

# Lesson 12

Teacher's Manual

## PRINCIPLES OF PRAYER

READ & MEDITATE ON: Matthew 6:5-18    MEMORIZE: Ephesians 6:18

### INTRODUCTION

Prayer is devout spiritual communion. It is the medium by which humanity links itself with divinity. It is God's means for providing man's needs. It is the voice of man that enters the heart of God. Prayer is eternal. Prayers live long after the lips of those who prayed them are closed in death. They outlive a generation, outlive an age, outlive a world. Prayer is the noblest of all heavenly employments. By it the course of nature has been stopped, miracles have been wrought, and kingdoms subdued. God hearkens to the voice of men. Alfred Lord Tennyson, a man who greatly trusted in the power of prayer, encouraged God's people to pray. For, said he, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of; wherefore, let thy voice rise like a fountain both day and night."

#### I. PRAYER

Prayer has been the one means by which God has set in motion a principle higher than all other laws. Jesus said, "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it," (John 14:14).

##### A. The Privilege

We must know something of the cost of being privileged to pray in order to place it in its rightful position of priority. Until Calvary, only the High Priest was allowed to enter into the Holiest of Holies where the presence of God dwelt. However, by the death of the Savior, the

## C. The Objectives

### 1. A Walk With God

For what shall we pray? Above all, let us pray for a walk with God. Every living eternal-bound soul secretly desires a walk with God. It is the nature of the living soul to desire the maker and lover of that soul. The silent cries are rising up before the throne of God daily for deliverance from the bondage of corruption, to walk with Him on celestial avenues. This is not just another era or dispensation; this is the generation upon whom the ends of the earth are come--and we must of necessity walk with God. Paul told the Philippians that he desired to, "...know Him, and the power of his resurrection..." (Philippians 3:10). We are not just seeking a revelation or a spiritual awakening but salvation that results in a supernatural walk with a supernatural God. God wants to meet with man as much as man desires to meet with God--even more so. Some express that they want God to meet them in a dynamic move of their soul, yet their lives speak so differently. Does one really want the Lord? Is he earnestly seeking to know God when he occupies himself with everything else but God? To love Him and pursue Him with all your being is to ultimately be engaged in a Divine meeting with God. If you never obtain anything else in this world but a walk with God, it is something no one can take from you. It matters not whether you have money, home, or prestige; whether you are loved or hated, persecuted or revered. This does not affect a walk with God. Paul ceased not to pray for the Ephesians that the eyes of their understanding would be enlightened to know God, His plan and His power (Ephesians 1:16-19). Oh, that men everywhere might find the unquenchable joy, the awesome splendor of meeting with the Master and coming to know Him!

### 2. Divine Unction

Unction is that indefinable, indescribable something which pierces into the heart and affections and comes directly from the portals of His glory. It cannot be manufactured by man, but is created from an intense, serious persevering in consistent prayer. Unction does not come from the room of study to the mind, but from the closet to the heart. It impregnates, softens, cuts, and soothes. It is not found in the halls of education. It is the gift of God. It is heaven's knighthood bestowed upon the chosen, the true and steadfast who have sought this anointed honor through many an hour of tearful, agonizing, wrestling prayer.

"...concerning the work of my hands command ye me" (Isaiah 45:11). Think about that remarkable engagement of God to those who pray. He actually places Himself at the command of a praying church! This is a wonderful inspiration to do God's work in God's way--by the way of prayer.

## II. ESSENTIALS OF PRAYER

The basic requirements of prayer are men, the Word, humility, faith and desire. These essentials are pre-requisites to any involvement in prayer.

### A. Man

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

*Luke 18:1*

The office of prayer is to change the character and conduct of men because men are God's primary method to reach the world with the gospel. "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John" (John 1:6). The dispensation that heralded and prepared the way for Christ was bound up in that one man, John the Baptist. God declares, "...the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him" (II Chronicles 16:9). He is declaring the necessity of men and His dependency upon them as a channel through which to glorify His name in the earth. The glory and efficiency of the gospel is staked on men who pray. The apostles gave themselves to prayer (Acts 6:4). The plea of the apostles was to put the church to praying (Romans 15:30). This was the burden of apostolic effort and the keynote of apostolic success. Jesus Christ had striven to do this in the days of His personal ministry. He was moved with infinite compassion at the ripened fields of earth perishing for lack of laborers. Pausing in His own praying, He tried to awaken the dulled sensibilities of His disciples to the duty of prayer when He charged them, "...pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest," (Luke 10:2). This is because God does nothing, but in answer to the prayers of men.

