

*An*  
ENCOUNTER  
*With*  
HIM

*Living Connected to God  
Through Prayer*

TERRI COPELAND PEARSONS

*Tremendous! Magnificent!* Those are just a couple of words that come to my mind after reading *An Encounter With Him*. MY prayer girl wrote this book! What a writer! I decided when I received the manuscript that I was going to read it like any other book, with my pen and highlighter ready to receive. I learned so much about prayer, and I learned so much about my daughter Terri, throughout this whole book.

What a joy it was to read about my mother, Vinita, or Nonnie as most family called her, and the impact she had on Terri. It meant a great deal to me to see just how much she and my mother were praying for me constantly. That's what saved my life. Terri revealed things in her book that I'd never heard before—about the time they spent together, and those thoughts and ideas have become very precious to me.

My mother taught Terri how to pray by praying for me. This ministry was built on the foundation of their prayers. Even after all these many years, Terri is still running this Kingdom race with me and holding up us all through her leadership in prayer.

There are many principles of prayer that you can learn from Terri, such as “prayer is not just about getting a particular result, it's about what happens in you as you pray.” But my favorite part was learning to talk to price tags (page 132)! This really got my attention. Through prayer and price tags, she got the revelation that nobody and no one else but God was her source.

Terri has built her entire life developing a covenant relationship with The LORD through prayer. This book will bring you along on that journey—inviting you to have the same encounter. Her words and teaching have helped open my eyes to a world of prayer that most believers don't know about, or of which they have no personal revelation.

I know when you read the same words I have, you will experience the anointing that's on her to communicate the power of prayer that is available to every believer. My prayer for you is that these God-ordained words sink deep into your spirit, leaving a lasting impression on you, just as they did on me.

I'm eternally grateful for my praying mother who imparted her grace into my praying daughter.

*KC, aka Dad*

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When I was sent the manuscript of *An Encounter With Him*, needless to say, the first thing I did was to dive into it! I would like to say that I read through it, but I didn't—I wept and rejoiced and prayed my way through it.

Reading about grandmother “Nonnie” marked me. I was stirred, instructed and challenged, but I wasn't left the same. She made a difference because of how she lived each day—hers was a DAILY walk with God—a walk with God that left us an example of prayer that is still blessing the generations after her.

Coupled with “Nonnie's” example, Terri Pearsons so skillfully teaches how you can bear much prayer fruit as YOU walk with God. She makes it so “doable”—her skill makes it simple for everyone else to do. Pastor Terri has put handles on these precious truths so that you can easily grasp them and take them to yourself, implementing them into your own life.

You will come away from reading this book not just knowing something more, but also wanting something more, and doing something more. Your hunger will be both satisfied and ignited.

May this book usher you into the place of being a “Nonnie” in someone else's life, where your walk with God makes it easy for others to know Him and to receive their miracle.

*Nancy Dufresne*  
*Pastor, Author, Broadcaster*  
*Murrieta, California*

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I just finished reading Terri Pearsons' book *An Encounter With Him*. For years, I have counted Terri a cherished personal friend. I have been, and still am, an avid follower of her teaching, and believe she is one of the finest Bible teachers I know in the land today. In fact, when I am honored to hear her speak, I lay everything aside and really pay attention. I have learned that if I will quiet myself to listen to her, I will receive rich revelation from the Spirit of God. And now, in the same way I receive from Terri as she speaks, her voice calls out to me and to others in this remarkable book.

Terri draws deeply from Scripture, from the Spirit of God, and from personal experience, to communicate that prayer is about living connected to God—and that it is the “greenhouse” required for any person to experience spiritual growth in his or her life. Indeed, this book communicates what prayer is, what it isn't, how to do it, and what it produces. For



men and women alike, this book holds answers that will walk them from where they are into the deeper place that their hearts have longed to know and experience. Don't let this book sit unread on your bookshelf or coffee table. *An Encounter With Him* is a book you must read from beginning to end, and you must allow its words to sink deep into your heart to help you sink deep into the awesome presence of God!

*Rick Renner*  
*Minister, Author, Broadcaster*  
*Moscow, Russia*

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*An Encounter With Him* is written by a dear friend who has experienced the encounters with God that she writes about, basing each one thoroughly in scripture. This book is far more than a journal of Terri Pearsons' own testimonies. It brilliantly portrays God and how to interact with Him in such a clear way that any person desiring to encounter Him would know how, and begin today. As I read this book, my eyes often filled with tears and my heart burned to know and encounter Him more.

*Patsy Cameneti*  
*Teacher, Pastor, Author*  
*Brisbane, Australia*

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This book is like opening or unlocking a treasure chest. Please pay close attention, because as your fingers turn from page to page, there are hidden secrets of heaven for your heart to discover, embrace and experience. Terri is one whom I would like to call a supernatural, no, a "Heavenly Lexicon"—lexicons tend to carry the language and vocabulary of a person or place and translate it for easy mental and spiritual digestion.

*Encounter* is used in the title, and I am so glad, because this book IS an encounter. When you grasp this book with your heart, you will surely know and understand what Jesus said in Matthew 11, "Come and learn from me, and I will teach you the unforced rhythms of grace..."

As you read, you will be empowered to join a worldwide movement of the Spirit, to link arms with others just like you, and pray your part in the coming of the Kingdom.

You are here for such a time as this.

*Lynne Hammond*  
*Teacher, Pastor, Author*  
*Brooklyn Park, Minnesota*



*An*  
ENCOUNTER  
*With*  
HIM

*Living Connected to God  
Through Prayer*

TERRI COPELAND PEARSONS



KENNETH COPELAND  
PUBLICATIONS

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## ***An Encounter With Him***

*Living Connected to God Through Prayer*

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# DEDICATION

Prayer, like most spiritual truths, is *caught* as well as *taught*. It's possible for truth to be *taught* without much experience, but it is *caught* from those who have lived practicing the truths they present.

Lessons on prayer can be learned as quickly as they can be spoken; but catching prayer most often comes through seeing, hearing and praying around someone who is keenly developed in ways of the Spirit, doing kingdom business with God. It is a valuable privilege to ever sit at the feet of such saints. To have multiple occasions with more than one of God's prayer generals is priceless. But to have ongoing access to those whose lives have come to embody the spirit of prayer is a treasure beyond description, and experienced by only a rare few. I am, inexplicably, one of those few.

Billye Brim, Lynne Hammond and Annette Taylor have all graciously opened to others a peek into their own walking, talking and working with the Blessed Trinity. I have learned from many, but these have allowed me, for decades now, to partake of the Spirit that is both within and upon them. Yet, the woman whose walk with Jesus still speaks to me most is *Vinita Copeland, my grandmother, my Nonnie*. Without her determination that I should know and love Him as she did, I would have been ill-equipped for my own calling to open for others what these have opened for me.

