

Renovate Conference November 2013

Biblical Prayer

**“How Leaders can pray
for Their Congregations”**

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PRAYING THE PRAYERS OF THE BIBLE

INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER:

God is willing and able:

God is fully willing to draw near to us. He desires to care, protect, feed, and lead us. He is known as the Lord our provider. But more importantly He desires an intimate relationship with us...

James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

1 Chron. 16:11 Seek the Lord and His strength; Seek His face continually.

Psalm 27:8 When You said, "Seek My face," my heart said to You, "Your face, O Lord, I shall seek."

Hosea 5:15 I will go away and return to My place Until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.

Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.

God hears, sees and acts:

1 John 5:15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

God does not always answer us according to the imagination of our request, but according to His purposes and His glory and our good .

Genesis 16:13 Then she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, "You are a God who sees"; for she said, "Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?"

Hagar – ran away from Sarai...I know you are the God who sees. The implication is that He acts...

Isaiah 65:24 It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear

Prayer is the basis of an intimate relationship with Christ...

PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT:

Jude 3,20-21 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints... But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

1. All prayer is on the basis of sound doctrine. We cannot pray the promises of God if we don't know them. We can't pray the will of God unless we know the God of the Word. Vs. 3

2. "Praying in the Holy Spirit"

When we pray in the Spirit, the Spirit makes intercession for us. The Spirit in our spirit prays.

Romans 8:26 In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;

Ephesians 5:18-19 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord

Ephesians 6:18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit...

3. Sometimes we just don't know what to pray...The Holy Spirit will guide us and lead us. We must pray with a view to understanding God's will and ways. Our goal is to find God, love Him and glorify Him in all that we are. Praying unites us with Him.

PRAYING IN AND FOR THE CHURCH:

**Acts 1:14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.*

[Who prays?] ALL

Historically, this was the first prayer meeting of the church. The church was born in prayer and is sustained in prayer.

**Acts 4:42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

Simplicity of the worship of the early church: Teaching of Doctrine, fellowship around the Word, the breaking of bread, intercession...

**Acts 4:13 Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.*

The basis of power in the church and in ministry is governed chiefly and almost solely on the intimacy of our relationship with Christ. This relationship is fostered by our being with HIM. It should always be our first resort, not our last resort only.

**Acts 4:29 And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence*

Prayer for boldness and confidence in the face of opposition to the Work of the Lord.

**Acts 6:4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word.*

Prayer is even seen as paramount over the preaching of the Word. It is the first thing. What any worker of the Lord has to offer comes from that worker's intimate relationship with the Lord.

**Acts 7:59-60 They went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" Having said this, he fell asleep.*

This prayer is a model of what Jesus would pray...Our prayers can be a source of mercy, forgiveness and salvation to others. It was once said that it is good to speak to people about God, but it is even more important to speak to God about people. Our prayers offered on behalf of others are a fragrant aroma to Christ.

**Acts 9:11 And the Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying,*

When Ananias was sent to Paul, the distinguishing mark of His belief was prayer. The truest mark of a Christian's walk is the prayer life. One of the most effective ways to pray for the Church is to pray for the prayer life of the saints.

**Acts 10:4-5,9 Cornelius... "Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God. 5 Now dispatch some men to Joppa and send for a man named Simon, who is also called Peter... On the next day, as they were on their way and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray.*

Because of the universality of prayer, true prayer to the Father, One prays and another can get the answer. The fountainhead of all prayer is the approach of the Father through Jesus Christ. We are related in birth-right, salvation, eternity and presently, prayer.

**Acts 12:5 So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God*

Prayer watchers pray without ceasing for the church until their prayers are answered. [Humorously, the answer to their prayers interrupted the prayer meeting.]

**Acts 13:2-3 While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.*

It is a wise practice to invoke divine blessing upon all work and workers in service. It is to be noted that the direction of God's plan came out of the group fasting and praying. Prayer before, prayer during, and prayer after. The covering of prayer must always be over the church.

**Acts 16:25 But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them*

Prayer is always opportune. It will affect us, our situation, and invariably the situation of those around us.

**Acts 20:36 When he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.*

The committal of all things in prayer, even separation and hardship. We know the one who keeps us, whether we are together or apart. It is always wise to pray for those whom the Lord is directing to a different place, position or plan. Always willingly and with prayer's blessing release others to follow the Lord's direction.

