothing can interrupt it. The more time we spend with the Lord, the more we understand how valuable it is to have the Lord in our lives, the more time we spend with the Lord, the more we see and understand how much we need the Lord the more it comes out in our thirst for the Lord.
- Prayer is another form of us seeking the Lord, and growing in our relationship with the Lord. Yet... you can't grow in prayer, or even have a prayer life if the Lord is not apart of your life! In order to have strong prayer to the Lord, you and the Lord should have a strong relationship because in any relationship that is strong, it is strong because of time being spent, and because of strong communication.
- When we communicate with the Lord, we are communicating with the Lord because of our relationship with the Lord, and because of that relationship it shows us the power of communication! How strong is your relationship with the Lord, because the way you talk to the Lord shows what kind of relationship with the Lord that you have.
- **If my relationship with God is strong, I shouldn't be afraid to talk to Him!**

- Steven University in Owings Mills, Maryland, came out with an article about effective communication, and in that article they say this about communication:
 1. Communication goes beyond the messages we send - it also includes how we receive messages. If we simply "hear" what individuals tell us, then we miss out on a vast array of messages directed at us. Listening is an active process that involves analysis and processing.
 2. There are key verbal elements that can alert us to an individual's feelings, such as the cadence of their voice, the specific words that they use, and the tonal quality of their voice.
 3. When communication is effective, it leaves all parties involved satisfied and feeling accomplished.
 4. How one communicates can be a make or break factor in securing a job, maintaining a healthy relationship, and healthy self expression.
- When we have real communication with the Lord it is improving us, it is growing us, and it is making us understand that in order to have effective prayer, we ought to have effective communication with the Lord on a daily basis!
- We shouldn't just talk to God when we need something, we shouldn't just talk to God when we need or when we just desire a blessing, but prayer would be better for us if we understood and realized just how much value and how rich we are when we know that we have the Lord.
- The Lord is the reason for our being here, and that is something that we should always have this appreciation for the Lord, and we should always have that thankfulness for the Lord because the Lord has kept us, the Lord has blessed us, and the Lord has allowed us to be righteous and we need to make sure that we are talking to God regularly!
- God never takes breaks from being God, and we shouldn't take breaks from the Lord but we should always make sure that we are seeking the Lord, and when I am seeking the Lord, I acknowledge how much I need the Lord, and I acknowledge how much I want the Lord!

- Prayer is that reality, and prayer is that truth because prayer is one looking at themselves and really having to strip themselves of things, that can get in the way of our prayer time with the Lord. When you follow the Lord, when you seek the Lord, and when you trust in the Lord do you desire more of the Lord, but what are you willing to leave in order to have a stronger prayer life.
- What are you willing to sacrifice in order to spend more time with the Lord in prayer? When we think about sacrifices, and when we think about letting some things go, the reason we are doing that is because we understand that there are things that I have to leave alone, and there are things that I have to stop entertaining so that when I am praying to the Lord I have made a decision that I want my prayer life to be better, I desire my prayer life to be better, and I need my prayer life to be better so some stuff I have to leave alone.
- When it is time for prayer what do you do? Prayer time with the Lord is personal, it is real, and it is important but how do you do it? Where do you go for personal prayer time with the Lord, what do you turn off to pray to the Lord, and do you have set boundaries in order to have that personal time with the Lord?
- Prayer is personal, and there are things that your walk with the Lord should be personal but it is also on you and I to make sure that we are being intentional about praying to the Lord and setting time aside to pray to the Lord. Prayer doesn't have any limits or time zones, and that is something that we have to understand that prayer is about you and the Lord, and because it is about you and the Lord that should make you want meaningful prayer!
- **Your prayer isn't graded on a prayer test!**
- The Lord doesn't care about words, but the Lord does care about the heart and prayer is not about sounding smart but prayer is about sounding thankful! Prayer isn't about being impressive, and prayer isn't about being loud but prayer is about being impactful, and prayer is about giving your all to the Lord.