*This book is lovingly dedicated to her.*

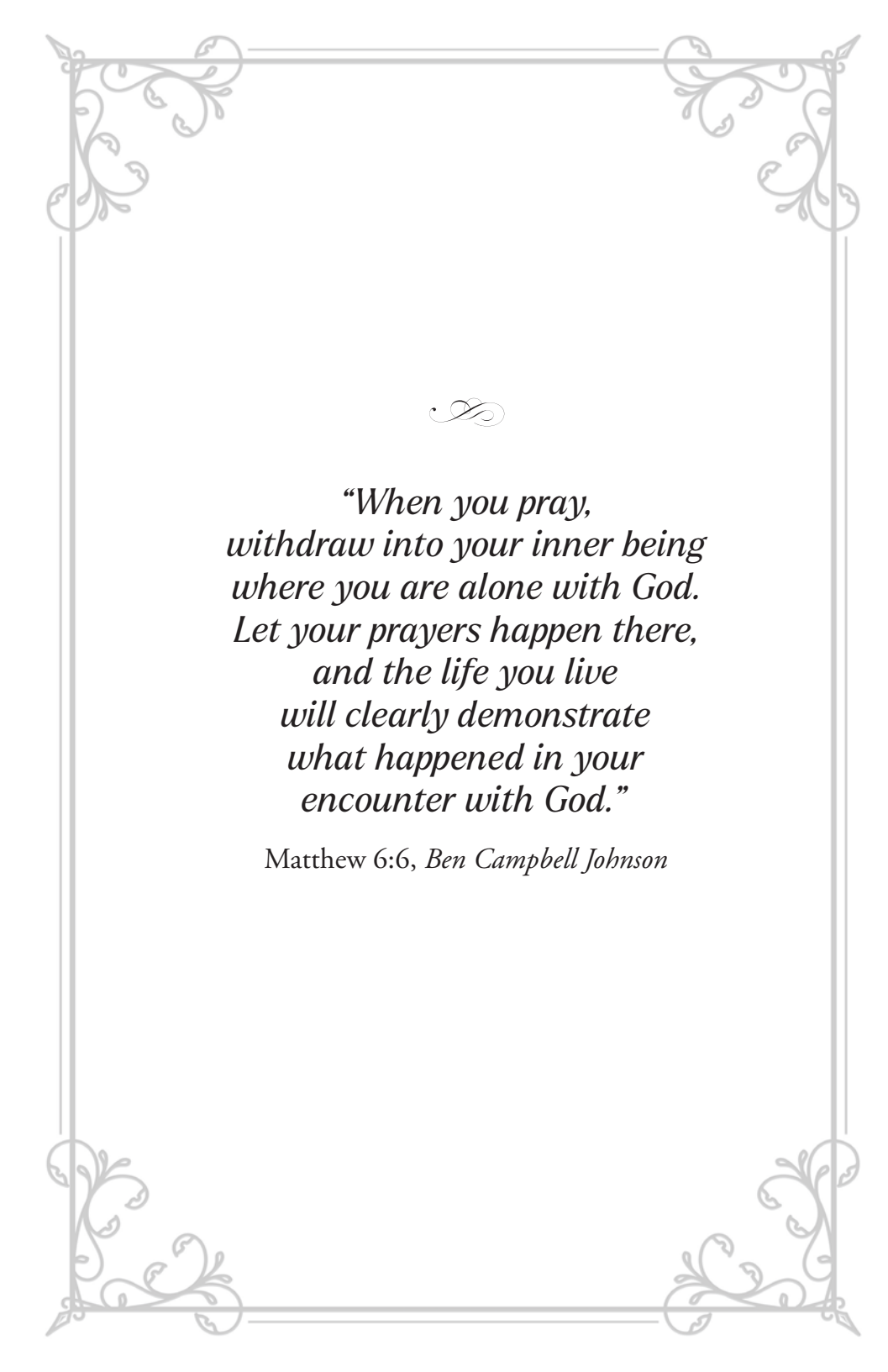






*My deepest desire  
for every reader is that  
the spirit of prayer is  
both taught and caught.*



A decorative border with floral and scrollwork motifs in the corners and along the sides, framing the central text.

*“When you pray,  
withdraw into your inner being  
where you are alone with God.  
Let your prayers happen there,  
and the life you live  
will clearly demonstrate  
what happened in your  
encounter with God.”*

*Matthew 6:6, Ben Campbell Johnson*





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## FOREWORD

I knew Vinita Copeland, Kenneth Copeland's mother and Terri Copeland Pearsons' grandmother. This woman of prayer carried a vibrant presence of the Lord. When Terri described to me, some years back, how in her childhood, Vinita drew her close into her very bosom physically and spiritually, I said, "Terri, she knew what she was doing. She was imparting to you."

Terri does a superb job of imparting to you and to me what the Lord, through Vinita, imparted to her. She has a wonderful way with words in putting forth the profound truths of God's Word and encounters with Him, with simplicity. Encounters with God in prayer, that many have never known, are related from the place of experience. You will not be intimidated or overwhelmed by them. Instead, you will be inspired. You will say, "I can do that!"

Terri's insight, and her "how-to" instruction on worship, waiting on God, watching, and so much more, caused me to think, *Yes! That's how it is! She said it so well!* She uses thought-provoking statements such as: "You watch for the Lord and locate His presence," and "My encounter with Love was an encounter with God." And concerning how He uses your prayer time to change you: "Prayer is the greenhouse for spiritual growth.... When you're praying, He'll always be developing you spiritually.... You grow in Him while you're praying."

When Terri handed me the manuscript to write the foreword, I thought I would quickly read through it. But I found myself having to pause, to meditate. I experienced illumination, and even revelation as I did so.

I highly, highly recommend this book to you.

Just think—every good work Kenneth Copeland Ministries has ever done, and will ever do, through its broad outreaches and through the lives of millions of people affected by KCM, can be laid at the feet of one woman who prayed—Vinita Copeland. Her eternal reward is immeasurable. And now, even more will be added unto her through the prayer lives affected by this valuable book. It will affect your own prayer life, and only God knows who all will be affected and what all He can do through your prayers.

*Dr. Billye Brim*

*Teacher, Author, Broadcaster*

*Branson, Missouri*

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR

*by Pastor George Pearsons*

I first met Terri Copeland at Oral Roberts University in August of 1975.

She was from the great state of Texas—and I was from Massachusetts. That is why it took a little while for us to connect. My dry sense of Yankee humor wasn't quite resonating with the bold cowgirl from deep in the heart of Texas!

But, GOD!

I never imagined that our relationship was going to be for life! That cute girl had a big Texan smile and an alluring Southern accent. But, there was something else about her that I had never quite encountered before.

Her unique conversation and lifestyle deeply spoke to my heart. I listened with great intrigue as she ministered to others. I was like those who listened to Jesus on the road to Emmaus. "Did not my heart burn within me as she talked by the way and opened up to me the Scriptures?"

