

THE LAST DAY CLASS

SPRING 2016-MAY 22, 2016-SUNDAY MORNING CLASS

The **BATTLE PLAN for PRAYER**

FROM BASIC TRAINING TO TARGETED STRATEGIES

PART IV: STRATEGIES

8

PRAYING OFFENSIVELY

They go from strength to strength. (Ps. 84:7)

Part of a good prayer strategy is knowing how to pray against evil. We all know, of course, the dangers that lurk within temptation. We're well familiar with the enemy's arrows of fear, anger, lust, and jealousy. But in this section we will focus on going on the offense in a positive way, meaning praying for the advancement of light, love, and truth.

Near the beginning of the model prayer, Jesus taught us to pray for three very important things: "*Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread*" (Matt. 6:10-11 KJV). All good things to pray *for*, not just things to pray *against*. So the Christian life is not merely about staying away from sin. It's also about walking in love with God and others. We're not only praying against the gates of hell but praying for heaven on earth. We want God 's kingdom to expand and His will to be done. And only part of this task involves stopping the enemy and standing firm in the evil day.

Sure, there are times when we need to play defense. But not *all* the time. We need a game plan for offense as well-asking God to open doors for the gospel, to send forth laborers into the harvest field, to pour out His Holy Spirit in revival, to fill us with His love and the knowledge of His will, to use our spiritual gifts in His service, and to raise up a generation who will honor His name. Spiritual warfare is about standing our ground against the enemy and *taking* new ground for the kingdom.

Matthew 5:16 states, "*Let your light shine before men in*

such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Think of your marriage, family, or city, and consider your answers these questions generate . . .

What is the most loving thing I can ask for right now?

What could I pray for that would be overwhelmingly good?

What could greatly advance God's kingdom in my situation?

What could I pray for that would be really glorifying to God?

We find positive prayers and steps for taking ground all through Scripture. In fact, God wants to help us and give us gifts along the way to encourage and assist us. Jesus tells us in Matthew 7:11, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!"

When we love someone, we want nothing but the best for them. John prays this type of prayer in 3 John 2, saying, "*Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.*"

If God is good and is preparing good things for us, then we need to be actively seeking and asking for these things. Praying very loving prayers. We need to cover situations in prayer and ask God to bless, provide, and be glorified as much as possible . . . praying that He would do more than we can ask or imagine. Why? Because His glory is the ultimate goal of all praying.

Not to mention that one of the best defenses is a great offense.

So don't just pray against hardship, but pray for blessings also. Instead of merely praying against a divorce, for instance, ask God to make your marriage a beautiful picture of the gospel of Christ and His love for His bride, and that He will use you to minister to others and advance the kingdom through your loving relationship as husband and wife. Instead of praying that your church leaders won't fight during a business meeting, pray for loving unity and revival to break out, resulting in greater ministry opportunities.

Scripture says in Romans 12:21, "*Do not be overcome by evil,*

but overcome evil with good." The apostle Paul was a great example of this mind-set when praying for his new brothers and sisters in the faith. He wrote in long, uplifting terms in Colossians 1:9-12, "*We have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.*"

Wouldn't you want something prayed over you like that? To be filled with knowledge, wisdom, and an understanding of God's will? To bear much fruit in your life for God's glory?

This is how to pray proactively and go on the offense. Paul gives us more examples in Philippians 1:9-11, saying, "*And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*"

Jesus also prayed lovingly for Himself, His disciples, and future believers in John 17 by praying that God would be glorified through Him and them. Praying that God would save and protect those who believe in Him as the Christ. Praying that they would be filled with joy and come together in unity. Praying that the world would know that God sent Him to save the lost.

So the next time you face a tough situation, or are just spending daily time with the Lord in prayer, remember to pray both defensively and offensively. Stand on the Word of God when under attack, but also ask God specifically for good things to happen in your life and in the lives of those you're praying for. Above all, pray that God would get the glory. So as you plan your prayer times, feel free to ask God to do something really, really

good!

Lord, thank You for giving me prayer to help push back against the darkness. But thank You, too, for enabling me to use prayer as a way of inviting Your blessing, enjoying Your presence, and actively investing lovingly in others' lives. For while Your strength and power amaze me, Lord, Your love amazes me even more . . . because I know what I'm like; I know what I deserve. Yet You continually take care of me and transform me. You keep turning my negatives into positives. You keep giving me opportunities to win. To advance. To conquer. And for this, I praise Your name.

