

WHY PRAY?

Dennis Harding

PRAYER MAKES THINGS POSSIBLE

Communion / Pastor Faisal

No person is perfect. Neither are you or me. So forgive them.

Isaiah 53:4-5

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed

Song: The Blessing

The Lord Bless you and Keep you
Make His Face Shine upon you
And be Gracious to you
The Lord Turn His Face Toward you
And Give you Peace
The Lord Bless you and Keep you
Make His Face Shine upon you
And be Gracious to you
The Lord Turn His Face Toward you
And Give you Peace
Amen, Amen, Amen

May His Favor be upon you
And a Thousand Generations
Your Family and your Children
And their Children

May His Presence go before you
And Behind you,
And Beside you
All around you and within you
He is with you, He is with you
In the Morning, in the Evening
In your Coming
And your Going
In your Weeping and Rejoicing
He is for you, He is for you
Amen, Amen, Amen

Tithing / Beverley Watkins

Genesis 14:18

Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, 19 and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth.

Abraham's response was bringing his tithe in the House of God - to Jesus.

Genesis 14:20

*20 And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand. Then **Abram gave him a tenth of everything.***

Pastor Dennis / Sermon

WHY PRAY?

Why praying? - Because Jesus told us to do so

Luke 18:1-5

Then He spoke a parable to them, that **men always ought to pray and not lose heart** 2 saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. 3 Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' 4 And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, 5 **yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her**, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'

This guy is getting fed up with this widow coming to him.

Jesus reveals here the nature of His heavenly Father

Luke 18:6-8

Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. 7 And **shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him**, though He bears long with them? 8 I tell you that **He will avenge them speedily**. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

Jesus is saying: *Will I really find people who will trust Me?*

Psalms 34:15

The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And **His ears are open to their cry**

Proverbs 15:29

The Lord is far from the wicked,
But **He hears the prayer of the righteous**.

Why do we PRAY? - Because God hears.

PRAYER actually opens up the door for God to respond for God to be able to get involved in your life.

If you want God to be involved in your life - just PRAY!

And prayer is not complicated. In fact, He says 'If you cannot be like a child, you're going to struggle. You won't be able to enter the kingdom.

Kingdom Principles are very simple.
God never made fellowship with Him difficult.

What is PRAYER?

Just communication with the LORD.

- You're *COMMUNING* with Him.
- You're *FELLOWSHIPPING* with Him
- You're *CONVERSING* with Him.
- You're *TALKING WITH* Him.

What does that look like?

Sometimes you might be crying out to God.
You might be weeping, crying, because you are going through something.
And that is okay! God listens to your prayer!

Sometimes when you pray you are excited. You have expectation in your heart.

So PRAYER is a place where you can unload the weights and the burdens that you carry on the shoulders of your heavenly Father.

And there are moments where you see things that are unjust that are going on.
And all over sudden *you feel this groaning* in your heart where you want to see justice happen. So what do you do? You cry out to the Father and ask Him to intervene in that situation. And what's that called? *INTERCESSION*.

We stand in the gap and we begin to PRAY for things and ask God to get involved.

So WHY do we PRAY? Because JESUS SAID IT.

Why else do we PRAY? Because JESUS DID IT.

Mark 1:32-34

*At evening, when the sun had set, they brought to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. 33 And the whole city was gathered together at the door. 34 Then **He healed many who were sick** with various diseases, and **cast out many demons**; and He did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him*

Jesus saw some incredible things happen, but look what He does - the very next day:

Mark 1:35

*Now in the morning, **having risen a long while before daylight**, He went out and **departed to a solitary place**; and there He prayed.*

Why do we PRAY? Because JESUS SAID IT and HE DID IT!

In spite of seeing all these victories and miracles,
Jesus continued to live a LIFE OF PRAYER.

He withdrew from the crowd.

He withdrew from the busyness of what was going on around Him at the time.

He withdrew from all the noise.

And He went and found a quiet place - and He PRAYED?

What was He doing? - He was communing with the Father. Talking to the Father.

PRAYER is a Two-Way-Channel

You speak but God also wants to reciprocate and talk to you as well.

Luke 3:21

*When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and **while He prayed, the heaven was opened.***

WHILE HE PRAYED - What happened? THE HEAVEN WAS OPENED.

Something happens when you PRAY!

Now you know why the enemy wants to shut down your prayer, why he tries to keep you so busy that you don't have time for personal prayer - let alone corporate prayer.

*The enemy fears a believer who is yielded to a LIFE OF PRAYER.
he becomes tremendously intimidated when people PRAY.*

Before, in Luke 6, Jesus called His disciples or named the twelve apostles, it says:

Luke 6:12-13

*Now it came to pass in those days that **He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.** 13 And when it was day, **He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:***

EXAMPLE OF JESUS

- Jesus needed to know who He was supposed to surround Himself with.
- He needed to know who the Father had hand-picked for Him to disciple and invest in
- He needed to know who was going to live with Him
- Walk with Him - Eat with Him - Fellowship with Him.
- Who He was to invest the most time into - He needed to know
- He needed to know who was going to initiate and start the church, the Ekklesia.
- He needed to know
- And He spent ALL NIGHT IN PRAYER
- And when He got up, He picked the twelve whom the Father had appointed.