What was it about this girl? What made her so different?

I did not realize it at the time. She was presenting me with a fresh, new relationship with the Lord. She introduced me to the Word of Faith.

Once we connected, our relationship moved quickly. We were engaged on December 31 of that year!

Before we were married in August of 1977, I had the honor



of living with Terri's grandparents, A.W. and Vinita Copeland. Living with them, serving Kenneth and Gloria Copeland, and knowing her mother, Sandy, gave me great insight into Terri's character, her passion for the Word, and her love for others.

Terri first discovered the adventures of prayer as a little girl, praying at the side of her grandmother. She called her "Nonnie."

Her grandfather A.W. Copeland was a great man of God and integrity. She called him "Grandad."

She was taught the rich heritage of faith by her father, Kenneth Copeland. As a girl, she diligently listened to his preaching on a reel-to-reel tape recorder. She was able to flip the tape over with one hand in the middle of the night when the message would end.

Gloria was a godly example of a woman who was a leader in ministry with great grace and style.

Her mother, Sandy, imparted a great care for people and a heart for those who were hurting. The grandchildren called her "Grammy."

Those primary influences in Terri's life have positioned her to help others connect with the power of God's Word, the presence of God, and the heart of God.

At a very young age, Terri's greatest desire was to attend Oral Roberts University and put her dad on television. While attending ORU, she studied television production from one of the greatest ministers of our time. She worked on the crew for the Oral Roberts weekly programs as well as for his prime-time specials. ORU was a training ground for Terri's immediate future.

By the end of her sophomore year in 1976, the Lord told her it was time to go home. She began working on her second greatest desire. It was time for her dad to be on television.

She successfully accomplished that assignment in 1979 when she became the producer of the *Believer's Voice of Victory* weekly broadcast. She was barely twenty-one at the time! And her father quickly became established as a forerunner in television ministry.

She also produced the *Believer's Voice of Victory* daily broadcast when it premiered in 1989.

In 1993, we became pastors of Eagle Mountain International Church.

In 2017, we stepped in together as the executive leaders of Kenneth Copeland Ministries and all of its global entities.

Kenneth Copeland Bible College was a vision the Lord gave to her to reach the next generation with the Word of Faith. Brother Copeland was in full support. Terri became the KCBC president in 2018.

Honestly, it would take a full biography to expound all that Terri has accomplished in her life—so far!

She is a consummate teacher of the Word whose messages reach deep into the heart of her listeners.

She is a visionary and has a strong prophetic anointing to see into the ministry's future.

She has spearheaded support for the Jews to such a degree that the name of KCM/EMIC is known throughout all Israel.

She is an absolute powerhouse when it comes to prayer.

Pastor Terri has ignited the fires of prayer at Kenneth Copeland Ministries through a dynamic network of prayer groups. “Prayer Everywhere” is the mandate throughout all the ministry departments, at the annual Southwest Believers’ Convention, and to people all over the world.

What more can I say?

Some years ago, Pastor Terri was invited overseas to minister in a church. Never before hearing her speak, the pastor called Jerry Savelle and asked, “What kind of a preacher is Terri?” Brother Jerry answered, “Kenneth Copeland in a skirt!”

I have told people that when it comes to ministry, “Terri not only has the heart of her father—she IS her father’s heart.”

Terri Copeland Pearsons is a tremendous mother and grandmother. It was a breathtaking honor when the family agreed that Terri should receive the name of “Nonnie” when our first grandchild was born.

To me, Terri is THE Proverbs 31 wife. There is no question about it—I am a blessed man. She has a huge heart, a brilliant mind and is a multitasker extraordinaire!

We have two children who are totally involved in ministry.

Our son, Jeremy Pearsons, and his wife, Sarah, pastor Legacy Church in Green Mountain Falls, Colorado. They also reach out internationally and have a television broadcast on VICTORY Channel aptly named *Legacy TV*. They have two awesome children, Justus and Jessie.

Our daughter, Aubrey Mitchell, serves KCM full time. She is a television producer, creative strategist, and a gifted singer and worship leader. She also takes after her multitasking

mother! She and her husband, David, have five gifted children: Madison, Eiley, Kayelin, Brooklyn and Piper.

And finally, it would be difficult to count all the spiritual sons and daughters she has impacted. The Lord knows! Only eternity will tell the accomplishments she has made for the kingdom of God.

Terri is a woman of God whose passion it is to obey God, preach the Word of Faith, and be led by the Spirit to meet the needs of others.



So, Terri—congratulations on your book! Thank you for leading us all into greater encounters with Him.

Now, here is your scripture:

She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness. She watches over the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: “Many daughters have done well, but you excel them all” (Proverbs 31:26-29, *New King James Version*).

I am deeply grateful to the Lord for our wonderful lives together. With much love and great admiration...

*Your husband,  
George*





A decorative border with floral motifs in each corner, framing the text.

CHAPTER 1



Living Prayer



## CHAPTER 1

# Living Prayer

### *My Grandmother: Vinita Copeland*

It's often said that a picture is worth a thousand words. But the picture of prayer I saw in the life of my grandmother has proven to be worth far more. Everything I've ever taught or written about prayer over the years, including what you're about to read in this book, can be traced back to her. Not because she formally taught me about prayer, but because she lived it.

Growing up, I stayed at her house a lot, and she prayed all the time. Prayer was like breathing for her. As a very small child, I used to follow her around like a puppy listening to her pray, as 1 Thessalonians 5:17 puts it, "without ceasing."

She prayed while she ironed. She prayed while she sewed. She prayed while she did everything!

I remember at four or five years old literally sitting on her feet underneath her sewing machine. As she stitched along, working the pedal, she was always either talking to Jesus or singing little songs to Him. We called those songs Sunday

school music because we sang them at church. They had words like, “Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. Sweetest Name I know. Fills my every longing. Keeps me singing as I go.”<sup>1</sup>

When I spent the night with her (which I often did), she let me sleep in her bed, and I’d hear her praying all through the night. I slept right on top of her until I was six years old. Curled up on her chest, like she was a big pillow, I’d lie there and listen as she inhaled and then exhaled in other tongues, literally breathing out prayer in her sleep.

Sometimes I thought her praying was going to keep me awake, and it might have if not for the little radio she brought to bed with us. Before we went to sleep, she’d search the AM dial for Sunday school music or preaching for me to listen to. When one station faded out, or went off the air, I’d poke her in the ribs. Seemingly without waking up, she’d reach out her hand and move the radio dial around until she found another station. However long it took, she kept finding new stations until I went to sleep.

She didn’t just do this a few times. She did it every time I stayed overnight. Determined to keep me close, she even booted my grandfather out of the bed at one point. Complaining that I kicked like a mule in my sleep, he said, “Vinita, it’s either her or me.” She picked me, and he ended up sleeping in the other room. Eventually, she decided I was old enough to sleep by myself and Grandad got his side of the bed back. But until I was twelve years old, I slept as close as I could—always.

