

POWER of Owner based prayer



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The Power of Grace Based Prayer
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LESSON 1 NEW COVENANT PRAYER

Prayer is such an important topic because it is the way we communicate with God, and it is also a way for us to maintain fellowship and communion with Him. Because prayer is so key to a Christian's spiritual life, it is critical to know and understand the requirements of prayer under the new covenant. Biblically, there is a clear distinction between the time before and after Jesus went to the cross, and when we pray we need to know the difference. By carefully reading the Scriptures, we see that under the old covenant the people were commanded to follow the letter of the Law and obey that Law "to a T" in order to be blessed. However, under the new covenant, which has been established by the blood of Jesus, we are already blessed because of our faith in what He has done. Understanding what has taken place under the new covenant will give a fresh perspective on prayer and how to communicate with God most effectively in order to get results.

In light of what Jesus did on the cross, there is actually a right and wrong way to pray. A wrong way to pray? Yes, a wrong way to pray. So often, Christians pray faithfully over their lives, families, and situations, and yet they see minimal results or changes in their lives. This is because they do not understand the difference between the old and new covenants and how things operate under each one.

To see how the differences in the two covenants tie into prayer, let's look at some examples. Under the old covenant, Abraham prayed on behalf of the few righteous people in Sodom (Genesis

18:22, 23). In contrast, when Jesus went to the cross and died for our sins, He was the perfect sacrifice for all time, for the entire world. As our High Priest, He makes intercession to the Father on behalf of all the nations, not just one city. Jesus came for every sinner and unrighteous person in the world. The redemption that He made available is for all people, not just one specific group. Under the old covenant, punishment from God for sin was the standard. Under the new covenant, God does not punish people because Jesus took the punishment on our behalf. When bad things happen, it is not God destroying people; it is the effects of sin, the curse, and the devil's activity in the earth. And as Believers, we have authority over these things.

One of the Apostle Paul's most powerful prayers is found in Ephesians 1:15-17, "Ever since I first heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for God's people everywhere, I have not stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly, asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called." (*New Living Translation*).

This prayer can encompass so many aspects of a Christian's life, including prayer. It is important that we have a revelation on the right way to pray so that we can get maximum results. This Scripture passage clearly takes into consideration the finished works of Jesus Christ. Paul is praying for all the saints in Ephesus, asking God to continually increase their awareness of their position in Christ under the new covenant. He is desiring

that people come to have a personal revelation of who they are and what their new identity includes. He wants them to understand and have confidence in the finished works of Jesus. First Timothy 2:1-4 echoes the idea that we are to include all people in our prayers, because it is God's desire for all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

A Different Way

The new covenant changed everything. It changed the way God related to man, and it changed the way we should relate to God. Jesus is the bridge that made it possible for us to have restored fellowship with the Father. Everything we do now, including how we pray, must be viewed in the context of what Jesus has already done.

Under the new covenant, we are to preach not just the Gospel but also Jesus Himself. The Great Commission was Jesus' instructions not to just a few but to everyone (Colossians 4:3). Because Jesus did what He did for everyone, the responsibility of sharing the Gospel of Grace is on all Believers. We are to share with others that Jesus has reconciled us to God, and, as a result, we have the spirit of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18, 19). God does not hold our sins against us and neither should we hold others' sins against them.

We can take this understanding into our times of prayer as well. Because Jesus is the mediator between God and man, we do not need to "stand in the gap" when we offer up intercessory prayer for others. Jesus is now the Mediator under the new covenant because He has already completed the work of reconciliation. Our job is to stand on what He has done and declare the Word of God

over the lives of others, adding our agreement to it. In addition, we can pray in the Spirit as God leads, which is the perfect prayer of intercession.

The key to new covenant prayer is to understand what has already been done and then stand on the finished work. Healing, forgiveness, deliverance, prosperity, and everything else you need has been secured by Jesus, and when you are in Him, the proper way to pray is to simply declare and affirm from the Word what is already a part of your inheritance. You release your faith by believing that you receive it in your life, and then thanking God for it before you see the physical manifestation. Praying this way, rather than begging or pleading with God to do something that was completed over 2,000 years ago, demonstrates that your faith is aligned with the finished works of Jesus. This is the stance of faith in prayer that results in signs, wonders, and miracles showing up to confirm what you believe.

HOW TO PRAY FOR THE LOST

Did you know that God greatly cares about and so desperately wants to bring the lost into fellowship with Him? Sometimes Christians can become so preoccupied with their own personal situations and circumstances that they forget about the Great Commission, which is to share the Gospel with those who do not know the Lord. This is God's top priority, and it should be the top priority of every Believer too. When we pray, it is important that we do not pray only for the individuals we know or those who attend church. Yes, it is important to pray for other Christians, especially as the Holy Spirit leads you, but we cannot lose sight of those lost souls who do not know Jesus Christ, as well as those who have backslidden. Grace-based prayer requires that we sow seeds of God's Word into everyone because it is through the prayers of God's people that He is able to make inroads into the lives of those who do not know Him.