need. Unbelief lies at the root of all poor praying, feeble praying, little praying, unanswered praying. What an era of glorious achievements would dawn for the church and for the world, if only there could be reproduced a race of saints of mighty faith, as those found in Hebrews 11! It is not the intellectually great that the church needs, nor is it men of wealth that the times demand. It is not persons of great social influence that this day requires. Above everything and everybody else, this generation desperately needs men and women of mighty prayer--after the fashion of those in the first century--who "...obtained a good report through faith..." (Hebrews 11:39).

"...What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them."

*Mark 11:24*

#### E. Desire

In the realm of spiritual affairs, desire is of utmost importance to prayer. It is not a mere wish; it is a deep-seated craving, an intense longing for attainment. Desire precedes, accompanies and follows prayer. Prayer is the oral expression of desire. Prayer is expressed; desire is unheard. The deeper the desire, the stronger the prayer. Without desire, prayer is meaningless; with no heart, no feeling. Its exercise is a waste of precious time. The vital basis of prayer is the heart's yearning for what we need. We must feel an urgency to pray. Desire is the will in action; a strong, conscious excitement in the inner nature for the good of mankind. It is specific, demanding and has fire in it. Desire knows the need, feels and sees the thing that will meet it, and hastens to acquire it.

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks,  
so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My  
soul thirsteth for God, for the living God..."

*Psalms 42:1-2*

God wills that we are either hot or cold (Revelation 3:16). Lukewarmness results in rejection by God. Ardent desire and fervency is the wellspring of unceasing prayer. It is the divine fire in the soul, intense, and dross-consuming, that burns its way to the Throne of mercy and gains its plea. It is the burden of a weighty desire that makes one restless. Without desire there is no sense of need, no burden, no vision, no strength, no glow, no holding on to God with a deathless despairing grasp. Godly desire is inflamed to have a clearer, fuller, sweeter and richer revelation of God.

### C. Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is one of the surest methods to get the attention of God. The scripture says, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name" (Psalms 100:4). Petitions should be accompanied with thanksgiving (Philippians 4:6). God's people are promised a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness (Isaiah 61:3). The greater portion of Psalm 150 reveals how one may praise the Lord. I Thessalonians 5:18 says that we should give thanks in everything. Surely this would include prayer.

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice  
of praise to God continually, that is, the  
fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name."  
*Hebrews 13:15*

### D. Supplication

Supplication is a formal request to a superior. When one makes a petition known in prayer, he is asking for a privilege, a right or a benefit to be granted him of the Father. James said, "...ye have not, because ye ask not" (James 4:2). When you humbly present unto God your desire and your need, you are recognizing His superior authority and ability to answer your request. Prayer and supplication brought forth the rushing mighty wind at Pentecost (Acts 1:14). Making supplication for yourself is not necessarily selfishness. "Let your requests be made known unto God..." (Philippians 4:6).

"Ask, and it shall be give you; seek and ye  
shall find; knock, and it shall be opened  
unto you..."

*Matthew 7:7*

## IV. THE MINISTRY OF INTERCESSION

Intercession is that special supplication entwined with perseverance and persistence. It is a request made on behalf of someone else. It is that petitioning that will not take "no" for an answer. If it is God's will and His Word says you can have it, stake your faith on His Word and command that it be done. This is especially effective when praying for a lost one or when a persistent sickness has attached itself to a child of God. Intercession is also praying in the Spirit for known and unknown needs. The Holy Ghost helps us to supernaturally know what we should pray for.

get away with while souls drop into hell all around us? We are in the most critical of all ages. Now is the time for us to move into the spiritual position to receive the latter rain (Hosea 6:3). How glorious, how urgent the ministry of intercession!

There are FIVE QUALITIES OF THE SPIRIT OF AN EFFECTIVE INTERCESSOR which are vital for us to achieve. They are:

A. A Right Spirit

If we would fulfill our commission to go and disciple all nations, we of necessity must have the right spirit. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face..." (Isaiah 59:1-2). You are wasting your time praying if unconfessed sin is prevalent in your life. James 5:16 states, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." The first requirement for prevailing prayer is that we come to the Lord with a spirit made right by the blood of Jesus Christ.