- Prayer is about us giving our all to the Lord, and not us restricting ourselves but we are giving all of us to the Lord. The power of prayer is us giving our all to the Lord, and that is the importance of relationship with the Lord because God can't lead what God isn't invited to!
- Do you invite the Lord to your life, and does the Lord have enough space in your life or is your life occupied by everything else but the Lord? Does the Lord lead your life, and does your life have enough of the Lord in it and do we really trust in the Lord because when we trust in the Lord, and when we follow the Lord that is when we know that because we are trusting in the Lord it will come through in our prayer life!
- Prayer feeds us, prayer is powerful, and prayer is trusting in the Lord. Prayer is trusting in the Lord, even though there are times that things get tight, things get hectic, and things can get low or even feel low but that is when my trust in the Lord has to step in, and if my trust in the Lord is real than I have to make sure that I am living that way.
- Trust in the Lord is not seasonal but it is permanent! How much do you trust in the Lord, and when you walk with the Lord what prayer does is make us trust in the Lord when battles come, when valleys are around us, when tough times grow, when pain is prevalent, and when storms are always raging it is at that time that you have to decide that you will trust in the Lord.
- Even though times are difficult, do you still trust in the Lord and do you still believe in the Lord? When we look at our lives, and when we look at the things around us we can't stop praying. Prayer is the key to anything in our lives, prayer is what holds you when you face heartbreak, prayer is what keeps you when you take crushing bruises, prayer holds you when you hit walls, and prayer holds you when you are in different ups and downs in life because prayer does live and makes us trust in the Lord.
- When we trust in the Lord that is what we are doing is trusting. Trusting in the Lord is not us saying it, but when we are trusting in the Lord that is us submitting to the will of God, and not just submitting but it is us understanding that we know that God is in control. Do you trust

in the Lord when we you are confused, when you are irritable, when you are feeling low, when you are feeling misery, when you are feeling sad, when you are feeling confused, and sometimes when you are feeling as though it looks like it won't get better that is when my trust in the Lord has to be real, it has to be strong, and it can't be a lie!

- Prayer is speaking what I trust about the Lord, and what is great about prayer is that the Lord knows how I feel and the Lord knows whether or not I am trusting in Him! If I am going to pray to the Lord that will make me trust in the Lord, and when I am trusting in the Lord I know that the Lord will make a way for me, and I know that the Lord will make a way for us all but it comes to do I believe in what I pray?
- Do you believe in what you pray, do you follow what you pray, and do you really know how strong prayer is? Prayer is powerful for us, prayer makes us hold on when we feel lonely, prayer makes us lift up our eyes to the Lord knowing that the Lord is still in control, prayer makes us have faith in God when we know that God is with us, God is keeping us, and God is giving us a peace of mind!
- Prayer is that important for us, and we need to make sure that we keep on praying but when we are praying to the Lord it will make me trust in the Lord, and when I trust in the Lord I know that the Lord won't leave me, I know that the Lord won't forget about me, and I know that the Lord won't walk away from me. Prayer is the shoes that I walk in that let me walk with pride, walk with assurance, and walk with love because I know who I am walking with!
- Prayer is keeping us closer to the Lord, and because we are staying closer to the Lord and following the Lord it makes me and lets me know that because I am praying to the Lord I know that He is with me, I know that He is guiding me, I know that He won't leave me, and I know that He won't turn me down. Prayer is that powerful, and when we pray to the Lord and when we are following the Lord that is when we know that God will take care of us!
- God will take care of us, and God will always be there for us, and we have to know what prayer does for us. Prayer does many great things

for us, prayer makes us encouraged, prayer makes us worship, prayer makes us calm, prayer makes us have peace, prayer makes us have patience, and prayer makes us have composure because when we follow the Lord and when we trust in the Lord we know that just because it is hard right now doesn't mean it won't get better, because prayer makes you hang in there!

