

**LORD**

**TEACH**

**ME**

**TO**

**PRAY**

# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this series is to help teach us to pray effectively.  
In preparation, let us remember some important points:

- ✚ Jesus is the teacher
- ✚ The bible sets the standard for our faith and practice
- ✚ The holy spirit provides understanding as we study God's word

Throughout the series, Joyce Meyer will be moving around the bible, sometimes rapidly. Therefore, I strongly recommend that you become as familiar as possible with the order of the books of the bible. As you practice finding various scripture references, this will become easier. I have prepared this study guide which also contains the scripture references, so that you need not worry if you miss anything during the sessions.

There are six sessions, each about one hour in length. Although you will benefit from any of these studies, I encourage you to make every effort to attend all of them. Since there are only six, they are tightly woven together and missing a session will break the continuity.

In order to lay a foundation for the series, consider the following scriptures.

Matthew 4:4

4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

This verse is taken from the record of the temptation of Jesus. The devil tried to cause Jesus to doubt his position as God's only begotten son. Notice that The Lord did not reason with the devil, rather, he responded by speaking God's word. "It Is Written" should always be our standard and our response as we live our lives. When we pray, we can be confident in our requests if we have knowledge of scripture, because on matters which are written, we can ask, knowing God's will, because that which is written is always according to His will. Sometimes we pray: "if it is your will", but we need not do this when the bible clearly teaches us God's will on a given issue. We also need to know what God does, and what the devil does, so that we give credit properly for those things which occur in our lives.

John 10:10

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

In this verse, Jesus shows us the opposing purposes of God and Satan. God does everything which is good; Satan does the evil things in the world. Also consider the following verse.

Hebrews 2:14

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

This verse shows us that the devil is the one who holds the power of death. He will hold this power until the end when Jesus will defeat him and he and his kingdom will be destroyed in the lake of fire. However, as God's children, we are not legally under the devil's power, but since he is a thief, he still tries to violate us. The greatest weapon he has is, at times, the lack of understanding which we have concerning the nature of God versus that of the devil. If the devil can convince us that God is causing the horrible things which come upon God's people, then he basically disarms us in prayer. We must learn to become bold in our prayers and aggressively resist the devil.

Hebrews 4:16

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

James 4:7

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

When we differentiate between God's promises and the lies (propaganda) of the devil, we can dig our heels in, and stand with resolve.

Ephesians 6:10

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

When we know God's will and have confidence toward Him, we can be strong in prayer, not because of our own ability, but because of God's love and promises. We are His children and He loves us and wants to bless us.

Matthew 7:11

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

It is amazing how much confusion the devil has caused in the church. We should always evaluate the events in our lives based on the standard set in this scripture in Matthew. Would you do to your children the things you attribute to God? If the answer is “no”, you should pray long and hard before you blame Him for something which Satan may have caused.

I certainly don't have all of the answers, nor do I expect that we will all agree on everything as we study together. As we proceed, let us remember the wise counsel which Pastor Dennis so often gives us: in the important things, unity; in other things, liberty; in all things, charity!

Let us embark on this study adventure together, with joy and excitement in our hearts. As we go, let us all remember to ask: “Lord, Teach me To Pray”!

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# SESSION ONE

## **Becoming The Friend Of God**

The foundational scripture for this series is:

James 5:16b

16 The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working].  
(Amplified)

Certainly, the entire verse is important, however, the key words which will be studied in detail during this series are in the second half (B part).

The following are several other renderings of this verse. In some cases, the version is not listed, as it is not specified in the series.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.  
(King James)

The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.  
(English Standard)

[The] fervent supplication of the righteous [man] has much power.  
(Darby)

The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects.  
(Revised Standard)

A prayer of a righteous person is able to do much as it operates.  
(Wuest Expanded New Testament)

The intense prayer of the righteous is very powerful.  
(Holman Christian Standard Bible)

The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working.  
(American Standard)

When a just man prays fervently, there is great virtue in his prayer.

An upright man's prayer, when it keeps at work, is very powerful.

The prayer of a righteous man can bring powerful results – makes tremendous power available – dynamic in its working.

A righteous man's in-wrought supplication avails much.  
(Worrell)

When we pray, we want our prayers to be effectual. Sometimes we sense, spiritually, that our prayers are not accomplishing what God wants them to accomplish. When we are feeling disturbed in our "inner man", it can be God nudging us toward growth. When this happens, we must seek God's direction for the next steps.

Our prayer time should be joyful – not drudgery. We should pray from within – the heart – not just in formulas and legalistic expressions.

We need to know our position as "just" men and women praying; rather than timid people praying – asking for just enough. We are justified through the faith of Jesus Christ.

The word "just" means:

By a narrow margin; barely; only; merely; possibly; perhaps.

Our frame of mind in prayer should be that God is our loving father and we need not be tentative or insecure to go to Him.

Be careful if you pray rote prayers. It is not necessarily a bad thing to pray this way, but if you do, you must pay special attention, so that your prayers are not mere repetitions without heart. It is easy to be distracted in this kind of prayer.

Like everything else in our spiritual development, prayer is progressive. Remember to specifically pray as we go through this class: "Lord, teach me to pray". We are individuals, and God has a prayer program tailored especially for each one of us.

We must also remember that we have an outer man (flesh) and an inner man (spirit). When our inner man is strong, we need not worry so much about our outer man. (see Matthew 6:33)

Do not try to follow someone else's prayer program. (unless The Lord tells you to)

We will now study some verses in Luke chapter 11.