Because Christians carry the power of God inside of them due to Jesus now living in us, we possess the life-giving Word of God, and it is our responsibility to share it with others. Because this is God's ultimate objective for our lives, we can rely on the Holy Spirit to lead us and help us to be the salt of the earth and the light in a dark world. We have been equipped with everything we need to get the job done.

To be effective in reaching the lost, it is vital to understand that God works through prayer. It is the way that we can connect with Him and release His authority and power into the earth. Every failure is a prayer failure, so if people aren't getting born again, it is actually because Christians aren't praying! Because the unsaved are so near and dear to the Father's heart, those of us who do know Jesus Christ must make praying for the lost a daily practice. We have to remind ourselves that we didn't always know Jesus, and we should be mindful of how God saved and delivered us. Millions of people all over the world do not know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and God wants to reach them. Your prayers are the catalyst to making that happen.

God is love, and His Word is powerful. He is so in love with the world that He did not hold anything back. He gave His only begotten Son to bring all people into the realm of eternal life. We know that all people will not receive Christ, but that should not deter every Believer from praying for the lost. Belief, trust, and a willingness to rely on God are crucial to reaching others. It is not God's will for anyone to die, spiritually or physically. He desires all to come to a point of repentance so that they can be saved and enjoy the wonderful benefits of salvation here on earth and in heaven.

The more you pray for the lost, the more opportunities you will find to share the Gospel with people. Don't be discouraged when people don't receive what you share; the Word only takes root if the heart is fertile and open to the Truth, in much the same way that the sower throws seeds on fertile ground. And we know that the seed of God's Word has fallen on fertile soil when it begins to bring forth fruit in a person's life. This is where grace-based prayer comes into play. Every time you pray for the lost, or pray specifically for someone you know who is unsaved, your prayers are actually helping to break up the hardened soil of their hearts

so that, at some point in time, they can actually be receptive to the Word of God, which is able to save their souls.

We should never be discouraged when it seems that our attempts to share the Gospel have fallen on deaf ears. When we do our part, God will take care of the rest. Some of us are there to plant seeds in others, and some of us are there to water the seeds that have already been sown. For some of us, our presence in the lives of those who do not know Jesus Christ acts as the method of breaking up hard soil. Regardless of the role you are playing in someone's life, you can always pray the Word of God and pray in the Spirit over the lost, knowing that because the work of salvation is already complete, your prayers are bringing to pass great things in people's lives. God does not forget any of His promises, and He is patient and extends grace to all.

One of the most effective ways to pray for the lost, outside of praying over them in tongues (which is the perfect prayer), is by praying that God sends laborers into the field to sow His Word into people's lives. Praying for God to send effective laborers to minister the Gospel in ways that people will listen to and understand is a key prayer-point when praying for the unsaved.

Another vital part of sowing seeds into the lives of others is through sharing our testimonies. We must be willing to share our testimonies about how Jesus has changed our lives. We do not need to point fingers of condemnation, but rather we should accept others in love, knowing that God is doing a significant work in their lives. We can allow God to work through us, even if it is for a short moment, knowing that every attempt to share His love with others does not go unnoticed.

The beauty of the Holy Spirit is that He will teach and guide us when we minister to others. We are to offer ourselves as vessels that are yielded to the Him every day. He will show us what to say, when to say it, and even if we are to say anything at all. He will provide us with divinely orchestrated encounters to be a living demonstration of God's grace and mercy to others. You never know who you might encounter on a day-to-day basis, which is why it is important to make prayer a part of your daily spiritual discipline. Through praying in the Spirit, you move in the perfect will of God and effectively provide an atmosphere where the Holy Spirit can move in people's lives.

No one becomes born again without prayer first going forth. Keep this in mind as you structure your prayer time daily. Pray for God to send laborers into people's lives, and pray fervently in the Spirit for the lost. Commit to cultivating a heart for those who don't know Jesus and be on the alert for opportunities to share the Gospel with others, since these opportunities are actually the fruit of your prayers. Trust God's ability to use you as you commit to praying for the world—that all men, women, and children will come into the knowledge of the truth and give their lives to Christ. This is the Great Commission, and it begins in your prayer closet!

LESSON 3 PRAYER AFTER THE CROSS

Prayer is more than just some religious exercise we do because we think it makes us "good" Christians. It is the connection that opens the door for all of God's blessings to be manifested, and it is essentially the process of granting permission for heaven to cause the manifestation of the finished works of Jesus Christ to show up in our lives. While it is incredibly important, there is a difference between the blueprint for prayer before Jesus went to the cross and after He died and was resurrected. When you pray from an "after the cross" position, you are guaranteed to get results.

Nothing done by God in the earth happens without someone praying. Grace has made available to us everything we will ever need for a godly, prosperous, and successful life, but not everyone will actually experience this type of living. Responding in faith to the finished works of Jesus Christ is the key.