- Prayer is that important, and prayer is that powerful because when we know that prayer is real and when we know that prayer is always hope we know that the Lord is going to deliver us. We know that prayer is going to give us a good reminder that we are never alone, and we need to know that we are never alone and we know that with the Lord we have that encouragement and that reminder that we aren't alone because we know that God has His hands on us!
- God is the one that has His hands on us, and God is the one that we do know that we have in our lives. There are things that do leave us, and there are even people that leave us but what is worthy to know is that we have the Lord, we know that the Lord is walking with us, we know that the Lord cares for us, we know that the Lord is here, and it is a great thing to know that we have a present Savior!
- We have a Savior that is real, we have a Savior that is with us when we deal with tribulations, we have a Savior when we deal with the rains of life, when we deal with the bruises of life, and when we deal with the turbulences of life we still know that the Lord is still present, the Lord is still in charge, and the Lord is still here.
- That is the power of knowing that prayer is true and real, that even though it gets tough and even though it gets messy sometimes in life what we do know is that the Lord is still here. If I didn't have the Lord I would have broken down a long time ago, but because of the presence of the Lord I am here and since I am here, it makes me always acknowledge how much the Lord means to me, the Lord will be there, and the Lord will always be my sustainer because I need it to keep on making it!

- Prayer does all of that and prayer will surely give me the confidence in the Lord to keep going. Whatever happens in life make sure that you keep on going, and don't stop but you have to keep on going no matter what it feels like, no matter how trying it gets, and no matter the different ups and downs that you live with make sure that you keep on going and when you keep on going you know it is because the Lord has give you that peace and hope to keep on going!
- We aren't alone, and we know that when we keep on going it is going that we know that life won't stop us, tears won't stop us, valleys won't stop us, afflictions won't stop us, problems won't stop us, fears won't stop us, adversity won't stop us, and crisis won't stop us because we know that the Lord is there with us. The Lord is with us, and that is why we can keep on praying, and that is why we should always keep on praying that is because we know that the Lord will allow us to keep on living and keep on making it because prayer keeps us alive!
- Prayer Is An Intimate Conversation: Psalm 61:1-5 ESV - Hear my cry, O God, listen to my prayer; [2] from the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I, [3] for you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy. [4] Let me dwell in your tent forever! Let me take refuge under the shelter of your wings! Selah [5] For you, O God, have heard my vows; you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name.
- Prayer Acknowledges The Need For God: Psalm 142:1-7 ESV - With my voice I cry out to the LORD; with my voice I plead for mercy to the LORD. [2] I pour out my complaint before him; I tell my trouble before him. [3] When my spirit faints within me, you know my way! In the path where I walk they have hidden a trap for me. [4] Look to the right and see: there is none who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for my soul. [5] I cry to you, O LORD; I say, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living." [6] Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low! Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me! [7] Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to

your name! The righteous will surround me, for you will deal bountifully with me.

- Prayer Loves The Lord: Psalm 116:1-6 ESV - I love the LORD, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy. [2] Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live. [3] The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered distress and anguish. [4] Then I called on the name of the LORD: "O LORD, I pray, deliver my soul!" [5] Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; our God is merciful. [6] The LORD preserves the simple; when I was brought low, he saved me.
- Prayer Waits On God: Exodus 33:12-20 ESV - Moses said to the LORD, "See, you say to me, 'Bring up this people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.'" [13] Now therefore, if I have found favor in your sight, please show me now your ways, that I may know you in order to find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people." [14] And he said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." [15] And he said to him, "If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. [16] For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?" [17] And the LORD said to Moses, "This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name." [18] Moses said, "Please show me your glory." [19] And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The LORD.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. [20] But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live."
- Prayer Is Devoted To The Lord: Isaiah 55:6-8 ESV - "Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; [7] let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he

will abundantly pardon. [8] For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.