The first four verses of this section are very familiar to everyone. They contain the model prayer which is commonly called “The Lord’s Prayer”.

This is a topic which has been studied and taught in great detail by many people. It is mentioned here, but it is not the primary focus of this series. As a brief review, the prayer can be divided into six major sections:

- ✚ God, our father, you are holy.
- ✚ Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. (not mine)
- ✚ One day at a time – God provide.
- ✚ My sins are forgiven – no condemnation – through Christ.
- ✚ I forgive others for their sins.
- ✚ God, keep me holy.

We have added a seventh section in traditional recitations of this model prayer. This section is praise and acknowledgement that all power and glory belong to God!

After Jesus teaches this prayer to the disciples, he elaborates on other powerful aspects of prayer.

Luke 11:5-8

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

Friendship is a key component in our prayer life. This is true from two aspects. One is concerning the relationships we have with those we pray for, and the other is regarding our relationship with God. In these verses in Luke, Jesus begins to address both of these aspects.

The level of emphasis and heart in our prayers, that is, how “fervently” we pray, is greatly affected by the relationship we have with the person or situation we are lifting up to The Lord. Sometimes we become disconcerted because we don’t seem to have a great deal of conviction to pray in some areas, while we are very involved in prayer in other areas. When this happens, we shouldn’t be too quick to chastise ourselves. The spirit may not be leading us to pray in every area. In fact, it is likely that God will move different people to concentrate their prayer in different areas. However, being God, He will make sure that everything is covered by someone. We must learn to trust the leading of the holy spirit.

The second aspect of our prayer lives concerns our closeness with God. Is he “my friend”? Considering the parable which Jesus uses in Luke 11, the level of friendship you have with someone has a profound effect on how persistent you will be when asking for help. If the man asking for bread for his friend were approaching a mere acquaintance, he would not be very persistent, because the relationship would not offer the confidence and the person asking would be afraid to impose on the other person. On the other hand, if the person being asked were a close friend, the man asking would feel free to persist. If we know God as a “friend”, we can also go to him on behalf of our other friends who have needs. We can ask God, our friend, to help us to help our other friends. We know that we are unable to provide the help our friends need, but our friend, God, is able to do it for us.

Consider the life of Abraham.

Isaiah 41:8

8 But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.

It is an awesome thing to read that God called Abraham His friend! What does it mean to be a friend? We know, but let’s look at some reminders.

Friend: a loved one; a dear one; a comrade; a partner; one allied with you in a struggle.

You cultivate a friendship by spending time with someone.

James 2:23

23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

Genesis 18:17

17 And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

God considered Abraham such a close friend, that He felt obligated to tell him about the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Read through verse 33 to see how much confidence Abraham had in his friendship with God. He was close enough to God, that he was able to shamelessly persist and press in on God, beseeching Him to spare the cities. When we truly live under the blood of Jesus, we can also go to God boldly in prayer.

# SESSION TWO

## What Makes Prayer Effective

We want to know, that when we pray, our prayers are accomplishing something. We need to be more concerned with the *quality* of our prayer than the *quantity*. Because of the nature of our flesh, our carnal, works-oriented minds like to conquer a lot of *anything*. But our spirit is interested in what is excellent because that is what has *real eternal value*.

For example, it would be more fruitful to read a single verse of scripture with understanding than to read several chapters with no comprehension. As we pray, we want our prayers to be excellent in quality – that is, effectual, sincere, earnest, heart-felt, in-wrought – coming from our spirit!

To pray fervently, is to put your whole self on the issue. We need to strive to keep our minds on track when we pray – not speaking one thing, while allowing our minds to wander off on tangents. As we work toward praying through in areas, the devil will oppose us, and try to keep us from finishing the job. Effectual prayer takes effort. We make an impact when we pray. We should be led by the spirit in prayer. We shouldn't waste energy trying to always sound polished and impressive. Once again, these are often fleshly tendencies, but our focus should be toward praying according to the will of God. Don't give God the details on how He should answer your prayer. Certainly we can, and should, have specific requests, but our analytical minds often try to figure out exactly how God will meet a particular need. His solution may be beyond your wildest expectation.

If you learn something in the spirit concerning an issue while you are in prayer, keep it between you and God. We must keep ourselves armed with scripture. God's primary will is written. He will add specifics which go beyond the written word, by way of the holy spirit as it works within you. The scripture sets the basic parameters for us, so that we can keep our prayers within God's will. For instance, don't pray for someone to be completely free from trials and tribulations. Jesus tells us that we will have trials in this world. However, we can pray for strength to help us, or others, through the trials.

Sometimes, in order for our prayers to be effective, we must narrow our scope. Don't be led by the fleshly desire to always pray for everything. It is a noble desire to want to cover all things, but one person can not give proper attention to everything. With regard to persistence: sometimes you will know spiritually that you haven't yet secured a victory in prayer. You may sense a nudging which leads you to continue praying through toward the answer. There are other times when you have the inner peace and faith – knowing that the issue at hand is secured. This is the point where we have been *released* from praying for the situation.

We have learned about the importance of heart-felt, quality prayer. We must also pray, knowing that we are righteous. As we learned in James 5:16b, the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Satan, who is the accuser of the brethren, will always confront us with our sins and try to stop us from praying by convincing us that we are unworthy and that we dare not approach God. When he does this, we can humbly thank God for His mercy and grace, and thank Jesus for paying for our sins. We are made righteous through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:1-2

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

God isn't waiting for perfect people before He will answer prayer!

James 5:17-18

17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

Although Elijah was an imperfect man, even as we are, he prayed and God answered his prayer.