In order for prayer to be effective, there must be a healthy dose of trust in God. We must trust Him and be strong in *His* power and might, not our own strength. Trusting in ourselves will never produce prayer results. The way to trust in God's power is by understanding that we have already obtained victory in battle through Jesus. Bringing this awareness into our prayer time is critical. We are to pray with confidence in maintaining this victory that has already been secured. Our enemy is not one of flesh and blood; we face principalities, powers, and unseen spiritual wickedness in high places. Because of this, we must put on God's armor daily in order to withstand the spiritual attacks that come

against our minds and our lives. The Word of God provides us with the protection and weaponry we need to both offensively and defensively deal with the devil in prayer. When we affirm to God what He has already done by declaring the Word of God over every area of our lives, we cannot be moved by whatever is coming against us. This is the way we are to operate in prayer under the new covenant.

What Happens When We Pray?

So many wonderful things happen when we pray, which is why it is vital to walking out our success on a daily basis. When people pray and give thanks, believing God has already bestowed grace and blessings on them, results are inevitable. Prayer that acknowledges the finished works of Christ is the bridge that allows blessings from heaven to travel to us. Because of this, grace and favor always show up when we pray.

Praying for each other from a position of faith and trust in God changes things. Second Corinthians 1:11 says, "And you are helping us by praying for us. Then many people will give thanks because God has graciously answered so many prayers for our safety" (*New Living Translation*). Effective prayer also heals the sick and afflicted (James 5:13-16). Jesus has given us all power and authority, and our Word-based prayers give heaven a permit to work in our lives.

Prayer after the cross is not marked by drama, excitement, or grand displays of the spectacular. Instead, it is confirmed by supernatural results that are produced by faith. For example, in Acts 9:40 Peter got supernatural results after praying for a girl

who had died: "But Peter asked them all to leave the room; then he knelt and prayed. Turning to the body he said, 'Get up, Tabitha.' And she opened her eyes! When she saw Peter, she sat up!" (*NLT*) Faith released while praying to God will always produce supernatural results.

Paul also got miraculous results after praying a faith-filled prayer, in Acts 28:8: "As it happened, Publius's father was ill with fever and dysentery. Paul went in and prayed for him, and laying his hands on him, he healed him." Prayer is the prerequisite for the supernatural power of God to show up. In both of these cases where Peter and Paul ministered healing, prayer was a vital part of the process of permitting God to work a miracle.

Because the same power that was in Jesus resides in us, we can also see these types of things happen in our lives and in the lives of those with whom we come in contact. We can lay hands on the sick, and they recover, and we can raise the dead. All power is available to us, we just have to walk by faith in order to access it. Just like the apostles, we can shake things up with faith-filled prayer that is confident in what Jesus has done for us.

Living Contact

Prayer is a conversation with God that keeps the lines of communication open and keeps us in living contact with the Father. This is why we are instructed to remain in this place of constant exchange with Him. When you are in constant communication with the Father through prayer, whether praying in the Spirit, acknowledging His presence by talking to Him as you would a friend, or speaking His Word back to Him, you position yourself

for prosperity in every form, both physically and spiritually (3 John 1:2). It is no wonder that the Bible tells us to pray without ceasing!

Not only should we pray without ceasing, but we are to continue to pray in all circumstances, giving thanks to God. The Scriptures tell us to rejoice and not to stop praying. There is no such thing as too much prayer. Giving ourselves continually to prayer actually manifests the ministry of the Word in our lives.

There is no need to pray long, drawn-out, dramatic prayers in an attempt to get God to move, in fact we must avoid praying foolish prayers that are just for show or based on emotion or traditional religious clichés. For example, some people pray for God not to take the Holy Spirit away from them. This type of prayer actually goes against the Word because God promises that He will never leave us (Hebrews 13:5). Others ask God to be with them, which, again, is a foolish type of prayer because the Bible says that whenever we pray, God is in our midst (Matthew 18:20). Still others request God to visit them. Since Jesus permanently lives in us and is with us always, a more effective prayer would simply be to thank God that Jesus resides in our hearts and that we possess everything that belongs to Him, expecting Him to work in and through our lives. While heartfelt prayers are important, the primary objective of our prayers should be agreement with God's Word. Consistent prayers that are Word-based and full of faith are what get the job done.

A Believer who knows who he or she is in Christ and has an understanding of the completed redemptive work that Jesus did is an unstoppable force to be reckoned with. Post-cross prayer is

marked by faith, trust, and an unwavering understanding that there is no need to ask God to do something that has already been done. Acknowledgement of the good that has been secured by Jesus, combined with a lifestyle of thanksgiving, is how we lay hold of the promises in the Bible. We are not waiting on God; He is waiting on us to believe and receive every benefit of salvation that belongs to us.

HOW TO PRAY AND SEE RESULTS

The cross has changed everything we know when it comes to prayer. Under the new covenant we pray from a place of victory because God has already made everything we will ever need available to us. In this three message series, The Power of Grace-Based Prayer, you'll learn the difference between prayers based on life before the cross and after the cross. Creflo Dollar teaches how to pray so that you can receive all the finished works of Christ—healing, prosperity, and deliverance.