Talking to God just came naturally to me when I was at her house—not because I was a particularly unusual or special

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<sup>1</sup> “He Keeps Me Singing,” Luther B. Bridgers, 1910, public domain.

child, but because Jesus was so real to me there. His living presence pervaded the atmosphere of her home. It felt so clean and good. Walking into it was like walking into heaven; you just knew you were where God was.

When my grandmother was otherwise occupied, and I had no one else to entertain me, I spent hours at her house talking to God on my own. I didn't go to Him with specific requests, or to pray about anything in particular. Most of the time I didn't know what to say. But it didn't matter. I simply talked to Jesus about whatever came to mind and sang little songs to Him, just like my grandmother—or “Nonnie,” as I called her—did.

Her example was easy for me to follow, even as a child, because she didn't get all technical when she prayed. She didn't focus on religious rules or fancy phrasing. She focused on fellowshiping and communing with God. For Nonnie, prayer was an encounter with Him. That's one reason I'm so committed to sharing with others the picture of prayer she lived out before me.

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*She didn't focus on religious rules or fancy phrasing. She focused on fellowshiping and communing with God. For Nonnie, prayer was an encounter with Him.*

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An encounter with God is what prayer is always supposed to be for all of us. And we all need to be reminded of it often. You see, as we learn more about the principles of prayer, we can get so focused on principles that we forget the Divine Person who established those principles. We can get so caught up in the mechanics of prayer that we miss out on life-changing moments with Him.

Billye Brim, another great prayer mentor, once asked me to tell her about my time growing up around my Nonnie. When she heard about Nonnie keeping me close, even through the night, she gasped. “Terri! All those years she was imparting to you! She understood how the anointing could be transferred through such close proximity.” I found that to be true *if* proximity is wrapped in love.

When the spirit of prayer is on someone as it was on my grandmother, it can get on those around them. I realize now that’s what happened to me during those times I spent with her. The prayers she prayed and the songs she sang got inside me; and without me even having to think about it, they began to flow out.

I’ll be forever grateful for the many moments I experienced so early in life because of my grandmother’s influence. One of the most memorable happened when I was about five or six years old.

My grandmother had just bought me a little turquoise and blue plaid umbrella that I really liked. It had a “crystal” knob on it, which I probably imagined was a diamond. Walking around her yard, twirling it in my hands, I was telling Jesus I loved Him and singing, “O, How I Love Jesus”<sup>2</sup> and “Revive Us Again.”<sup>3</sup> (I didn’t know what *revive* meant, but I knew it must be good.) As I strolled up the hill behind my grandmother’s house, twirling my little parasol, I suddenly heard someone audibly call my name. When I turned around to see who was calling me, no one was there. I ran inside and asked my grandmother, “Did you call me?”

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2 Whitfield, Frederick, originally titled “The Name of Jesus,” 1855. Public domain.

3 William Patton Mackay, 1863. Public domain.

“No, why?”

“I heard my name, Terri Lin. I heard someone say it!”

“Honey, that was the Lord,” she said. “If you hear Him call your name again, you just say what Samuel did in the Bible: ‘Yes, Lord. Here am I.’” (See 1 Samuel 3:9.)

I went back outside and listened. And though I can’t say I heard the audible voice of the Lord again, from then on I could hear it on the inside, and I was always listening for Him. I was always watching for Him to call my name again and speak to me, because I’d heard Him and I knew His voice.

### *Praying for My Dad*

Some of the life-changing moments I experienced in those early years at Nonnie’s house happened while I was praying for my dad, Kenneth Copeland. At the time of my earliest memories, he had not been born again. So praying for him was my grandmother’s top priority. I’ve heard that from the time he was a teenager he seemed determined to go to hell, and she was intent on doing everything she could to stop him. She would get up early in the morning (in the middle of the night for most people) to talk to God about my dad.

Dad still tells about times when, heading out the door on his way to a party, he’d hear my grandmother praying for him. “Oh, Jesus, don’t let him have any fun!” she’d say, “Don’t let him have any fun!”

As a faithful Baptist, Nonnie didn’t have the ability to pray in tongues to fall back on, but she had great faith in the Name of Jesus and in the blood of Jesus. Mostly, all she knew to pray at that time was, “In the Name of Jesus, God, save Kenneth”

and, “In the Name of Jesus, I plead the blood over him.” Whether walking the floor or on her knees, over and over she declared, “I plead the blood,” many times all night long.

I was about four years old, and she would say, “Let’s go pray for your daddy.” She never told me he wasn’t living for God, and I was too young to understand what was going on with him at the time. All I knew was that he smoked cigarettes, and he shouldn’t, and that I needed to pray for him. So, pray for him I did—not just with Nonnie but also by myself.

One day at her house, I found a little gray record player that had belonged to him. When I asked my grandmother about it, she said I could use it to play one of the Christian songs he’d recorded as a gift for her even though he wasn’t saved at the time. I plugged it in and laid on the floor under Nonnie’s coffee table, listening to a very young Kenneth Copeland sing, “Were You There?”<sup>4</sup> Before I knew it, I moved into a place of intercession for him. I didn’t know to call it that, of course. Having no idea what words to say, I cried and cried over my dad, yielding to the Spirit of prayer that had gotten in me by being around my grandmother. Alone under the coffee table, I poured out my heart to God on behalf of my father.

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*Yielding to the  
spirit of prayer,  
alone under the  
coffee table,  
I poured out  
my heart to God  
on behalf of  
my father.*

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One of my favorite places to pray for Dad was in Nonnie’s long hallway. It was perfect for

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<sup>4</sup> African-American spiritual, originating in slavery days. First published by William E. Barton, *Old Plantation Hymns* (Boston: Lamson, Wolfe and Company, 1899) p. 40. Public domain. Recorded by Kenneth Copeland, album *Bread Upon the Water*, KCP, 1979.



doing cartwheels and somersaults at night or on rainy days. Hanging on the wall there were three framed pictures of my dad—publicity photos taken when he was pursuing a career as a recording artist. In one of them, he held a cigarette in his hand.

That cigarette really bothered me! When it caught my eye, as I was walking or cartwheeling down the hallway, I'd stop and put my hand on the picture and pray over him. "God, save Daddy." I was still praying that even after he gave his life to Jesus. It was another five years before he surrendered to the ministry. During those five years, there was a lot of "working out his salvation" that he had to do.

Looking back now at those little hallway prayers, I don't think many believers realize how much power there is in just consistently lifting things to the Lord. They think prayers must be long and sophisticated-sounding to be effective. But that's not the case.

We can just lift to God whatever is on our hearts very simply, and He will hear us and do amazing things. Of course, we must mature in prayer, but it doesn't mean we must complicate prayer. It's the faith released in those prayers that does the work.