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

*II Chronicles 7:14*

B. A Separated Spirit

The effective intercessor must have a separated spirit--a spirit that is detached from the rest of the world. "And great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities. And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed" (Luke 5:15-16). No matter what you are doing in the church, if it is only a manual function, be careful to give yourself to intercession. Be involved in church work, but not to the extent you cannot separate yourself for seasons of prayer. How detached, how separated we must be in our spirits, so that we do not respond to things that might cause us to be bitter, resentful or angry. We must also be separated from the world, the flesh and the devil.

C. A Focused Spirit

The power of a focused spirit is revealed in Acts 4:29-31. Peter and John had disturbed the authorities and were threatened by them. "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto

when he challenged the prophets of Baal to a contest by fire. After all the prophets of Baal had danced and cut themselves trying to have their god consume their sacrifice, Elijah poured water upon his sacrifice just to make sure they knew how real his God was. He told them if their god was real; serve him, but if not; serve the Lord! He prayed and in just a few moments the fire fell. He prayed again for rain when it had not rained in three and a half years. After praying seven times, Elijah's servant saw a cloud... only a little cloud...but he said, "Let's get out of here, there's going to be a flood!" Now that is boldness. Just give them a hint, a little suggestion and the saint who has a bold spirit will not be afraid to stand on a promise of God.

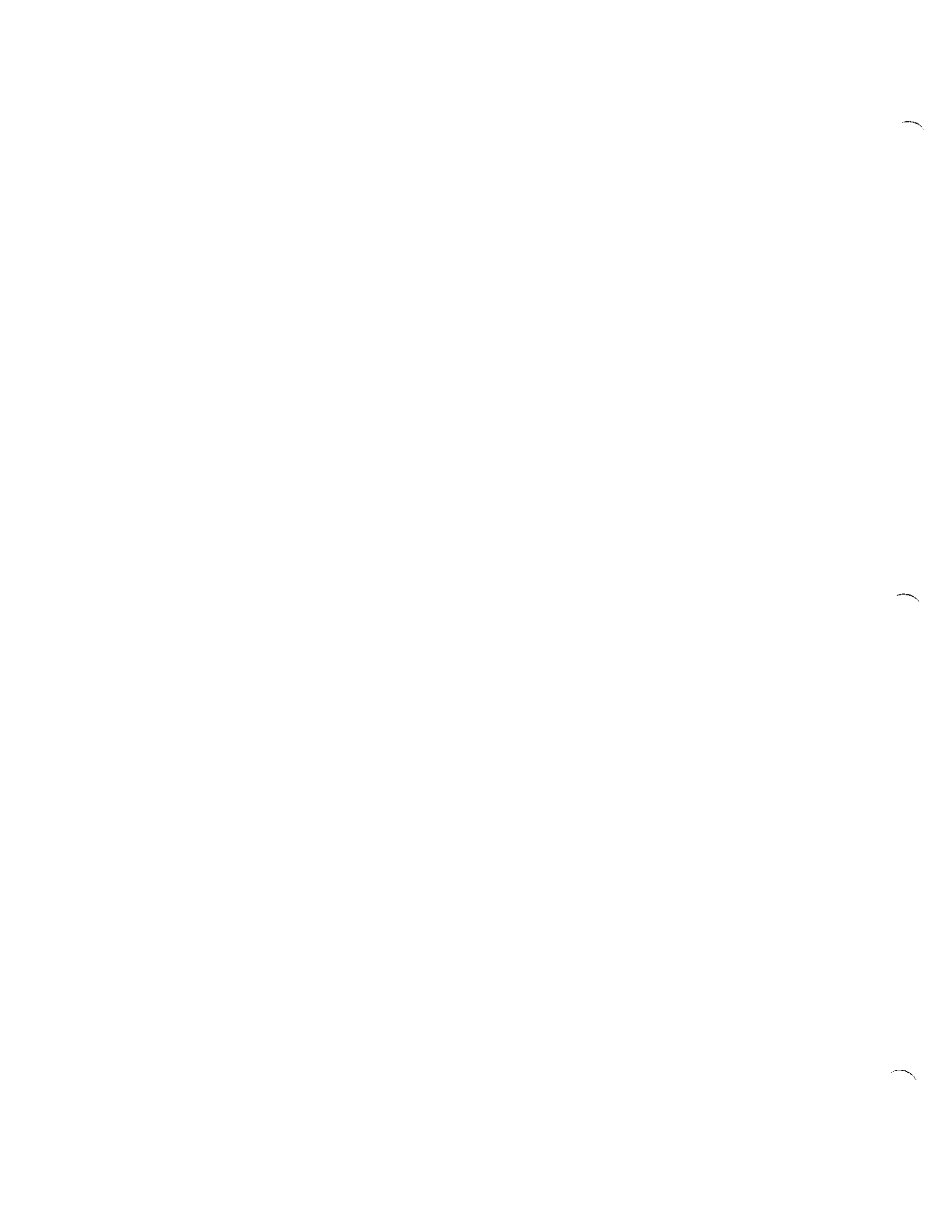
"And this is the confidence (boldness) that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

