

# Powerful Prayer for Your Life and Ministry

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## 1) The Urgency of Prayer

Jesus invited His disciples to abide in Him and promised that He would abide in them. If they do, He promises that they will bear much fruit for apart from Him we can do nothing.

If we don't, we are spinning our wheels. We are wasting our time. We can make our plans and work our administrative systems, but if we are not abiding in Jesus, and if we are not praying, we will not bear fruit. Not the kind of fruit we are hearing about overseas where thousands upon thousands of Hindus and Muslims are discipling other Hindus and Muslims and there is a movement of God.

## 2) Key principles of prayer

a. Asking, Seeking and Knocking - The nature of prayer is not just asking. Asking is a part of prayer, but there is more. It is asking, seeking, and knocking. Matt 7:7, 8; Lk 11:9,10

b. Persistent Prayer - Jesus taught His disciples to persist in prayer. Jesus taught persistence in prayer more than any other theme in prayer. Matt 7:7, 8; Lk 11:1-13; 18:1-8

c. Lord's Prayer - The only devotional tool Jesus gave His followers is the Lord's Prayer. Prayer is not praying through a list. It is praying through God's agenda found in the Lord's Prayer. Matt 6:9-13; Lk 11:2-4

d. Spirit-led Prayer - Eight times Jesus promises the Helper, the Spirit of truth, in the upper room discourse. When His disciples asked Him to teach them to pray, He taught them to persist in prayer and promised them the Spirit. Jn 14, 15, 16; Lk 11:13

e. Goodness of God - The premise of prayer is that God is good, and He loves to give good gifts to His children when they ask. Matt 7:9-11; Lk 11:11-13

## 3) Proven Practices of Prayer

Personal Prayer:

a. Pray through the Lord's Prayer - The first two requests deal with seeking God's Kingdom. The last three requests deal with seeking God's Righteousness. In the middle is a request for God's provision. Praying for the Kingdom is like climbing a

mountain. As I pray through the names of Yahweh, I am asking Jesus to set Himself apart as Yahweh and to manifest Himself as God in light of all my sin, weakness and inadequacy. Once I am in the place of abiding in Jesus, being seated with Him as a member of His Body in the heavenlies, then I am on the summit of the mountain and ready to pray for the Kingdom. Kingdom prayer is spiritual warfare with the powers of darkness on behalf of those Jesus is entrusting to us.

Once done praying for the Kingdom, I then am ready to look toward the day and begin praying for God's righteousness. I confess my sins. Forgive others. I ask the Father to lead me in paths of righteousness and to deliver me from evil.

b. Time of day, Posture and Place of Prayer -

- Your best time of the day when you are most alert.
- The position that will allow you to be alert and pray for long periods of time.
- A place of solitude where you can focus.

**c. How much do I need to pray?** As long as it takes to see fruit and glorify the Father.

**Corporate Prayer:**

a. Motivation for Prayer: Our cupboards are bare - Two things motivate people to pray; Desperate Need and Compelling Mission.

b. Prayer Efforts - Jesus taught persistence in prayer. Throughout Scripture we see periods of time:

- Twenty-four hour fast (Samuel, Ezra, Jehoshaphat),
- Three-day fast (Ester),
- Seven-day spiritual battle (Jericho)
- Ten days (disciples in the upper room)
- Twenty-one day partial fast (Daniel)
- Forty-day fast (Children of Israel, Moses, Jesus)

c. Guidelines for Prayer -

1. Praying in Jesus' Name: When we pray in Jesus' name, we remind ourselves of the source of authority for answered prayer.

“Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.” Jn 16:24

2. Agreeing Prayer: We recognize that as we agree with one another in prayer, we have promises from Jesus that He will act in a powerful way in answer to our requests.

"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven." Mt 18:19

3. Spirit-Led: As we pray, we listen for the Holy Spirit's prompting. If a song comes to mind, sing it. If a verse of Scripture comes to mind, quote it or read it out loud.

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints." Eph 6:18

4. Praying In One Accord: We focus our prayers on one request at a time, allowing other members of the group to pray for that same request as they are led. We then move on to another request as the Spirit leads.

"If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose." Phil 2:1,2

5. Worship: We enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise, magnifying the Lord before we begin to make requests of Him.

"Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name." Ps 100:4

#### d. Five Prayer Points from Luke 10

##### 1. LABORERS

Ask Jesus to send persons of peace (open and responsive to the Gospel who are gateways to their communities) to you whom you can disciple and who will be workers in His harvest field to bring the Gospel to their households. Lk 10:2

##### 2. PEACE

Pray for God's peace and blessing to come upon your persons of peace and their households. Lk 10:5

##### 3. ASSOCIATION

Pray that the Spirit will give you wisdom and understanding to know what to do (and who to do it for) as you seek to associate with your persons of peace and their households. Lk 10:7

##### 4. MIRACLES

Pray that the Father will work in miraculous ways to meet the felt needs in the lives of your Persons of Peace and their households. Lk 10:9

## 5. GOSPEL

Pray that Jesus will open a door for you to make noise for Him, share your story and lead a Discovery Bible Study with your Persons of Peace. Pray the Spirit will testify of Jesus as you testify of Jesus and convict them of sin, righteousness and judgement. Lk 10:9

## 4) The Fruit of Prayer

First major fruit in ministry was in 1988 when I was the administrator of a little Baptist church. We had a \$37,000.00 debt that we acquired in the first six months of the year. The Senior Pastor left because of a stress-related illness. If we didn't change our spending and increase our giving, we would have a debt of \$70,000.00 at the end of the year. In this desperate situation, I began praying an hour a day through the Lord's Prayer. We began controlling spending. We laid off staff, adjusted our budget, and in twenty-six weeks the debt was gone. We were at a zero balance.

The second major fruit in ministry began in the summer of 1989. God called me to another church that had plateaued in growth for two years. It was a large church with five worship services. After Prayer Walking an hour a day in the community (plus two two-hour On-site Prayer Efforts weekly: two hours on Friday morning for the two Friday services and two hours Saturday morning for the three Sunday services every week), we grew after six weeks to 100 new people in one weekend in the middle of summer. That began a trend of growth where we grew 1,000 people in twenty months.

At my present church, Fielder Church, we prayed through several prayer effort for an Evangelical Outreach with the Power Team for five nights. The key prayer effort was a Wilderness Prayer Effort with 35 students and their adult sponsors. We fasted one day a week for six weeks and prayed for one hour on the day of the fast. Over 250 people trusted Jesus through the five nights of the outreach. Seventy-two of them were adults.

ISI

Praying the Five Prayer Points of Luke 10 for Anish and a third-culture young man from Nepal. I was building a relationship with Anish on Friday Night Group. One night I asked him if he would ever be interested in doing a Discovery Bible Study (first generation of M28 Bible Discovery Study). He said he would if a friend would do it with him. I started praying through the five prayer points of Luke 10 for him. Two weeks later a friend apart from ISI gave him a Bible and encouraged him to start reading in John. The third week, he came to Group confused. He had a Hindu background and was a practicing Buddhist. He had no framework for an understanding of God. So we started a DBS and six weeks later he trusted in Jesus as his Savior. In the next six months, my wife and I disciplined him and two other adults through Passing Truth On and a study on prayer.

Roy (ISI) and I began Prayer Walking and praying through the Lord's Prayer on the TCU campus and in the next four months the UTA Group Roy was involved in almost

doubled in size, and for the first time of any group ministering to internationals on the UTA campus, Roy and Ron (ISI) and the group met through the summer. Two groups were launched in the fall.

Mary Lynne and I connected with an Iranian couple who are PHD students. Because of the US sanctions on Iran, they were facing the prospect of having to leave the US because they had no funds to pay for the next year. Mary Lynne and I prayed regularly through the Five Prayer Point of Luke 10 asking specifically that the Father would do a miracle and provide income for them. The man received a scholarship and the woman got a job with the city. Now here is the unusual miracle: She had an internship with the city. They offered her a job. But her new work visa had to come for her to get the job. It usually takes six weeks to get the visa. She got hers in two weeks! She later said to Mary Lynne, "God hears your prayers more than ours."

Mary Lynne was chatting with another person of peace, who is also a PHD student. He shared with her that he had failed an English test twice that he needed to pass in order to move on with his PHD Program. Mary told him we would pray for him. We prayed through the Five Prayer Points in Luke 10 and specifically asked God to do a miracle. This took place in May. He went home to Nepal and brought back a new wife. When he came back in August, he told Mary Lynne that God blessed him through her prayers and he passed the test. He has come to ISI for over a year and never went to the DBS on Friday nights. He and his bride came to the DBS three times in August and September. We are still pursuing them and praying for them.

Ron and I, as well as Roy and I, Prayer Walk on the UTA campus every other week so leadership is prayer walking on campus weekly, praying through the Lord's Prayer. We declare the victory of Christ and call forth a harvest every week. Ron, together with Roy (and his wife, Lisa, and Mary Lynne and I), both Friday Night Group Leaders began praying together for an hour one day a week, primarily through the Five Prayer Points of Luke 10, for our persons of peace. We have begun seeing M28 groups led by ISI staff and leaders with one or a few persons of peace this fall. Mary Lynne and I are praying often and I pray regularly for our persons of peace. We now have four couples and six singles who we are praying for and loving on that testify of Jesus from four different nations. I am leading one study with two Taiwanese Masters students.

## Warfare Prayers

Pray out loud, making affirmations about Jesus and His work (this creates/provides restraint over the forces of darkness):

- 1) Declare the victory that Christ has won over Satan and his domain
- 2) Declare your authority by being seated with Christ in the heavenlies
- 3) Call forth the harvest of souls God is leading you to win to Christ