### *A Continual Communion*

While growing up, I never really stopped to think about why Jesus was so real to me when I was at Nonnie and Granddad's house. As an adult though, I've come to understand the reason. It was because Jesus' presence was so real to them, especially her. Jesus had always been her all in all.

When she was just a little girl, she would climb up on the windmill on her parents' West Texas farm to be alone with God and talk to Him. By the time she was eleven or twelve years old, she had discovered that my grandfather's sister also liked talking to God, and they began getting together to pray. Good friends, they liked to hold their prayer meetings down in the cellar.

My dad once asked why they chose the cellar, and Nonnie said, "Because down there we could shout and praise the Lord as loud as we wanted to without getting in trouble." As it turns out, the rest of her family didn't appreciate noisy prayer; they were of a stuffer persuasion. When Nonnie and Aunt Barbara got together, however, they got so excited about Jesus when they prayed, they couldn't help but shout, pray, and then shout some more.

As Nonnie put it, "We were never prayer-satisfied."

They never got enough of the Lord.

That remained true throughout my grandmother's life. It was the primary secret behind her spiritual success. Nonnie loved God's Word and was a fabulous Bible teacher. She beautifully laid out the Scripture line upon line, precept by precept. Sometimes word by word. But interestingly, the only topics I recall on prayer were "The Lord's Prayer"<sup>5</sup> and maybe a few others.

Kenneth E. Hagin said, "Some things in prayer are better caught than taught." My grandmother exemplified that. She didn't often attempt to "give lessons" from Scripture on

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<sup>5</sup> Available through Kenneth Copeland Ministries at [kcm.org/shop](http://kcm.org/shop).

everything she knew by the Spirit. She was so full of God's Word though, the Spirit could easily lead her. Without any doubt, she knew God.

She didn't just know *about* Him; she *knew* Him, face to face. She and God were a team. She fellowshiped with Him like you would with any other person you knew very well. There was continual communion between them, and it wasn't just a communion of one kind. She knew Him on every level.

She knew Him in worship. She loved Him so much that her whole life was a worship to Him. She lived for Him. But because she talked to Him so much, when she needed something from Him, she could be somewhat stout in telling Him about it. While she always approached Him with deep humility and respect, she would talk to Him really straight. "Lord, this is what I need from You," she'd say. "You promised it in the Bible, and I fully expect You to do it for me."

She thought every believer should have that kind of boldness. And when she exercised it herself, it was parting-the-Red-Sea time! Like Moses stretching out his rod, she expected God to do the impossible, if necessary. And as far as I know, she always got whatever she needed from Him.

She didn't get things from Him just for herself, either. She prayed all the time for other people. After she passed away, my sister and I were cleaning out her house and we found boxes and baskets filled with pictures. Some were snapshots, others were formal portraits. There were even some baby pictures. But they all had one thing in common—each had a little red cross drawn on the forehead of the person in the photo.

I had no idea who the people were, and my sister and I

laughed together imagining what someone else might have thought if they'd found those photos. They might have concluded our family was part of some kind of strange cult. We knew full well, however, what those red crosses meant. They were a sign my grandmother had prayed for those people.

I remember seeing her sit at the desk, or sometimes on the floor, with a big pillow, praying over picture after picture. With great purpose and intensity, she'd plead the blood of Jesus, in the Name of Jesus, over each one as she marked them with her red pencil. To her, those little red crosses were a point of contact for her faith.

A few years into Dad's ministry, he heard the Lord say within him: *You are going to be a success if I have to wake you up in the mornings and put you to bed at night.* Stunned, he responded to the Lord, "Why, Lord, would You do that for me? There have been greater men than me to fail." The Lord emphatically said, *Because I have your mother in My face!*

She didn't begin to get a revelation of the Word of Faith, as we know it, until after my dad started preaching. But in the denominational church she attended, she'd heard all her life about the power in the blood and in the Name of Jesus. So, that's where she put her faith hooks. She used both the blood and the Name of Jesus in her prayers continually, in a myriad of different ways.

Sometimes, she might just sit quietly, praying for someone and pleading the blood over them in Jesus' Name. Other times, she got so excited she paced the floor. Flinging her hands back and forth as if she were physically sprinkling the blood of Jesus over some person or situation, she'd pray with great passion and vigor: "I plead the blood! I plead the

blood!” When I heard that, even as a small girl, I knew power was being released. Something supernatural was happening.

If my grandmother had known more about releasing faith in the Word earlier in her life, some of her prayers might have come to pass sooner. But since she didn’t, she just kept persevering. She kept doing what she did know to do until she got the result she was after.

Were there times when situations she prayed about didn’t turn out the way she wanted? It’s possible, I suppose. But I never knew about them. As far as I could see, all the things she prayed for happened. Some even after she went to heaven.

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In my eyes, this gave everything she said great validity. For me, when she talked, it was like God talking. If she’d said, “Terri, tomorrow the sun is going to come up in the west instead of the east,” I would have been outside looking west the next morning. Her words were so filled with faith, it was easy for me to believe her, and when I was with her it was easy to believe God. Just sitting in the same room with her, I could sense His presence.

As a result, throughout my teenage years and as an adult, I always listened to her and did what she said. If I had a problem she would say, “Take it to Jesus” or “Hit it in tongues, honey! Hit it in tongues!” And I did!

If she said, “It’s going to be all right,” I believed it. If she said, “Terri, I want you to stop that” (whatever “that” was),

I didn't stop out of fear, I did it out of confidence. (That fact by itself ought to be reason enough for parents of teenagers to want to develop an effective prayer life!)

### ***Comfortable in the Throne Room***

My grandmother has been in heaven now for decades, yet the effects of her prayer life still ripple across the earth. We see them all the time in the testimonies we receive here at Kenneth Copeland Ministries. People are constantly calling and writing to say things like, "I was healed at one of your Believers' Conventions," or "My whole family got born again watching *Believer's Voice of Victory* on television, and now we're learning to live by faith in God's Word." Although most people don't realize it, every one of those testimonies can be traced back to my grandmother's prayers.

They're a direct result not only of the prayers she prayed for my dad, but of the picture of prayer she lived out before him. He learned by watching her, just as I did, that prayer always comes first before any decision or making any move. Many other ministers learned that from her as well, because eventually, her place in prayer blossomed into a ministry.

Through the Bible studies and prayer meetings she led, her influence spread. The meetings themselves were generally small, with only about fifty to seventy-five people attending. (I think the biggest group she ever had numbered about 200.) Yet today, I can count fifteen to twenty powerful churches and ministries that came out of those small meetings. Some of them went worldwide and begat other ministries.

Did all that happen because my grandmother was someone special?

No, it happened because she liked to walk and talk with Jesus. It happened because back in the 1920s, as a little girl on a farm in West Texas, she embarked on an adventure. She climbed up on a windmill, began communing and cooperating with God...and never stopped. That made her special.