When we talk about continuing in prayer, we are in the area of *shameless persistence*. Do we feel at liberty to go to God in prayer as our father and friend?

Luke 11:9-10

9 So I say to you, Ask and keep on asking and it shall be given you; seek and keep on seeking and you shall find; knock and keep on knocking and the door shall be opened to you.

10 For everyone who asks and keeps on asking receives; and he who seeks and keeps on seeking finds; and to him who knocks and keeps on knocking, the door shall be opened.

(Amplified)

The Amplified bible sheds new light on these two verses in Luke. In the context, we are still dealing with the parable concerning the man who is in need of bread for a friend. He asks his friend to lend him three loaves. When his friend resists due to the hour of the night, he persists and ultimately receives what he needs. Jesus tells us in verses 9-10 to do likewise when we ask God for the things we need.

Verses 11-13 bring the parable to its wonderful conclusion.

Luke 11:11-13

11 What father among you, if his son asks for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone; or if he asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

13 If you then, evil as you are, know how to give good gifts [gifts that are to their advantage] to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask and continue to ask Him!

Often, when tragic things happen to Christians, there is a tendency to assume that God is in control, and there is a reason for the evil. Some people also believe that the evil comes upon us because of our sins. It is beyond the scope of this series to elaborate on this question, but remember that God is our father and gives us good things, according to Luke 11:11-13. Also remember that the devil always does evil, and seeks to destroy people – especially God’s children.

As we briefly mentioned earlier, our prayers tend to be more fervent when we are praying for those closest to us. In addition, we have some specific people which God always wants us to be responsible for in prayer. If you have a spouse, they need you to cover them in prayer. The same is true for your children – and as children, for your parents. Pray for your pastor and other spiritual leadership. Jesus knew who his people were.

John 17:8-11

8 For the [uttered] words that You gave Me I have given them; and they have received and accepted [them] and have come to know positively and in reality [to believe with absolute assurance] that I came forth from Your presence, and they have believed and are convinced that You did send Me.

9 I am praying for them. I am not praying (requesting) for the world, but for those You have given Me, for they belong to You.

10 All [things that are] Mine are Yours, and all [things that are] Yours belong to Me; and I am glorified in (through) them. [They have done Me honor; in them My glory is achieved.]

11 And [now] I am no more in the world, but these are [still] in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep in Your Name [in the knowledge of Yourself] those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We [are one].

As Jesus approached the end of his time on earth, he prayed for God to protect the people which God had given to him. He didn’t pray for the entire world, but for those who God had given to him.

John 17:14-15

14 I have given and delivered to them Your word (message) and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world [do not belong to the world], just as I am not of the world.

15 I do not ask that You will take them out of the world, but that You will keep and protect them from the evil one.

Jesus covered his disciples in prayer. He asked God to protect them from the devil. Shouldn’t that be our prayer for our close friends? If everyone maintains the proper authority structure, everyone will always have someone taking care of them in prayer.

Remember that all of these considerations are part of the overall goal of praying effectively. Satan always tries to add confusion to our prayer life. When we feel that we are being led to pray for one thing while we have no leading to pray in another area, the devil often tries to heap guilt upon us. He will do anything he can to try to make our prayers ineffective, or get us to stop praying altogether. This should be an encouraging confirmation to us, that when we do pray effectually, we are helping to further the purposes of God, and to defeat the devil. Our prayers, when prayed according to God’s will, are powerful! God is the one who provides the power, yet he needs people praying in order to be able to release that power. Prayers consist of words. Our words are spiritual implements. As we become more confident in our relationship with God, we will become more bold and direct in our prayers. As we learn His word from the scriptures, we will know His will and be more able to pray with confidence.

1 John 5:14-15

14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

# SESSION THREE

## **Boldness In Prayer**

The bible is our reference throughout our study of prayer. We will look at the lives of two men in the Old Testament, who were very bold in their prayers.

Exodus 32:7-10

7 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves:

8 They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

9 And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:

10 Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.

Moses was petitioning God in prayer. He was persistent in his request that God should not allow the wrath which the people deserved to come upon them. He was pressing in to the point that God told him to leave Him alone! Yet, Moses had such a close relationship with God, that he still persisted in prayer. To better understand the way God works with regard to people's sin, let us consider a verse from Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 22:30

30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

When a person or people continue in sinful behavior, unless a person comes between them and God, God has no choice but to allow the fruit of their sin to come upon them. This is because of His holiness and justice. He would rather that someone would fill the gap and provide the prayer to enable the consequences of the sin to be averted. God is always looking for intercessors to pray in order to cover for the sins of others. Certainly, we must strive to refrain from sin, but when our humanity causes us to fall short, if someone is taking care of us in prayer, it could literally save our lives!! Here on earth, God needs us to speak out the words in prayer, which enable Him to perform mighty acts for His people. We have the privilege and authority to help God bring His will to pass on earth by speaking the words which come from our spirit in prayer and faith. As we see in Exodus 32, we can, through prayer, convince God to change His mind. As Moses did, we can remind Him of His promises. In much the same way as our children remind us of what we have promised them, we can remind our heavenly Father of the things which He says in His word. The bible itself teaches us to do this very thing.