Before Jesus was going in the garden of Gethsemane, when He knew His time was coming...

What did He do?—HE PRAYED

And He asked Peter, James and John to pray with Him
...so that you don't enter into temptation."

Why was Jesus PRAYING? - So that He would not enter into temptation.

What was the temptation?

The temptation would have been to abandon the will of the Father.

Jesus came to a place of SURRENDER IN PRAYER and He said:

Father, not my will, let YOUR WILL BE DONE.

PRAYER is a place where we SURRENDER our will to HIS WILL

- PRAYER is a place where we yield to the will of the Father.
- PRAYER is a place where we SURRENDER to God.
- PRAYER is a place where we say: Not my will - but YOUR WILL.
- PRAYER is extremely powerful!

PRAYER accesses the Heavens

When Jesus PRAYED, the heavens opened.” Lk 3:21

Jesus also said:

My House shall be called a HOUSE of PRAYER for all Nations.

Mark 11:17

Then He taught, saying to them, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations’? But you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’ ”

God has these great ambitions that He wants to fulfil for His body.

He needs people that will OPEN UP THE HEAVENLY PORTAL to Him to get involved in whatever we are facing.

We can do that on a *personal level*.

We can do that on a *corporate level* as a body.

But we could do that even as a nation on a *national level*

when leaders that love the Lord, that have a heart for God, *open up the nation and PRAY*,

That’s why God says:

1 Timothy 2:1-2

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

It talks about the IMPORTANCE to PRAY.

God instructs us to *PRAY for our LEADERS* so that the results will be that we will live a peaceably, quiet live in all godliness and reverence.

God wants us to PRAY. - And the strategy of the enemy is to make us complain.

And a lot of times we fail to realise the IMPORTANCE that we have as church, as the body of Christ, TO PRAY.

Every time we come together to PRAY, *we actually create an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to come and work and flow.*

- *A PRAYER-less Church is a POWER-less CHURCH*
- *A PRAYER-less Person is a POWER-less PERSON - a defeated person.*

Because PRAYER demonstrates your reliance on the Father - not reliance on yourself.

And it doesn’t matter how skilled you might think you are, or how educated you might be, you still need PRAYER. You still need to invite the LORD into your life.

PRAYER actually is a place of humility

The posture of PRAYER is humility

Because it takes out *self-reliance* and puts us into *GOD-RELIANCE*.

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As a people of God, no matter how gifted you are, you need to come before the throne of God and lay your talent on the altar and say:

God I lay my gifting on the altar.

- *I lay my talents at the altar and I WELCOME YOU.*
- *I need YOU TODAY!*
- *I need a FRESH ANOINTING on my life today!*
- Let my talent, my gifting, my business be used to serve You, the King.

You're never too famous, too gifted, too popular, to bow at the throne of the King.

And PRAYER is a place where we kneel - in our hearts - and surrender everything we have to HIM.

God is looking for a people who SURRENDER.

And when you SURRENDER, you're going to experience the GRACE of God on your life to do what He has called you to do.- in an incredible way.

Because now what you have done, is,
*you have invited the Father himself to come upon you,
and to work in your situation, to work in your circumstance.*

- **WHY do we PRAY? - Because Jesus SAID TO.**
- **WHY do we PRAY? - Because Jesus DID IT.**

Examples in scripture to encourage you in PRAYER:

PRAYER is actually one of the most exciting places to be!

- *PRAYER is the birthing place to be.*

You give opportunity for the *promises of God to be birthed in your life* - in your family - in your homes - in your children - in our grand-children.

In PRAYER, we can PROCLAIM THE WORD word of the Lord over people!

Ephesians 5:1 Therefore be imitators of God

The Father hears - and He wants to respond!
He might have responded though you have not yet seen the answer.

When we're praying for things, God has to work with the will of the people, the hearts of the people, and sometimes that takes some time. Sometimes it takes Him relocating someone into that person's life.

In fact, Jesus prayed "Send forth labourers into the harvest field!" (Luke 10:2) Jesus said to pray that way.

If we are believing for certain things - sometimes we have to pray:
Lord, send the right person across their path.
And that might take some time to re-arrange.

We can hinder the purposes of God in our life by simply not obeying right away.

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Sometimes we take a little bit longer to step into the will of God because we have this wrestle, this struggle.

So when you're PRAYING, GOD IS SPEAKING, God is busy working in the background. Don't get discouraged and think that nothing is happening!