Increasingly, as she grew older, my grandmother's whole life became absorbed in that adventure. Other things began to mean less and less. My grandfather was a very prominent salesman in the organization for which he worked, so when they were younger there was a significant social element to Nonnie's life, and she entertained a lot. But as the years passed, she lost her desire for it.

After my husband, George, and I got married, she began giving me things from her house: silverware, lovely dishes and crystal. "Here, take this," she once said. "I don't want it. You're young; you go entertain. I don't have any interest in that anymore."

She might occasionally watch television, and once in a great while she might go to a movie with us, but it was rare, then eventually not at all. She wasn't against those things. She never said, "I don't go to movies," or chided anyone else for going to them. She just wasn't interested in such activities. She was too busy doing what Colossians 3 says:

Aim at and seek the [rich, eternal treasures] that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. And set your minds and keep them set on what is above (the higher things), not on the things that are on the earth. For [as far as this world is concerned] you have died, and your [new, real] life is hidden with Christ in God (verses 1-3, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Vinita Copeland's desire for eternal things was what drew her into prayer so much. It kept her attention on Christ, at the right hand of God. "He's seated there, and so are you," she'd say. Then, in prayer, she'd go right into the Father's throne room and take us with her.

Oh my, did she have a place in His throne room! She was comfortable there. She always revered it, but she knew she had a right to be there, not because she was someone special, but because of Jesus.

By faith in Him and by His blood, we all have that right. We're all told in Hebrews 4:16 to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." What made my grandmother different from a lot of other Christians is that she actually acted on that verse. She didn't just believe it and quote it; she did what it said—not just occasionally but all the time.

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That's what it takes for God's presence and power to become a reality in our lives. Simply knowing what the Bible says isn't enough. It's when we take hold of God's Word and activate our relationship with Him around it that it comes to life for us. It's as we fellowship with Him over the Scriptures and act on them that we

experience Him and get to know Him face to face.

Jeanne Wilkerson, another powerful praying woman of God, wrote in her book *Contact With God*:



You can rattle off Scriptures all day long, but if you don't apply the Word in your life through obedience, then that Word can't accomplish what it is sent to do.... The Word of God has been broadcast by radio, television, and word of mouth to millions and millions of people. But not all of those people have been saved, healed, and delivered. That tells us that if the Word could accomplish mighty works on its own, then we would see many more nations of the world on their knees before God. The problem is that the people who do hear God's Word lack the obedience in their prayer lives to make it work. That is why there is so little return on all the Word that goes out into the earth.<sup>6</sup>

A lot more supernatural things would happen to all of us if we applied in prayer what we see about it in the Word and lived in the presence of God like my grandmother did. Her continual awareness of Him was the reason I heard Him call my name that day at her house. Because He was so real to her, He was real to me. If it had been otherwise, He might still have spoken to me but I might not have known what I was hearing. Like the people who heard God speak when Jesus was being baptized in the Jordan River (see John 12:29), I might have just thought it thundered.

We've all missed supernatural manifestations of God at times. We've all walked right past them on occasion because we weren't living in close contact with Him. But the good news is, we can change that.

There isn't anything Vinita Copeland had with God that anyone else can't have. There isn't anything in God that has

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<sup>6</sup> Jeanne Wilkerson, *Contact With God* (Branson: Bilye Brim Ministries) p. 37-38.

happened to her or to me that couldn't happen to you. So, even as you read this book, go boldly to the throne of grace with great faith and expectation. Take the scriptures and insights you find here and commune with God over them. Launch out into new places in the Spirit, and let prayer become for you, more than ever before, a living, life-changing encounter with the Lord.

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CHAPTER 2



Balancing the  
Legal and Vital  
Aspects of Prayer



## CHAPTER 2



# Balancing the Legal and Vital Aspects of Prayer

Some years ago, I was invited to minister for two days at a conference held by Word of His Power Church with Pastors Jay and Sarah Jayaraman. I was honored to be with this church of prayer-focused, prayer-hungry people led by pastors who love the Word of God and the flow of the Spirit. As I sat on the front row of the church, about to take the pulpit, the Lord spoke one sentence to me: *Prayer has two sides: a legal side and a vital side.*

Having grown up with the importance of the Word drilled into my thinking and having seen the flow of the Spirit operate regularly through my grandmother, I thought I had a fairly well-developed understanding of the importance of those two sides of prayer. I knew that successful prayer is rooted in both. I also knew that Jesus said in John 4:23, “True worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; *for the*

*Father is seeking such to worship Him” (New King James Version).* So to a degree, I understood how precious to the Lord it is when we yield to the Spirit’s lead while staying strictly in line with the Word.

But in that instant as I was about to minister in the Jayaramans’ church, the Lord spoke to me about it with deeper revelation. He extended an invitation—not only for me, but for everyone else there—to experience Him in a way that I didn’t recall having experienced before. Suddenly, whatever I had planned to speak on left me, and within seconds, or maybe even less, an entire sermon seemed to drop into my spirit at once. I knew exactly what to say.

The remainder of the sessions unfolded that same way. It was as if the words were set in front of me like steppingstones, each one leading to a higher place in the Lord. By the end of the last session, no one would, or even could, move. Finally, the pastor dismissed everyone quietly, but no one left. The

presence of the Father was resting on us in such a way that no one wanted to disturb it.

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*“There are two sides of prayer: the legal side and the vital side” sounds so simple, and it is—but there is an eternity’s worth of revelation and experience waiting to be tapped into.*

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What an awesome door of the Spirit He opened for us in those meetings with just that one sentence! “There are two sides of prayer: the legal side and the vital side” sounds so simple, and it is—but when *HE* speaks it the way He did that day, there is an eternity’s worth of revelation and experience waiting to be tapped into.

Your mind may be following the same track right now that mine did that day. I thought, *I know what vital means. It means "important."* But when the Lord dropped that word into my spiritual consciousness, it was accompanied by a holy hunger to know what He meant. My heart began pulling on the Holy Spirit for His definition. As I preached, it became clearer: The vital side of prayer is the living side of prayer!

The funny thing is that a good dictionary tells the same story...without the revelation, of course. Merriam-Webster says, among other things, that *vital* is defined as "full of life and vigor, a manifestation of life, a characteristic of life, fundamentally concerned with or affecting life, tending to renew or refresh the living."

We often use the word *vital* to refer to something that's essential. We say, "That's vital information," or "It's vital for us to get that." Referring to the body, we call organs such as the heart, lungs and liver "vital organs" (or "the vitals") because the body can't function without them. The same is true with prayer. The living side is vital. We can't function without it.

Yet, the legal side is essential as well. And perhaps even more essential is the balance of the two. For prayer to be effective, and for it to be the encounter with God it's intended to be, we must understand and value both sides.

The living side is revealed to us through our relationship with God and the work of the Holy Spirit. That's the side I experienced so powerfully as a child with my grandmother. The legal side of prayer is revealed to us through God's written Word. Nonnie showed me that side by her persistence. She showed it to me by staying in God's face continually for my dad.