*I John 5:14-15*

Your spirit must have daring faith. You must come boldly to the throne of grace. Those who pray boldly, fearing not to come face to face with devils, will see results. You must not look at appearances or circumstances, but keep your mind's eye on the Lord God who made the promise.

There is no power like that of the prevailing intercessory prayers of Abraham pleading for Sodom, Jacob wrestling in the stillness of the night, Moses standing in the breach, Hannah intoxicated with sorrow, David heart-broken with remorse and grief, Jesus in sweat of blood. Add to this list from the records of the church your personal observations and experience, and always there is the cost of passion unto blood. Such prayer prevails. It turns ordinary mortals into men of power. It brings fire. It brings rain. It brings life. It brings God.

Holy men in the past who changed the whole course of national affairs, revolutionized character and country, subdued kingdoms, obtained promises and wrought righteousness were all men of incessant prayer. Who prays as Elijah prayed, until all the locked-up forces of nature were unsealed and a famine-stricken land bloomed as the garden of God? (I Kings 18:41-45) Who prays as Jesus Christ prayed? Out upon the mountain when He, "...continued all night in prayer..." (Luke 6:12). Christ often lifted up His voice to God, "...with strong crying and tears..." (Hebrews 5:7). Being in agony Jesus prayed until His sweat became as great drops of blood (Luke 22:44). He is the pattern and model for us all. The Apostle Paul prayed exceedingly night and day for the people and work of God (I Thessalonians 3:10). In his prayers was forged the history of Western civilization. The men of our day who most fully illustrate Christ's character and affect our generation for Him are men who consistently pray. If we are to be successful in our walk with God, we too, must have a regular, meaningful prayer life.





thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word... that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus...And when they had prayed, the place was shaken." God answered because the petition was focused on a specific thing. They said exactly what they wanted, and it pleased the Lord so much that He shook the building as He filled them. They did not pray to be filled again, nor did they pray for God to shake the building--they prayed that His name would be glorified. When you learn to intercede in the will of God and seek first the Kingdom, you will be surprised at how many things will be added to you. A spirit that is focused can pray no matter what the circumstances are. If God lays a burden upon a man's heart to pray for one thing, and (in spite of troubles, problems, harrassment, and distraction) he continues to pray for that one burden, he is a real intercessor.

#### D. An Intense Spirit

The spirit of an effective intercessor is a relentless, aggressive, and intense spirit. In Romans 9:1-3 we find one of the truest examples of intercession in the Bible. "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren..." How could a man love Christ that much? Had he not written of his hunger and yearning after the Lord? Yet, in his intercession, he would be willing to go to hell to spare his brethren, the Jews. He was not seeking to repay them for their kindness. They caused riots, and vowed not to eat until they had assassinated him. Why did he love them? Because God put love in Paul's heart for people. Moses had that same quality. "And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, This people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (Exodus 32:31-32). How can we understand this persistence, this intensity of spirit, this aggressiveness that an intercessor has? We cannot, unless we identify it with Christ. An intercessor is a perpetuation of Gethsemane and the sweating as it were great drops of blood. It is the ministry of Christ coming forth in His love and His compassion: Christ living in them and praying in them. This is the only way we can understand the strong intensity of intercessory prayer.