Isaiah 62:6

6 I have set watchmen upon your walls, O Jerusalem, who will never hold their peace day or night; you who [are His servants and by your prayers] put the Lord in remembrance [of His promises], keep not silence,  
(Amplified)

It is a comfort to realize that part of the ministry of Jesus Christ is to pray for us, the saints. Jesus, as the head of the body of Christ, prays for us, even as we pray for one another. As we go about our day, when we are led to pray for a person or situation, we should do it immediately. Don't wait – Satan will try to distract you if you do, and the prayer may never be offered. The more we become convinced that our prayers have an impact, the more we will respond instantly to prayer needs. The other person we will look at with regard to boldness in prayer, is Jacob.

Genesis 32:9-10

9 And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

Jacob had been a trickster and a swindler for most of his life. He had tricked his brother Esau out of the blessing due him as the oldest son. Now, as he was on his way to meet his brother, he feared for his life, knowing the evil he had done. Notice that when Jacob prays to God, he reminds Him of His promise to deal well with him. He then quickly acknowledges his unworthiness. Nevertheless, because of God's promise to him, Jacob persists boldly.

Genesis 32:24-26

24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.



Jacob refused to leave God alone in prayer until he received the blessing he needed. As you read through the chapter, you see that this was done with due respect toward God, but with confidence and persistence. The resolution comes when Jacob is given a new name, because he has made a decision to turn from his evil works and begin living in God's will. Even though we so often fall short in our daily lives, we must learn to live under the redemption we have been given through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 3:20

20 Now to Him Who, by (in consequence of) the [action of His] power that is at work within us, is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly, far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams] —  
(Amplified)

God is able to provide much more than we dare to ask or think! How much do you *dare* to ask? Consider some meanings of the word "dare":

Dare: to be adventurous, bold or courageous.

Bold: plain, open and straightforward.

As Joyce Meyer states in the session:

"Sow your seed with expectancy, not vagueness."

Sometimes, because we lack confidence and relationship with God, we pray vague prayers. It is as though we are embarrassed or reluctant to clearly let Him know what we want and need. *If we want clear answers we must pray clear prayers.*

We must always keep things in proper balance. Ask God for the things you need. He wants to provide for us, and He will work with us as we grow in our spiritual walk with Him. Remember that our prayer life is progressive. Sometimes God may refuse to give you something you request, because you are not ready for it. As we put off more of our flesh and walk more by the spirit, our requests will mature and our ability to handle God's blessings will also develop. Don't be afraid to have expectations when you pray. We often set our sights too low because we fear that we might not receive the things we request. Even if you receive less than you expected, if you receive something, it is far better than asking for nothing, (and getting it).

Hebrews 4:16

16 Let us then fearlessly and confidently and boldly draw near to the throne of grace (the throne of God's unmerited favor to us sinners), that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find grace to help in good time for every need [appropriate help and well-timed help, coming just when we need it].  
(Amplified)

When we ask according to the promises set forth in the scriptures, we can go boldly to the throne of grace. As we read the previous verse, we will understand how we are able to approach the throne with this confidence.

Hebrews 4:15

15 For we do not have a High Priest Who is unable to understand and sympathize and have a shared feeling with our weaknesses and infirmities and liability to the assaults of temptation, but One Who has been tempted in every respect as we are, yet without sinning.  
(Amplified)

Jesus, the high priest, experienced the same temptations which we face each day. However, he never sinned! Therefore, relying on his righteousness, we are able to shamelessly approach God, our loving Father.

Ephesians 3:12

12 In Whom, because of our faith in Him, we dare to have the boldness (courage and confidence) of free access (an unreserved approach to God with freedom and without fear).  
(Amplified)

When we expect something, we will reach out for it, and be ready to receive it. When we pray with expectancy, we will watch – looking for the result – much as one might wait expectantly for a parcel in the mail, or the arrival of a friend or family member coming to visit us.

This is exciting, and as we change our thinking to expect more and more results when we pray, our faith will build and our prayers will become more specific and more effective.

As Joyce Meyer stated:

"Trade in evil forebodings for a holy expectancy of good!"

# SESSION FOUR

## **Seventeen Reasons Why Prayer Is Not Answered: Part I**

Before studying the reasons why prayer isn't answered, we will look at some of the many kinds of prayer. As we begin, remember our foundational scripture in James 5:16b. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man makes great power available. This implies that the wrong kind of prayer may not have the desired effect. By now, it isn't a question of whether or not we are going to pray. We know that we can not be victorious without the power of God, made available through prayer. Our work is to pray – then God does His work. Sometimes we fail to receive because we try to do the work which only God can do, and we fail to really go to Him in prayer. Prayer is the believer joining forces with God. It is us – God's children – speaking forth God's will in prayer, here on earth. We must pray according to the will of God if we are going to receive the answer we seek. We are here on earth so that God has a person to work through, but our heart and home is in the heavenlies. We are workers together with God – agents, helping God to bring His will to pass on earth. We must remember that prayer is a two-way conversation. We should *seek to learn* God's will as we pray, so that we can *do* His will. As we pray, we must remind ourselves that the spirit in us is greater than the evil spirits in the world.

1 John 4:4

4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

God works through words. Throughout the bible, God has men and women speaking for Him, helping Him bring His will to pass on the earth. In the beginning, Adam was given the authority to rule and reign on earth.

Genesis 1:26

26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

However, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they transferred this authority to Satan.

Luke 4:5-6

5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.  
6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

Although the devil has dominion in this world for a time, he does not have authority over us, because Jesus, by his passion, death, resurrection and ascension, has overcome Satan and taken back the position which God had originally bestowed upon Adam. However, only when a person accepts Jesus as Lord, is this authority also available to them. We, as children of God, reign with Christ in this life.