HOMEWORK:

1. Part of your good prayer strategy is knowing how to pray against what? _____
2. We all know, of course, the dangers that lurk [to lie or wait in concealment, as a person in ambush; remain in or around a place secretly; steal, to exist unsuspected] within what?
3. We're well familiar with the enemy's arrows of:
☞ _____,
☞ _____,
☞ _____, and
☞ _____.
4. But in this lesson 8 we will focus on going on the OFFENSE or DEFENSE in a POSITIVE or NEGATIVE way, meaning praying for the advancement of LIGHT or DARKNESS, LOVE or HATE, and TRUTH or LIE.
5. Near the beginning of the model of prayer, Jesus taught us to pray for three very important things:



❖ _____

❖ _____

6. All good things to pray _____, not just things to pray _____.
Let us look at two categories:

☞ 'all good things to pray for'

- Christian life is _____ in love with God and others.
- We, Christians, are praying for _____.
- We, Christians, want God's _____ to expand and His _____ to be done.
- We need a game plan for _____ as well-asking God:
 - to open _____,
 - to send _____,
 - to pour out _____,
 - to fill us _____,
 - to fill us _____,
 - to use _____,
 - and to raise up _____.
- Spiritual warfare is about _____ our new ground for the Kingdom.

☞ 'things to pray against'

- Christian life is _____ from sin.
- We, Christian, only are praying against _____.
- We, Christians—our tasks/jobs involve stopping _____.

- Sure, there are times when we need to play _____ . [But not all the time].
 - Spiritual warfare is about _____ our ground against the enemy.

Matthew 5:16 VOC: "You are like that illuminating light. Let your light shine everywhere you go, that you may illumine creation, so men and women everywhere may see your actions, may see creation at its fullest, may see your devotion to Me, and may turn and praise your Father in heaven because of it." Think of your marriage, family, friends, workers, church people, or deaf community. Using any scripture that fit questions below: try to do your best to answer!

7. What is the most loving thing I can ask for right now?
8. What could I pray for that would be overwhelming good?
9. What could greatly advance God's kingdom in my situation?
10. What could I pray for that would be really glorifying to God?
11. We find POSITIVE or NEGATIVE prayers and steps for STANDING or TAKING ground all through Scripture.
12. In fact, God wants to _____ us and _____ us gifts along the way to _____ and _____ us.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 7:11 TLB: "And if you hard-hearted, sinful men know how to give good gifts to your children, won't your Father in heaven even more certainly give good gifts to those who ask Him for them?"

John penned in 3 John 2 VOC: "My beloved friend, I pray that everything is going well for you and that your body is as healthy as your soul is prosperous."

13. If God is _____ and is preparing _____ things for us, then we need to be _____ seeking and asking for these [good] things.

14. Y N NS: You praying very loving prayers.

15. We need to cover situations in prayer and [we—that's means you and I together] ask God to bless, provide, and be glorified as much as possible...praying that He would do more than we can ask or imagine. Why?

16. TWO CATEROGIES: You either mention:

☞ BEST DEFENSE:

- You pray against _____.
- You pray against a _____.
- You pray that your church leaders _____ during a business meeting.

☞ GREAT OFFENSE

- You pray for _____.
- You ask God to make your marriage _____

- You pray for _____ and _____
_____, resulting in greater ministry opportunities.

PRAY FOR YOUR CHURCH PEOPLE in Colossians 1:9-12 daily.

Father, may they clearly know Your will and achieve the height and depth of spiritual wisdom and understanding. May their lives be a credit to You, Lord; and what's more, may they continue to delight You by doing every good work and growing in the true knowledge that comes from being close to You. Strengthen them with Your infinite power, according to Your glorious might, so that they will have everything they need to hold on and endure hardship patiently

and joyfully. Thank You, Father, as You have made us eligible to receive our portion of the inheritance given to all those set apart by the Light in Jesus' Name. Amen.

17. Y N NS: God the Father disqualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in the Light!

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHURCH PEOPLE in Philippians 1:9-11:

Father, may their love grow more and more in wisdom and insight—so they will be able to examine and determine the best from everything else. And on the day of the Anointed One, the day of His judgment, let them stand pure and blameless, filled with the fruit of righteousness that ripens through Jesus the Anointed in Jesus' Name. Amen.

18. Jesus also prayed lovingly for _____, His _____, and _____ in John 17 by praying that God would be glorified through Him and them.

- ☞ You praying that God would _____ and _____ them who believe in Him as the Christ.
- ☞ You praying that they would be filled with _____ and come together in _____.
- ☞ You praying that the world would know that God sent Him to save the _____.

19. Next time you face a TOUGH situation, or are just spending daily time with the Lord in your prayer:

- ☞ You remember to pray both _____ and _____.
- ☞ You stand on _____ when under attack.
- ☞ You also ask God specifically for _____ things to happen in your life and in the lives of those you're praying for.
- ☞ Above all, you pray that God would get what? _____
- ☞ So as you plan your prayer times, feel free to ask God to do something really, really what? _____