Nonnie had an unquenchable hunger for the Word. She was writing in her Bible before markers and highlighters were “cool.” She was not only a student of the Word; she taught the Word. Everything had to measure up to the Word. I’m sure that’s why growing in her walk with the Lord and developing in spiritual things came so easily to her. The Word was the foundation and gave parameters for what was God and what wasn’t.

Once Dad started preaching faith, Nonnie quickly began to apply the Word in ways she hadn’t before. Faith brought further revelation that enabled her to pray even more effectively. She gained a clearer understanding of spiritual law and how to apply it. Previously, the devil had only *thought* he had a fight with her. Now she really knew how to put him on the run. Faith in the Word gave her an even deeper confidence before the Father, and great boldness in dealing with the devil!

Whether or not she could have quoted John Wesley, she instinctively knew that, as he put it:

It seems God is limited by our prayer life—that He can do nothing for humanity unless someone asks Him.

That’s a great quote to remember. But why is it true? Because God is a God of supreme order. He designed all things in heaven and on earth to work based on spiritual law and natural law, and when God created Adam, He made this legal declaration:

God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion...over all the earth.... So God created man in his own image, in the



image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion...upon the earth (Genesis 1:26-28).

With those words, God granted mankind, by law, a dual position of authority on earth. He gave them authority in the spirit realm, and out of the realm of the spirit they were empowered to exercise dominion over the natural realm. Then, “God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good” (verse 31).

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*God granted mankind authority in the spirit realm, and out of that realm they were empowered to exercise dominion over the natural realm.*

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If you’ve read the entire Creation account, you’ll remember that God had already pronounced the various aspects of His handiwork to be “good.” Yet in this instance, He said it was “*very* good.” What made the difference? The legal authority that God had given to mankind. Although creation was good on its own, when God put man in place, it became even better. When man took his seat of dominion and authority, everything started working together in a way that was *very good*.

### *Not Just a Puppet System*

In Psalm 8, David marvels over the fact that God would grant human beings such authority. He says:

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent (majestic and glorious) is Your name in all the earth! You have set

Your glory on [or above] the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and unweaned infants You have established strength because of Your foes, that You might silence the enemy and the avenger. When I view and consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained and established, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of [earthborn] man that You care for him? Yet You have made him but a little lower than God... and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yes, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatever passes along the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent (majestic and glorious) is Your name in all the earth! (verses 1-9, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Those verses reveal again that God gave mankind authority over the earth and everything in it. He did not design people just to be puppet dictators that He controlled, either. No, He gave us full dominion. His desire, of course, was for us to exercise that gift through a vital, or living, connection with Him. But whether we did so or not, God would not go back on His Word. No matter what, He would operate according to the law He had established. He had declared, "Let man have dominion," and that's how it was forever going to be.

This meant that Adam could legally invite into his realm of authority any influence he chose. If he had only invited God into this realm, the law of the spirit of life would have remained the only spiritual influence on the earth. That was God's perfect will. But Adam chose to sin and open the door for Satan.

Romans 6:23 says, “The wages of sin is death.” That, too, is a spiritual law, and Adam’s sin set it in motion. What’s more, because as the first man he represented all mankind, the effects of his choice were multiplied. The seed of spiritual death was lodged in all humanity and Satan became the god of this world.

I don’t know if you’ve ever thought about this, but Adam did not repent of that sin. He did not! If he had, things might have been different. Another spiritual law could possibly have been set in motion that would have superseded the law of sin and death. As with the natural laws of physics, when a higher spiritual law is applied in a situation, it can override a lower law because it has more authority.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8:2, for example: “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” That tells us the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is the higher of those two laws. It doesn’t get rid of the law of sin and death or make it go away, but it overpowers and dominates it.

When Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, however, he did not set any higher spiritual law in motion. He did not repent and invite God into the situation. Therefore, the law of sin and death began to reign on earth, and Satan continued to use mankind’s lawful authority to rule here.

It was a tragic situation, but God will not break the law for anyone. He wouldn’t do it for Adam, and He won’t do it for you and me. As long as Adam’s lease on earth exists, God has to be invited in.

How do we invite Him in? By praying in accordance with

the spiritual laws and precious promises He has laid out for us in the Bible—His written Word.

Some people point to 2 Corinthians 3:6 and discount the importance of Word-based prayer. They say, “Well, ‘the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life,’ so, I just go with the spirit. I just pray and fellowship with God and seek His presence.” But here’s a news flash: God will never lead you to seek His presence apart from His Word. On the contrary! Psalm 138:2 says He has exalted His Word above His Name—and His Name represents His presence.

Yes, the Apostle Paul did say, “The letter killeth.” But the entire Bible is made up of letters, and it certainly doesn’t kill us. So, Paul obviously wasn’t talking about Scripture there. He wasn’t even talking about the Old Testament portion of it. He was talking about the part of the Old Covenant that has now been fulfilled.

What part has been fulfilled? The Old Testament system of keeping laws as a means of attaining righteousness in order to gain relationship with God. That Old Testament system was like trying to climb a ladder. With every righteous act you come up in righteousness and get closer to God. But it’s kind of like the game of Chutes and Ladders. When you mess up (which you most certainly will), you must go back down the ladder. The blood of an animal must be offered to cover your sin, and then you are allowed to start climbing again.

Jesus, through His life on earth, death on the cross, resurrection and ascension, became the ultimate fulfillment of that Old Testament system. Taking the sin of all mankind on Himself, He paid the price for us to be forgiven and made the righteousness of God by faith in Him. He initiated a new

system, or covenant, that Hebrews 10:20 calls a “new and living way” by which we can “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16). We no longer must work to attain righteousness, but rather we work to express the righteous nature of God that is within us.

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*We no longer must work to attain righteousness, but rather we work to express the righteous nature of God that is within us.*

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### ***The Right Kind of Prayer Prayed the Right Way***

Every person ever born has built into them a desire to come to God. Because we are all His “offspring” (Acts 17:29) and all human spirits originally proceeded from Him, people in general have a desire to reconnect to where they came from—to pray.

Born-again believers, especially, sense the call to pray. But they don’t always respond to that call. Some push it down because prayer intimidates them. It seems too big. They think, *I don’t know how to pray. I don’t know what to say to God.*

Other believers may attempt to pray, but then they get discouraged. They back away from prayer because their prayers don’t seem to produce any results. James 5:16 tells us what the problem is in such cases. It says, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

Notice it’s not just any prayer that avails much or gets results. It’s the right kind of prayer, prayed the right way, that gets the job done.

*Is there really a right and wrong way to pray?* you might wonder.

Yes. James 4:3 says, “You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss” (*New King James Version*). But that doesn’t have to scare us, because we have the Bible. When our prayers aren’t getting results, we can find out from the Word of God and by the illumination of the Spirit where we’ve gone awry.