#### E. A Bold Spirit

Another quality about the human spirit that identifies an effective intercessor is boldness. It is a daring spirit. The intercessor looks at God's promises and believes what God says. When summoned to walk on water as Peter was, the bold intercessor does not hesitate to hop out of the boat. An audacious spirit reaches out and is bold to believe. It may not have much of a promise, but a small one is all it needs. The spirit of Elijah was bold

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

*Romans 8:26-27*

A new era of intercession is of necessity being born. People everywhere are beginning to feel something of a deep undercurrent, and are giving themselves to it. It is the call to go forth into new spiritual dimensions. When Zion (the Church) travails, she shall bring forth sons and they in turn cause her fruitfulness (Isaiah 66:7-8). After the children of God have been weaned from the milk (Isaiah 28:9) and have exercised their faith in prayer, they go on to maturity. They are no longer babes in Christ, but are become prayer warriors. They recognize danger signals, not only in their own lives but in the Body of Christ. Therefore, they continually make mention of God's people day and night (Romans 1:9, I Thessalonians 1:2). Intercession may technically be an individual, specific ministry, but it always goes hand-in-hand with another ministry. Whoever you are, whatever your ministry, you have the ministry of intercession. EVERYONE in the Body of Christ should be deeply involved in intercession. When Peter was imprisoned and facing execution the following day, prayer was made without ceasing by the church. That intercession resulted in a visit to Peter's prison cell by an angel, who awakened him and led him out through the gates, past the guards and on into the streets. After results like this, how can one minimize the affects of the ministry of intercession?

We are not called to sit on a pew, but to perform the duties of His Kingdom: "...to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). The priest of the Old Testament tabernacle daily offered up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's. As the priest was to the salvation of Israel, so are the saints of God a royal priesthood to a lost world (I Peter 2:9). The whole earth is groaning to be delivered from the bondage of corruption (Romans 8:19-22). The true son of God, with God's purpose at heart cannot digest these verses of scripture without it causing him to move into his position to perform the duty of the priesthood: interceding for those with whom he lives, works, and has to do. This generation will be lost, utterly damned, unless we move to redeem it through intercessory prayer. Oh that men worldwide would seek to involve themselves in the work of the heavenlies! Now, Christian, is the hour for us to prove God. What in reality are we doing? Tempting Him to see how far we can go or how much we can

### III. THE KINDS OF PRAYER

The Bible says that we should pray always with all prayer (Ephesians 6:18). This lets us know there is more than one type of prayer with which we can address our Heavenly King. As we examine the pages of God's Word, we indeed come to realize that there are various forms of communication with Him. One way to classify the different kinds of prayer is to use the letters of the New Testament book of Acts (A-C-T-S) as follows: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication.

#### A. Adoration

Adoration is that heartfelt love and admiration for the greatest lover of man's soul. Worship is worthy and befitting, and no less than an act of God when coupled with prayer. To worship is the extreme ultimate of devotion--honoring the character and office of the Lord of lords. To adore Him is to hold Him very dear and precious, to show Him the highest reverence. It is commanded that His subjects worship Him with all of their heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to worship no other God, for the Lord is jealous and His name is Jealous (Exodus 34:14).

"...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

*Matthew 22:37*

#### B. Confession

Confession is that form of prayer that we see when a man acknowledges his sins before God. God will not hear the prayer of a sinner until he repents (Luke 24:47, Acts 2:38). Repentance means a turning away from evil. He is not in a position to ask or receive anything but forgiveness, whose life is marred by sin (Acts 11:18). We repent when we are convicted of a failure, a shortcoming, a misdeed, or attitude opposing the will of God. With Godly sorrow, our failings must be confessed and forsaken if we are to enjoy unbroken fellowship with God. For only if our heart condemns us not can we have confidence toward God (I John 3:21).

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

*I John 1:8-9*

## B. The Word

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

*John 15:7*

Far too many who are called disciples have the attitude that the Word of God is not really essential for them to learn. How then can His words abide in you and you abide in them? Not just the pastor, but all the Spirit-filled saints should feed daily on the scriptures. In the longest chapter of the Bible, Psalm 119, David gives a beautiful explanation of the affects of the Word in his life and his prosperity because of it. His psalm speaks of the magnificent heights to which he was uplifted in the presence and the joy of the Lord (Psalms 119:14-16). Solomon's wisdom as portrayed in I Kings 8 was the direct result of the life of prayer and praise exemplified by his father, David, who hid the Word in his heart. If our lives are filled with the Word of God, prayer will spring forth spontaneously.

## C. Humility

Humility is an indispensable prerequisite for true power. Neither pride nor vanity can pray. Humility springs from a lowly estimate of ourselves and our deservings, realizing our utter human inability without the power and presence of God. There is no self-praise in humility, but rather it prays for the glory of God alone. "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:4).