**Acts 13:3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.*

**Acts 14:23 When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.*

Even more so than prayer, fasting has become a lost discipline in the church. It is a vital part in beckoning revival and intimacy with the Lord. We need the discipline of fasting in our spiritual repertoire.

**Romans 1:9 For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you...*

Spiritual giants pray for their congregations. Paul thinks it is so important, that he even let them know he was praying for them. Notice again, prayer and preaching are found as partners. Prayer not just for inspiration and unction, but for changed lives and fruit.

**Romans 15:5-6 Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Unity in the church is an prerequisite to glorifying the Father. Paul prayed that the church would be of the same mind, united in spirit. We can never pray too much for unity, perseverance and encouragement.

**2 Corinthians 1:2-4 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*

When a wonderful pattern to emulate, praying prays of benediction over the sheep and the congregation. The shepherd prays for comfort from affliction that the saints will experience and also that the saints would be comforters to others, themselves.

**Ephesians 1:16-17 do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him*

Prayer for the church to have a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.

**Ephesians 3:14-19 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God*

Prayer is offered up for the church that each would be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, and that for all who believe, they would come into a real depth of intimate relationship to the point of being filled to all the fullness of God.

**Ephesians 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.*

Prayer is a pre-requisite, it is to be watchful and persevering and on behalf of all the saints.

**Philippians 1:2-4 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all...*

As shepherds, we must offer up prayer in thanksgiving for all the sheep, and find joy in our every remembrance of them.

**Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Just as important as prayer is, instruction and encouragement in prayer is also important. We set the model of prayer, and then we encourage and teach others the efficacy of prayer.

**Colossians 1:3-4, 6 We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints... just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it...*

We also give thanks in prayer for the fruit that we see in the saints, as they are receiving and acting on the word of truth. We commend them to God for their love of the church. It is especially encouraging that the saints know of our thanksgiving for them and the fruit that we see.

**Colossians 1:9-12 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, 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...*

Prayer of blessings for the church: 1. To be filled with the knowledge of His will. 2. Prayer for spiritual wisdom and understanding. 3. Prayer for a walk worthy of the Lord. 4. Prayer to be pleasing to the Lord in all. 5. Prayer for the bearing fruit for every good work. 6. Prayer to be strengthened with all power. 7. Prayer for steadfastness. 8. Prayer for patience. 9. Prayer for joy. 10. Prayer for the giving of thanks.

**Colossians 4:2-3 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ*

We encourage the saints to pray, be alert, have an attitude of thanksgiving and to have a stake in the work of the ministry, praying for opportunity and unction.

**1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers; constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father*

We need spiritual eyes so we can recognize the fruit of Faith, love and hope in the lives of the sheep. Not only do we instruct, but we inspect, encourage and protect in prayer.

**1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.*

The work is not complete until each saint is with the Lord. Paul teaches us to pray for the entire sanctification of the saints. Our work is to present all believers complete in Christ. It is not enough to prayer the lost into the Kingdom, we must prayer for the believer until the fulfillment of the Kingdom.

**2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Prayer is to be offered up for the fulfillment of the purposes of God in each believer. Prayer is also to be offered up that the desire for goodness and the work of faith would be fulfilled in each believer and that the Lord would be glorified in their lives.

**2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.*

Praying that the saints would be comforted and strengthened in every good work and word by the very love of Christ and the Father.

**2 Timothy 1:3,5, I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day...For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you...*

Paul continually gives us examples of his constant prayers and his surveillance of those in his care and ministry. He is often thankful for their faith, their ministry and his relationships with them.

**Hebrews 4:16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Again, found in the New Testament, is the exhortation to prayer. It is the life-blood of every believer's walk. We are told that apart from abiding, we can not bear fruit. Pray that others would understand the significance of prayer and that it would become a vital part of every believers walk.

**Hebrews 13:20-21 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen*

This is a prayer for help for each believer to perform every good work by the power that God supplies. We pray for the help that each believer needs for each day.

James 1:5,17 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him... Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

Teaching the saints to pray for wisdom and also praying to the Father that He would bestow gifts on His saints.

**1 Peter 4:7 The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.*

Our prayers should be watchful. We should be about the purpose of prayer in all things. Our judgment should be with eternal purposes in mind. We must be models of such prayer for the church. We should ever be on the lookout for motives and occasions to pray.

**1 Peter 5:10-11 After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

We should take responsibility for each other not only to encourage but to supplicate and intercede that we would be perfected, confirmed, strengthened and established.