Romans 5:17

17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

Read Romans 5:12-21. It will give you a complete summation of the comparison between Adam and Jesus, who is also called the last Adam. It is essential that we learn our authority in Christ. We need the confidence that we are God's children and agents. The devil will always try to make us believe that we have no authority. However, this is because he knows that if God tells us that we can help Him bring his will to pass on earth by literally saying or doing something, the devil will not be able to stop us from succeeding if we act in faith and obedience.

We must take a more aggressive stand against the devil by prayer and resisting spiritually. We don't usually need to act aggressively toward people – in the flesh – but we resist the devil in the realm of the spirit. We can't always escape the many negative or evil attacks on our senses, but we can refuse to be affected within.

James 4:7

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

In the record of Peter's mother-in-law, the bible says that she was *taken* with a fever. The nature of the devil is always to take (steal) from God's people. The account then states that Jesus *came against the fever*. *If you understand this, there is a dual activity involved: the physical action of speaking against the fever, and the spiritual resisting of the devil's attack.*

We will not be able to persist and succeed in prayer, unless we take hold of our authority. Once again, it is important to hit the balance, where we act with gentleness and kindness on the outside, but in the spirit, we steadfastly act by faith. We have the spirit of Christ and the faith of Christ.

Colossians 1:27

27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Galatians 3:22

22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Faith comes out from our spirit. The real *you* is your spirit. This is the inner man. It is not the external words we hear which defile us, but the words we speak, those which come from us.

Matthew 15:11

11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

Words are the implements of the spirit. We exercise our spiritual authority by speaking the words which God gives us. This is why prayer makes power available. As we pray according to God's will, we are properly using our spiritual authority. Although God is sovereign, we must remember that He generally operates according to certain guidelines as seen throughout the bible. Do not always wait, expecting Him to operate in the exception rather than the rule. As an example of this concept, consider the situation you might have at your place of employment. You have standard work hours and tasks which you are normally expected to perform. However, perhaps there are special occasions when your manager decides to give you an early dismissal or take you out to lunch. When this happens, you don't change your standard mode of operation just because of the special treatment. You enjoy the occasion, knowing that the next work day things will return to the normal schedule. We need to work with God in the same manner. As we read scripture, we learn through many examples that God works through men and women to bring His will to pass on the earth.

As stated earlier, there are many *kinds* of prayer. We will now briefly discuss some of them.

Prayer of petition: asking God to do something specific.

Worship: praise, waiting on The Lord, the song at the midnight hour, the song of battle, simply loving God. (Acts 16:23-34)

United prayer: when a group of people pray about a situation – each one praying as they are led by the spirit.

Agreement: when one person prays, and the others in the group listen and agree in prayer.

Commitment: casting our cares on God. (psalm 37:4-7) Gather your problems together and roll them over to God.

Intercession: praying for others.

Thanksgiving: praise, but in remembrance of a particular thing which God has done.

Importunity: continued prayer, when a situation requires ongoing prayer – a war for instance.

Philippians 4:6-8

6 Be careful (anxious) for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

# SESSION FIVE

## **Seventeen Reasons Why Prayer Is Not Answered: Part II**

The first reason why prayer isn't answered is that too often, people simply do not pray! This seems almost too elementary, but it is true. Sometimes we say that we will pray concerning a particular situation, but because we don't immediately take action, we forget to do it. There are other times when doubt creeps in, and we lose enthusiasm for prayer, because, after all, God does whatever He wants to, and our prayers really don't have an effect. Remember: God instructs us throughout His word, to pray, and we read examples of the results which came through prayer.

The second reason why prayer isn't answered, is that people do not pray boldly. We have studied this in other sessions, but we should be reminded of the most important issue in this area – rather than focusing on the things we have done wrong, we must rely on the things which Jesus has done right! Jesus is our righteousness. In order to be able to pray without guilt and shame, we must live under the grace and mercy of God, and accept His gift of righteousness through Jesus Christ. Only with this attitude, will we be able to pray, knowing that God hears us, and wants to answer our prayers.

John 16:23-24

23 And when that time comes, you will ask nothing of Me [you will need to ask Me no questions]. I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, that My Father will grant you whatever you ask in My Name [as presenting all that I AM]. [Ex 3:14.]

24 Up to this time you have not asked a [single] thing in My Name [as presenting all that I AM]; but now ask and keep on asking and you will receive, so that your joy (gladness, delight) may be full and complete.

When we use the name of Jesus Christ, we are not speaking a magic word or phrase. We are acknowledging and relying on everything which that name represents, and all that we have been made through him. We know and declare that it isn't by our works that we can come boldly unto the throne of grace, but because of the completed work of Christ. We are complete in him.

Colossians 2:10

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

Ephesians 1:3

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

If we have been blessed with *all* spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ, I would say that makes us complete! Often, the thing which stands between us and God's blessings, is our failure to accept the grace and mercy of God toward us. Read Ephesians 1:3-14 to see an amazing summary of the blessings which have been bestowed on us as God's children. As we have seen previously, we must also avoid being vague. Vagueness is often a result of insecurity and a feeling of unworthiness. In everything we do, we should pray. We must make every effort to allow God to be our guide and partner in all that we do as we live each day. Don't try to solve everything by yourself. Rely on God.

The third reason why prayer is not effective is because we regard iniquity in our hearts.

Psalms 66:18

18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me; [Prov 15:29; 28:9; Isa 1:15; John 9:31; James 4:3.]

To regard iniquity in your heart is to try to hide something from God. This is normally a response to our knowing that there is something in our lives which is wrong. Obviously, God knows the thing we are trying to hide anyway. Also, as long as we hold such things inside, we are in bondage to them.