- Prayer Trusts In The Lord: Daniel 6:19-23 ESV - Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. [20] As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" [21] Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! [22] My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm." [23] Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

- Author Cindy Jacobs says this: "God wants us to ask Him to do the things that release His will into every part of creation and each part of our everyday lives." "We need to pray with full trust and assurance that God wants to answer prayers that are prayed in alignment with His Word and will for our lives."

- The Late Theologian John R. W. Stott said this: "In prayer we do not "prevail on" God, but rather prevail on ourselves to submit to God. True, the language of "prevailing on God" is often used in regard to prayer, but it is an accommodation to human weakness. Even when Jacob "prevailed on God," what really happened is that God prevailed over him, bringing him to the point of surrender when he was able to receive the blessing which God had all the time been longing to give Him"

- Author Donald S. Whitney said this: "Sometimes a failure to persist in prayer proves that we were not serious about our request in the first place. At other times God wants us to persist in prayer in order to strengthen our faith in Him. Faith would never grow if all prayers were answered immediately. Persistent prayer tends to develop deeper gratitude as well. As the joy of a baby's birth is greater because of the

months of anticipation, so is the joy of an answer to prayer after persistent praying. And as much as a generation that measures time in nanoseconds hates to admit its need for it, God crafts Christlike patience in us when He requires persistence in prayer."

- Madeline R. Vann & Sarah Garone wrote an article titled: "Is Prayer Good For Your Health" and they quote Dr. Crystal Park and she says these are benefits of prayer:
 1. Offer a bigger sense of purpose.
 2. Elevate mood.
 3. Help you cope with difficulties.
 4. Enhance gratitude.
 5. Promote mindfulness.
 6. Promote physical healing and heart health.

- Prayer makes us feel that important, and prayer makes us know that no matter what we face and no matter what we deal with it is still good to know that when we are praying to the Lord, and when we are seeking the Lord we know that prayer will make us feel better!
- Prayer will alleviate some burdens, and when you are praying to the Lord that will make you forget some stuff because you start to feel better when you are praying, because when I am praying to the Lord I am taking my mind off of the things that made me feel uncomfortable, because I know that the Lord will take care of me.
- Prayer will uplift my tough spirit, prayer will make me not lose courage but gain courage, and prayer will let me know that everything is going to be alright because God is there. We have to make sure that we are praying always, and when we pray always we know that something great happens when we pray, something special happens when we pray, and something powerful happens when we pray because it breaks us through and gives us hope!
- Prayer is our battery that will give us life, prayer is our light that will give us light in dark days, dark seasons, and dark moments, prayer is

the lifeline that will keep me calling on the name of the Lord, because prayer always makes us call on the Lord. Prayer will help us through so much, and because we pray that is us knowing that when we follow the Lord, and when we are always in the realm of the Lord we know that we will live and can always live because of our trust in the Lord.

- Prayer Is A Reminder That Peace Will Prevail: Philippians 4:6-7 ESV - Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. [7] And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- Prayer Gives Good Directions: Colossians 4:2-6 ESV - Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. [3] At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison- [4] that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. [5] Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. [6] Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.
- Prayer Makes Us Humble: Ezra 8:21-23 ESV - Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our goods. [22] For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and horsemen to protect us against the enemy on our way, since we had told the king, "The hand of our God is for good on all who seek him, and the power of his wrath is against all who forsake him." [23] So we fasted and implored our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty.
- Prayer is Restoration: 2 Kings 20:1-6 ESV - In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover.'" [2] Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, saying,

[3] "Now, O LORD, please remember how I have walked before you in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly. [4] And before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the LORD came to him: [5] "Turn back, and say to Hezekiah the leader of my people, Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD, [6] and I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake."

- Prayer Has Faith: Luke 11:9-10 ESV - And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. [10] For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.
- Prayer Gives Strength: Mark 11:22-26 ESV - And Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. [23] Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. [24] Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. [25-26] And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."