Because ***the moment you PRAYED, God released the answer.***

Because you invited Him to do so.

Story of DANIEL

The Bible says that, when Daniel PRAYED, it took 21 days for the answer to get to him. But the angel, when he showed up in Daniel's life, said

Daniel 10:12-13

*Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for **from the first day** that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, **your words were heard**; and **I have come because of your words.** 13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.*

The spirit realm is very real!

There was OPPOSITION for the answer coming. 21 days!

That was three weeks! But the answer came!

In Acts 4:24 Peter and John had done this incredible miracle, this lame man at the gate beautiful has been raised up, and he was supernaturally healed. And of course, the religious people wanted to shut this thing down. The enemy was really using the religious people to shut down the work of God. And so they threatened Peter and John: We're going to arrest you. We're going to beat you.

And what happened, was, they came back to all the disciples

Acts 4:23-25

*And being let go, **they went to their own companions** and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. 24 So when they heard that, **they raised their voice to God with one accord** and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, 25 who by the mouth of Your servant David have said 'Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things?*

What are they doing?

They are PRAYING the SCRIPTURE BACK to the Father's ears.

- The apostles were *PRAYING THE WORD OF GOD BACK* to the Father.

Acts 4:26-28

*The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ 27 For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28 to do **whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.***

What are they doing? - **They are CONVERSING with God.**

- *They are becoming aware of what God did precisely.*

And then they bring it into the present - and then they say:

Acts 4:29

29 Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word,

- They were *specific*.
- They are **RELYING ON THE LORD**.
Even though they had been experiencing a great miracle.
- *Through YOUR NAME, not through our name.*

You're seeing here the cry of HUMILITY

Acts 4:30

30 by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus."

Acts 4:31

*And **when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken**; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.*

When you PRAY, something happens in the HEAVENLY REALM!

Don't allow the enemy to second-guess that your prayers are not working!

Don't allow the enemy to make you second-guess and think that your PRAYER is in vain!

You're crying out to the Father for your family, for your child, for your spouse - whatever the case may be.

Don't allow the enemy convince you that God does not hear!

Because the Bible says that **HE HEARS the cry of the righteous.**

If God is going to respond to anyone's prayers, it's going to be His kids!

And the only reason why you qualify to get the ear of the KING is because you have accepted the sacrifice of the KING. You accepted Jesus. And you accepted the blood that He shed on your behalf. And you received the gift of salvation. You received the gift of eternal life which is **CHRIST IN YOU**, the hope of glory.

You received the Holy Spirit, the down-payment of your eternal redemption in you.

That is the only reason **WHY YOU QUALIFY** to have the ear of the KING - because you become the righteous now. You received the sacrifice that Jesus made on your behalf.

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So when you PRAY - because you've accepted Jesus - you have the ear of the KING.

And you are part of the Family of God.

So when we come together to PRAY CORPORATELY, God is here!

And in fact, because we have the Holy Spirit residing in us, there are times where you don't even know what to pray, and now we step into the third person of the trinity, and **WE ALLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT TO INTERCEDE THROUGH US.**

Because *He* knows what needs to be **PRAYED** for.

They **PRAYED** and the whole place was shaken.

Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians when he was in prison. He was in chains

Philippians 1:19-20

For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.

Paul knew that this would turn out for his deliverance.

HOW? BY THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

And by the SUPPLY OF THE SPIRIT.

Paul knew that he would be delivered. How? **Through the PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

Story of CORNELIUS

God used Cornelius to share that the gospel was not only for the Jews but also for the Gentiles. Cornelius actually got God's attention

Acts 10:1-5

There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian [a]Regiment, 2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. 3 About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!" 4 And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?" So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.

STEADFAST PRAYER was offered for Peter

Acts 10:5-12

Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. 6 And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were [c]keeping the prison. 7 Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying,

*“Arise quickly!” And his chains fell off his hands. 8 Then the angel said to him, “Gird yourself and tie on your sandals”; and so he did. And he said to him, “Put on your garment and follow me.” 9 **So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision.** 10 When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. 11 And when Peter had come to himself, he said, “**Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people.** 12 So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, **where many were gathered together praying.***

PRAYER OPENS THE DOOR FOR THE SUPERNATURAL!

- *Ask the Holy Spirit to help you get excited about taking your prayer life to a whole other level.*

God responds when His people pray.

Jesus said: My House shall be called a House of PRAYER.

Which means: **We must be a people of PRAYER.**

PRAYER is a place of great HUMILITY and of tremendous STRENGTH

Because you just invited the KING of GLORY in.

And He accepts those invitations.

HE LOVES to SHOW UP.

- While on earth, Jesus accepted the invitations given to Him.
- He never denied an invitation.
- He is the same yesterday, today and forever. Hebr. 13:8

Would you invite Him fresh today?

Include Jesus in everything because He will accept your invitation.

Prayer

1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light;