James 5:13

13 Is anyone among you afflicted (ill-treated, suffering evil)? He should pray. Is anyone glad at heart? He should sing praise [to God].

When we bare our hearts before God, we are able to ask for forgiveness and we also receive release from our guilt. This same approach is healthy and appropriate when we are dealing with other people. If I need to confess a sin to a brother or sister, I should be specific and honest. When we have guilt as a result of wrong behavior in our lives, it will block us from being effectual in our prayers. We should pray for God to uncover such things for us, so that we can live more holy lives. Recalling our foundational verse in James 5:16b, we now see that part of the context involves an honest confession of our faults and failings – not to heap guilt and condemnation on ourselves, but to receive forgiveness and release from bondage.

1 John 2:1-2

1 MY LITTLE children, I write you these things so that you may not violate God's law and sin. But if anyone should sin, we have an Advocate (One Who will intercede for us) with the Father — [it is] Jesus Christ [the all] righteous [upright, just, Who conforms to the Father's will in every purpose, thought, and action].

2 And He [that same Jesus Himself] is the propitiation (the atoning sacrifice) for our sins, and not for ours alone but also for [the sins of] the whole world.

1 John 1:9

9 If we [freely] admit that we have sinned and confess our sins, He is faithful and just (true to His own nature and promises) and will forgive our sins [dismiss our lawlessness] and [continuously] cleanse us from all unrighteousness [everything not in conformity to His will in purpose, thought, and action].

The truth sets us free. Part of that is clearly confessing our sin, and being freed from the guilt and condemnation it causes.

The fourth factor in prayer being ineffective, is that we sometimes are not praying according to the will of God.

1 John 5:14

14 And this is the confidence (the assurance, the privilege of boldness) which we have in Him: [we are sure] that if we ask anything (make any request) according to His will (in agreement with His own plan), He listens to and hears us.

There are times when we want things which are not necessarily wrong, but may not be God's answer. Other times, we know the will of God, but it isn't yet the proper time. We may not yet be ready for a particular blessing, or there may be other events and details beyond our knowledge which need to be fulfilled before God can bring something to pass. Part of praying according to the will of God is to pray for the right people and situations. Remember that you often have more faith to pray in one area than in another. Don't waste time being condemned because you feel more motivated to pray for some situations than you do for others. Instead, always seek to pray in God's will, and learn to trust the leading of the spirit as it works within you. Ultimately, the areas where you have the most faith are also the areas where your prayers will be the most effective and powerful. Faith comes from your spirit. It is not a product of the mind (supernatural not natural). As Joyce Meyer states in the series: "Impossible things can be done with faith, but possible things can not be done without faith."

When we are asking according to God's will, he pays attention to us. It is much like the situation when a child asks a parent: if the child asks for something inappropriate, the parent will not give the request much consideration. Everything we obtain in prayer comes to us first by faith. When our prayers are led by the spirit, we receive as we follow. We know within that we have received something in faith, which we have been seeking in prayer. Then, after we have it in our faith, we will see it in the natural world. It always comes first by faith.

Hebrews 11:1

1 NOW FAITH is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses].

What do we do when we want to pray, but we really don't know how to pray according to the will of God? The solution is to pray with the spirit, that is, to pray in tongues. Many people are not familiar with this concept, nevertheless, it is briefly mentioned here because it is a true scriptural part of prayer.

Romans 8:26

26 So too the [Holy] Spirit comes to our aid and bears us up in our weakness; for we do not know what prayer to offer nor how to offer it worthily as we ought, but the Spirit Himself goes to meet our supplication and pleads in our behalf with unspeakable yearnings and groanings too deep for utterance.

1 Corinthians 14:14-15

14 For if I pray in an [unknown] tongue, my spirit [by the Holy Spirit within me] prays, but my mind is unproductive [it bears no fruit and helps nobody].

15 Then what am I to do? I will pray with my spirit [by the Holy Spirit that is within me], but I will also pray [intelligently] with my mind and understanding; I will sing with my spirit [by the Holy Spirit that is within me], but I will sing [intelligently] with my mind and understanding also.

A thorough study of this topic is beyond the scope of this series, however, it is a significant and extremely powerful aspect of prayer which should be studied. The verses in Corinthians show us that there are two types of prayer: prayer by way of the spirit and prayer in our understanding. Some people who have received the manifestation of the spirit, and speak with tongues, become so enthusiastic about the experience, that they stop praying with their understanding for a time, then, they once again find the point of balance and pray in both ways. Similarly, we have learned that there are many kinds of prayer. One which we haven't mentioned thus far is known as spiritual warfare. This involves praying against the strongholds of Satan's kingdom. Although this is an important area of prayer, we should not become obsessed with it. There are many kinds of prayer, and as The Lord leads us, we pray in different ways. We can pray, and thereby turn messes into miracles!

Ephesians 6:18

18 Pray at all times (on every occasion, in every season) in the Spirit, with all [manner of] prayer and entreaty. To that end keep alert and watch with strong purpose and perseverance, interceding in behalf of all the saints (God's consecrated people).

The fifth way in which our prayers can be ineffective is when we ask amiss.

James 4:3

3[Or] you do ask [God for them] and yet fail to receive, because you ask with wrong purpose and evil, selfish motives. Your intention is [when you get what you desire] to spend it in sensual pleasures.

