

The Prayer Life of a Christian 2

This is your Friend and Minister, Dr. Joshua Uhiara, bringing you healing word from the Master, a program of the Master's Vessel Ministry which lets you know that Jesus loves you as you are, but loves you so much that He will not leave you as you are.

Friend, we are back to continue from where we stopped last time, The Prayer Life of a Christian. And we read from Acts 9:10-16

¹⁰ Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias."

And he said, "Here I am, Lord."

¹¹ So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying."

Let me pause to ask, do you know that God knows your address, friend? He does.

¹² And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight."

¹³ Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name."

¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. ¹⁶ For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

Before we pray, let me call your attention to what is happening here between the Lord Jesus and His servant Ananias. Ananias said to Jesus, I have heard so many things from many about this man, so many bad things, so many evil things.

Do you know that what you hear from people is not as important as what you hear from the Lord? Because the message or the information from men and women...that's information that is dated. Ananias was still working with an old information; but the Lord was current – for the man he thought was so evil is now a new person. Always listen to the Lord, not relying on what men and women say.

PRAYER:

Father, we've come again, as we search Your Word, that You may instruct us regarding prayer in the life of Your child. Thank You for that privilege we have to come to You in the Name of Your Son. And it is in His Name that we come now. Amen!

Last time, we tried to define prayer. I looked at James Montgomery, his definition of prayer. Well, it is a hymn he wrote – but I find in it the definition of prayer. Prayer is the soul sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed; the motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast. And there are so many other stanzas.

And I also shared with us what Chadwick says, Samuel Chadwick the Methodist minister from Northern England, years ago. But of the two things he said which I mentioned last time, let me pick on the second one where he says, *the one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying*. That is the one concern of the devil. And he is succeeding at it. *He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom – but trembles when we pray.*

Let me hurry to say that we looked at the basis of prayer. And the basis is sonship – relationship that the Christian has with God, more specifically the relationship of child and Father: heavenly Father and His child. And you become a child of God by receiving Jesus Christ – just as John says in John 1:12: *As many as received Him into their lives to them He has given right – the authority to become children of God*. And when you exercise this authority, exercise this right you have, this privilege you have in Christ...and that privilege of coming to God with your needs, coming to God with praise, coming to God with worship and thanksgiving.

For in my own understanding, prayer is when you harness your thoughts, and deliberately direct these thoughts towards God, in the expression of gratitude, worship and presentation of the need of people and your own needs. That is prayer.

The basis of prayer!

Relationship between you and God – relationship that stems from your faith in Christ. The objective of prayer is what we want to look at now.

The main objective of prayer is to know the will of God. That is, what God wants done and to do it. And to know what God wants us to do means then that I will look into His Word. That is where we find the will of God. William Barclay says that *the first objective of prayer is not so much to speak to God as to listen to Him. It is in knowing the will of God that we have the primary objective in prayer, not in persuading God to do our will. It so often happens, Barclay says, that in prayer we are really saying, Your will be changed when we ought to be saying Your will be done.*

Some people say that when you say your will be done it is a badge of unbelief. They don't understand. Having known the will of God the next issue is the power to do it. And this power is what we get through prayer.

What are the laws of answered prayer?

We find the laws of answered prayer in

Mark 11:22-26

²² So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. ²³ For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. ²⁴ Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

²⁵ “*And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.*” ²⁶ *But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.*”

Here we find the laws of answered prayer. And they are these:

i. Faith

Prayer has the power to contend with any problem that seems insurmountable when we believe God.

ii. Expectancy

Prayer not offered with an expectant spirit is prayer not prayed at all. When we pray, we should pray with expectancy. Peter and John met the lame man at the beautiful gate, in Acts 3. And Peter said to him, look on us. And the scripture said that he fixed his eyes on them, expecting to get something; and he got something. He got more than he expected.

iii. Love

God is love and whoever will approach this God of love must do so with a heart of love. And forgiveness is expression of love. William Barclay observes that the prayers of bitter people cannot penetrate the walls of their bitterness. For our prayers to be answered, we must ask God to cleanse our heart of bitterness. If you do not forgive, Jesus says, neither will Your father forgive you, neither will Your Father hear your prayer.

The basic challenge of prayer.

Let us look at the basic challenge of prayer. The basic challenge of prayer. According to the minister of God, Chadwick, he says, *is there any proof that a man is a man of God like the fact that he is a man of prayer?* Let me put it differently. Is there any proof that the person is a child of God (is a Christian) like the fact that he or she is a praying Christian?

We will find that in our lives as believers in Christ, the evidence should be found in the kind of relationship we have with God. A relationship where there is no atom of bitterness that you harbor in your heart against anybody, a life that is free of sin. That kind of life will have power with God. And when such a one comes to God in prayer you have open heaven.

The scripture says that Elijah was a man of light passion as we are. But his prayer life was full of power. He prayed that rain would not fall on earth because his people have strayed from God. And he prayed again three and a half years later and the rain came. We find this in James chapter 5. And then of course the incident you find in 1 kings 17 and 18.

Friend, we have awesome power that God has made available to us. As many as belong to Christ have access to the omnipotence of God. Let us use it.

PRAYER:

Father, again we say thank You for the time we have spent together today in Your Word. I am praying for my friends, dear Lord. I'm praying that Your Spirit will convince us of the power we have, the power that you have made available to us. And so I use that power now, that authority, on behalf of my friends, asking that You meet the needs in their lives. Whatever that need may be: physical, spiritual, material or financial – whatever it is, O God, hear them and answer and touch their lives, in Jesus Name we pray. Amen!