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

*Isaiah 57:15*

## D. Faith

Before a prayer ever starts toward God, before its requests are made known, faith must have preceded. Prayer must proclaim its belief in the existence of God, and acclaim the gracious truth that God is, "...a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Faith opens the door for prayer to approach the throne of God. Faith is the one ingredient so many disciples

Our devotions are not measured by the clock, but time is of their essence. To hurry through a devotion with God is damaging to an alarming extent. Short devotions deplete spiritual vigor, arrest spiritual progress, sap spiritual foundations, and destroy the root and flower of spiritual life. Spiritual work is taxing and men are loath to do it. Praying, diligent praying, costs us serious time and attention which humanity does not relish. Few persons are made of such substance that they will pay a great sacrifice when surface work will pass. He who would be great for God must be great with God. To have power for God is to have power with God. The shortening of private devotions starves the soul; it grows lean and faint. We need more than, "a little talk with Jesus," if we are to be anointed Christians. We must awaken and learn anew the value of prayer, enter into the school of it, acquire the spirit of it, and press for the Apostolic unction of yesteryear.

### 3. Answered Prayers

Answered prayers make the engagement of prayer a Divine reality. Unutterable and beyond comprehension are the benefits secured by those who pray. Answers are the guarantee one has prayed aright. Supplications answered bring glory and honor to the Name of the Lord Jesus. Desires of the innermost being are met and fulfilled by answered prayer. In direct proportion to the answer received is the degree of faith exercised. Answers reveal, re-arrange, and revolutionize men and purposes. When prayers are answered, it bespeaks the Master's willingness to subject His power to man's level of thinking. Answered prayer heralds the pleasure of the Creator to dwell in and work among His creatures. Answers declare the longing of the Father to give unto those who will ask of Him. Too many who profess salvation want instant answers to instant prayers. We live in the age of instant imitations. Gone are the days when saints labored in prayer in one accord over a situation or sickness until the hordes of evil are dispelled and the victim rises victorious.

Prayer affects three different spheres of existence: the Divine, the angelic and the human. It puts God to work, it puts angels to work, and it puts men to work. It reaches into the realms of the unseen. It brings down the forces of heaven to earth. God has placed Himself subject to prayer to such extent that He commits Himself to work among men in a way in which He does not work if men do not pray. The work of God stays or advances as prayer puts forth its strength. Prophets and apostles have urged the utility, force and necessity of prayer. The Lord Himself says,

veil of separation was rent and the ark of the covenant was made accessible to as many as believe on His name (John 1:12). Now Jesus is become our High Priest, and we are of the Holy Priesthood who come into the presence of the King. Woe unto that individual who esteems lightly the privilege to come into such a holy, hallowed place as the place of prayer, unto Him who is the King of kings and Lord of lords. Such splendor, such grandeur, such majesty is unspeakable glory. Let us not take for granted the privilege of having an audience with the Lord God Almighty. What a privilege we have to be able to ask and receive of Him! (John 16:23-24).

#### B. The Necessity

Jesus was always a busy man, but never too busy to pray. Divine business filled His heart and hands, consumed His time, and exhausted His nerves. However, saving people from sin and suffering must not be substituted for praying. There should be no lessening of the time or intensity of these holiest of seasons. Jesus filled the day with working and employed the night with praying. The day working made the night praying a necessity. The night praying sanctified and made successful the working of the day. "Too busy to pray," gives salvation a Christian burial. The more we pray the better the world will be, the mightier the force against evil everywhere. In every ministry prayer has always been a serious business. Talking to men about God is a great thing, but talking to God about men is greater still. He who has not first learned how to talk to God for men will never talk well to men for God. One who would see the need for prayer must look to his Master:

"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."

*Mark 1:35*

Samuel of old, in his address to Israel at a critical time of war, said, "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you..." (I Samuel 12:23). Why would it be a sin? Because he understood the nature and necessity of prayer, and his position was to stand in the gap for God's chosen people. In the writings of Samuel, we find he was very careful that he prayed. This resulted in mighty men of prayer coming forth under his ministry. Samuel did something for his country. He loosed a nation. He was completely absorbed with the duty and value of prayer. Prayer is not an optional thing, it is an obligation. There is no other method that God has committed Himself to, to loose His wisdom and power among men, but prayer.