There are times when we pray for good things, yet we are praying with improper motives. A young Christian is more carnally minded, therefore, fleshly desires sometimes get in the way of the spirit. For instance, I may pray for my ministry to grow and flourish, which may well be God's will, but the timing may be off. If my desire for a large following is to boost my own ego, God will withhold His blessings of growth until I am ready. If He allowed me to see great growth while I was living in pride, I would be consumed by it, and could easily lose my ministry. As we mature and become more like Christ, we also become more spiritually minded. We are then more capable of knowing and doing the will of God out of a pure heart.

Romans 12:2

2 Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].

2 Corinthians 3:18

18 And all of us, as with unveiled face, [because we] continued to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [Who is] the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 10:5

5[Inasmuch as we] refute arguments and theories and reasonings and every proud and lofty thing that sets itself up against the [true] knowledge of God; and we lead every thought and purpose away captive into the obedience of Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One),

The issue of motives makes us uncomfortable at times, because we are confronted with our own shortcomings. However, if we truly want to grow up into Christ and be more effectual in our prayers, we can face these issues with joy. As we consider the various reasons why prayers are often not answered, we see that the same principles which will help us to be more powerful in prayer, will also help us to mature in every other aspect of our walk with The Lord.

## SESSION SIX

### **Seventeen Reasons Why Prayer Is Not Answered: Part III**

The sixth reason why prayers are not answered is doubt and unbelief.

Mark 11:23

23 Truly I tell you, whoever says to this mountain, Be lifted up and thrown into the sea! and does not doubt at all in his heart but believes that what he says will take place, it will be done for him.

James 1:6-8

6 Only it must be in faith that he asks with no wavering (no hesitating, no doubting). For the one who wavers (hesitates, doubts) is like the billowing surge out at sea that is blown hither and thither and tossed by the wind.

7 For truly, let not such a person imagine that he will receive anything [he asks for] from the Lord,

8 [For being as he is] a man of two minds (hesitating, dubious, irresolute), [he is] unstable and unreliable and uncertain about everything [he thinks, feels, decides].

Luke 18:1-8

1 ALSO [Jesus] told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not to turn coward (faint, lose heart, and give up).

2 He said, In a certain city there was a judge who neither revered and feared God nor respected or considered man.

3 And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, Protect and defend and give me justice against my adversary.

4 And for a time he would not; but later he said to himself, Though I have neither reverence or fear for God nor respect or consideration for man,

5 Yet because this widow continues to bother me, I will defend and protect and avenge her, lest she give me intolerable annoyance and wear me out by her continual coming or at the last she come and rail on me or assault me or strangle me.

6 Then the Lord said, Listen to what the unjust judge says!

7 And will not [our just] God defend and protect and avenge His elect (His chosen ones), who cry to Him day and night? Will He defer them and delay help on their behalf?

8 I tell you, He will defend and protect and avenge them speedily. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find [persistence in] faith on the earth?

We have discussed persistence in other sessions, but in the context of doubt and unbelief, it is important because when we persevere, we fortify ourselves to fight against doubt and are more able to pray through to the victory. The devil wants you to give up. We must resolve to refuse to do so! A startling section of scripture which was not included in the series, but which is being added to this study guide, is in the gospel of Matthew.

Matthew 13:54-58

54 And coming to His own country [Nazareth], He taught in their synagogue so that they were amazed with bewildered wonder, and said, Where did this Man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?

55 Is not this the carpenter's Son? Is not His mother called Mary? And are not His brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?

56 And do not all His sisters live here among us? Where then did this Man get all this?

57 And they took offense at Him [they were repelled and hindered from acknowledging His authority, and caused to stumble]. But Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.

58 And He did not do many works of power there, because of their unbelief (their lack of faith in the divine mission of Jesus).

When Jesus came to Nazareth, the people there did not believe that he was the son of God. Therefore, they also refused to believe that he could do mighty miracles. The amazing thing which we must realize is that Jesus could not do many great works there because of their unbelief. It's true! As stated elsewhere in this series, God is the one who provides the power and miracles, but we play a major part in the equation.

Sometimes, while we are in prayer, our requests seem much more attainable than when we are facing daily situations. We may receive a victory in our faith, and we have the assurance in our spirit that the prayer has been answered, even though we haven't yet seen evidence of it in our senses. (Hebrews 11:1) We must remember that faith comes out of the spirit, while belief is a product of the mind. Therefore, the conflict which we often face, is that we may have received an answer in truth spiritually, but we must resist the fleshly tendency to only focus on the facts. We don't deny the facts, but we persist in prayer until the facts change to line up with the truth. Satan will always try to get us to believe that facts are the truth, and the information which we have received in the spirit is just an illusion. Obviously, we do not want to deceive ourselves, but when we really *know* that we have an answer, we must persevere until it is seen in the senses.

The seventh reason why prayers are ineffective is that people pray and then worry. This is related to the same conflict just examined in the previous section. When we spend too much time trying to figure out how God is going to solve a problem, we become caught up in a mental exercise of analysis and reasoning, which ultimately leads to confusion. This steals our peace.

When we follow the exhortation in Philippians 4:6-7, we present our requests to God and leave them with Him. Then, our anxiety is replaced by peace. We also see this truth in 1 Peter.

1 Peter 5:7

7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

The word *casting* is the same term as is used in fishing, indicating that we are to give our cares to God, and let them go.

The eighth reason why prayers are not answered is that people are not grateful. Once again, the verse in Philippians 4:6 teaches us that in *everything* we should be thankful. Everything includes my thing. While asking for those things which we still need, we must remember to be thankful for the many blessings which God has already given to us. When we consider what God has done for us, we are more able to be patient while waiting for other answers.

The ninth reason why prayers are ineffective is that people pray for an issue, but then their confession negates the prayer. That is, they speak the opposite of the way they are praying. Our words are powerful! When we speak, our words reinforce our belief. (or unbelief)

Matthew 15:17-18

17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

This doesn't mean that we should lie about a situation in an attempt to be positive. On the other hand, we can be honest without dwelling on every detail of an issue. We must keep things in balance. It is easy to become caught up in the moment and lose sight of the goal.

The tenth reason why prayers are not answered is that our prayers are not always biblical. The words in God's word, the bible, are alive! They are true and vital.

Isaiah 55:11

11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Ephesians 6:17

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Romans 10:17

17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Hebrews 4:12

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

As you read the above verses, you can see the amazing things which God says that His word does for us. When we hear it, it builds belief in us. When we speak, it does the things which God wants it to accomplish. It is our spiritual sword! It teaches us when we are operating in the spirit and when we are in the soul (mind). In this way, we are more able to focus in prayer, so that we pray spiritual prayers rather than soulish ones. That is, we become sharper and learn to be led by the spirit instead of being guided simply by our senses.

The eleventh reason why prayers are not effective, is that we may fail to pray fervently. In fervent prayer, we commit our hearts to the issue at hand. We must avoid being distracted by the desire to sound impressive or polished. It is nice to appear spiritual to others, but our real goal is to commune with God and The Lord so that we can be alert for information which may be communicated to us while we are praying. Remember that prayer is a conversation, not a monolog. Similarly, when others are praying, we should pay attention to the content of their prayers to see if we can agree with them. When we know what is being asked and it lines up with the scripture, we can agree and the prayers become effectual.

Matthew 18:19

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

The twelfth area of concern in effective prayer is described in 1 Corinthians 11:3-10. It involves the relationship of husbands, their wives and The Lord. There are two main points which should be properly understood from this section. First, it is essential that the husband covers his wife in prayer. We spoke of this earlier when we considered the concept of everyone taking care of certain people in prayer. The second point is that the wife is to submit to her husband's authority and the husband must not be irresponsible with his position. In general, everyone should operate properly in a Godly authority structure. The devil works diligently to get people to rebel against all forms of authority.



2 Thessalonians 2:7-8

7 For the mystery of lawlessness (that hidden principle of rebellion against constituted authority) is already at work in the world, [but it is] restrained only until he who restrains is taken out of the way.

8 And then the lawless one (the antichrist) will be revealed and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of His mouth and bring him to an end by His appearing at His coming. [Isa 11:4.]

The spirit of antichrist is at work in the world, promoting rebellion in every aspect of life. Submitting to authority, and properly using our authority, are both essential if we are going to be effective in prayer – or in any other aspect of our spiritual walk. We are all equal and good. God doesn't organize us into structures to promote any kind of superiority or inferiority among us, but rather, to enable us to function in a Godly order as the body of Christ. Without organized authority structures, we have lawlessness.

The thirteenth area concerning effective prayer is related to the twelfth one. That is, it is the part played by a husband in proper care and treatment of his wife.

1 Peter 3:7

7 In the same way you married men should live considerately with [your wives], with an intelligent recognition [of the marriage relation], honoring the woman as [physically] the weaker, but [realizing that you] are joint heirs of the grace (God's unmerited favor) of life, in order that your prayers may not be hindered and cut off. [Otherwise you cannot pray effectively.]

The emphasis in the previous discussion was on submitting to authority. In this section, the emphasis is on those in authority behaving properly. Our examples are more specific to the marriage relationship, but the principles apply everywhere throughout the body of Christ. Ideally, this should also apply in the world, but we know that there are many in the world who do not have faith and therefore, may not live according to God's precepts.

Ephesians 5:22

22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Ephesians 5:25

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Here we have the balance. When we all operate in love, it is a joy to serve The Lord and one another.

The fourteenth reason why prayers are not answered is that people do not pray in secret.

Matthew 6:5-6

5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

This relates to motives and also to wisdom in dealing with our relationship with God. We must decide that God's reward is far greater and more important than the praise of men. When God answers our prayer, we must sometimes keep it in our hearts and quietly thank The Lord for His goodness. We sometimes become so excited, that, like children, we can't contain ourselves. This is not always a bad thing, but in keeping all things in balance, we don't want to take the glory for ourselves. We know that we have prayed for something, and when it comes to pass, we may be full of joy and excitement. But we must give God the glory.

The fifteenth consideration regarding ineffective prayer is strife. Study Proverbs and the sections in the epistles where the renewed mind is discussed.

The sixteenth area of consideration is unforgiveness. We have touched on this in other portions of the series. We know that Jesus tells us that we must forgive others. We can forgive other people in ourselves even when they are unwilling to forgive us. This is really a spiritual decision rather than an emotional one.

The seventeenth reason why prayers are not answered is that we may not know how to receive things from God.

John 16:24

24 Up to this time you have not asked a [single] thing in My Name [as presenting all that I AM]; but now ask and keep on asking and you will receive, so that your joy (gladness, delight) may be full and complete.

## CONCLUSION

This study guide attempts to cover the major areas of discussion in the series as presented by Joyce Meyer. In addition, I have added some of my own scripture references and thoughts as inspiration came during the preparation of the material. It is my prayer that The Lord will teach all of us how to pray, and I trust that each of you will benefit from this guide in some way.

If you would like to purchase your own copy of the tape series, you may use the link shown here and place an on-line order with Joyce Meyer Ministries.

God bless you richly as you continue learning from The Lord!

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