God is *for* us! He’s never going to say, “You prayed that wrong. Forget you!” No, He’ll keep working with us. If we keep seeking His wisdom in the Word and paying attention to the promptings of His Spirit, He’ll teach us whatever we need to know.

The Word will tell us, for instance, how to be bold in prayer. It will tell us how to be reverent and humble. It will teach us about the different kinds of prayer—such as the prayer of agreement, the prayer of petition, the prayer of praise and worship, and the prayer of faith—not because we have to stop and analyze what type of prayer is needed in every situation, but so we can easily follow the Holy Spirit in using them.

As we learn about prayer from the Word, all the aspects of it start to come together. They become for us the sword of the Spirit, and great power is delivered. I like how James 5 describes this in the *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*. It says:

The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working]. Elijah was a human being with a nature such as we have [with feelings, affections, and a constitution like ours]; and he prayed earnestly for it not to rain, and no rain fell on the earth for three years and six months. And [then] he prayed again and the

heavens supplied rain and the land produced its crops  
[as usual] (verses 16-18).

Those verses point to Elijah as our example. So, let's think about him for a moment. What kind of power was delivered through his life? Well, let's see...

Elijah prayed, and it didn't rain for three years. During those three years, the ravens fed him by the brook Cherith. When the brook dried up and the ravens stopped coming, a widow fed him from a jar of meal that never ran out. When the widow's son died, Elijah raised him from the dead.

After that, Elijah called down fire from heaven and killed 450 prophets of Baal. Then he prayed for the rains to return, and when it began to rain, even in the mud he outran the king's chariots.

The greatest thing of all, however, was that Elijah learned to recognize the still, small voice of the Lord—a voice that was small, not because it lacked power but because it was quiet and subtle. The Lord didn't speak quietly to Elijah because He wanted to make Himself hard to hear. He did it to train Elijah to be sensitive to Him. He wanted Elijah to learn to respond to even His slightest whisper.

Psalm 32:9 says, "Do not be like the horse or like the mule, which have no understanding, which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you" (*New King James Version*). Have you ever heard of a horse that is trained to neck-rein? A neck-reined horse is a horse that's so responsive to a rider's direction that you don't have to pull on the bit in his mouth to turn him. You just lay the rein on the side of his neck in the direction you want him to go, or lean a

little this way or that way, and the horse will respond.

That's how we want to be with the Holy Spirit. We want to be sensitive and responsive to His slightest touch. One way we cultivate such sensitivity is by learning from the Word how to distinguish between the Holy Spirit's leadings and the impulses of our flesh. The more we're able to do that, the more we'll be able to pray like Elijah.

Learning from the written Word how to be led inwardly by the Spirit doesn't readily "compute" to the reasoning mind. Our Father, who longs for us to partner with Him through prayer, has a beautiful way of opening our understanding so that we can not only grow to maturity in our prayer lives but thoroughly enjoy the journey.

The spiritual laws that define prayer can be taught, but the nature of prayer and the ways of the Spirit are most often "caught." Kenneth E. Hagin referenced this quite often when teaching prayer. So do I.

Now since as Jesus said, His words are spirit and life, we know we can gain understanding of anything related to prayer directly from the Word of God. But gladly, God has added to that the joy of learning by praying together. The fastest way to grow in prayer is by having an experienced, Word-grounded, Spirit-led mentor. This is where prayer is best "caught."

Clearly, my grandmother was the first and foremost mentor in my life for prayer and innumerable other aspects of life. Although I heard her teach prayer in her Bible class, it was not a frequent topic. I learned by "watching" in prayer with her, but I didn't have much working knowledge of Scripture. For a Copeland, that's a serious deficiency.



About the time I turned thirty, I received clear direction from the Lord to begin teaching prayer. I respectfully told Him, “No, thank You.” Since I had little Bible instruction, I *actually* had the thought, *I don’t think the Bible says that much about how to pray. Can you believe it?! My argument continued: Lord, I don’t have much chapter and verse from the Bible on how to pray. And I’m a Copeland! Without chapter and verse, I could lose my birthright!*

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*If you don’t pray, the power remains locked up. If you do pray but you don’t pray the right prayer the right way, the power can’t do what it’s designed to do.*

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But thank God for His patience and His system of mentors in the Kingdom. He had a true treasure waiting for me: Sister Lynne Hammond. Listening to a message of hers on prayer, my eyes were opened. I could “see” the ways of the Spirit revealed in the Word, then watch them unfold as she prayed. Her way of tying the Word with following the leading of the Spirit was evidence of her love for the Father and her closeness with the Master. For me, this was prayer-life changing.

Quickly, I gained confidence enough to step out and teach from the Word, with chapter and verse, what I knew by the Spirit. For my weekly “Prayer School” I would often listen to Lynne, then go teach what I learned, followed by demonstration of the Spirit as we prayed. Prayer School grew rapidly as well as many, many Word-founded, Spirit-led prayer groups.

Through Sister Hammond’s ministry, I came to realize that *all* spiritual truths can and must be applied to all elements of

the Kingdom. The same spiritual laws that govern faith, love, the fruit and the gifts of the Spirit are fundamental in prayer. That makes sense since prayer is working with God, doing Kingdom business.

I have been privileged to benefit as a student and as a friend of Sister Lynne for many years now. She is one of the many mentors, only some of whom are mentioned in this book. Their value to my walk with God is incalculable. Because of them, I've been taught and caught many encounters with Him.

“But Pastor Terri, I don't know anyone! How can I 'catch' prayer like that?”

I'm glad I heard Brother Hagin say that we can connect with the anointing on someone by listening with an open heart to their messages or simply reading their books (like this one!). Paul said in Ephesians 3:2-4, “Assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace (His unmerited favor) that was entrusted to me [to dispense to you] for your benefit...as I already briefly wrote you. *When you read this you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ*” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Of course, you can pick up on a person's unscriptural, carnal motives and behaviors as well. Jesus said, “Be careful what you are hearing” (Mark 4:24, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). That's why your own study of Scripture and fellowship with the Father by the Spirit is essential. He will never give you a serpent or a scorpion when you are hungry for the Bread of Life (Luke 11:11).

Describing Elijah's prayer life, Sister Lynne said that “Elijah, through prayer, projected God onto a situation to stop

things and to start things. One aspect of prayer is to release God out of your own spirit's deposit. The power residing in us is released through prayer. To not pray locks up this power."

How much of God's power do you, as a believer, have inside your spirit? According to Ephesians 1:19-21 you have within you:

...the immeasurable and unlimited and surpassing greatness of His power...as demonstrated in the working of His mighty strength, which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His [own] right hand in the heavenly [places], far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named [above every title that can be conferred], not only in this age and in this world, but also in the age and the world which are to come (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Now *that's* power! It's God's own power. It's *Him*.

It's up to you, though, to connect with that power and release it through prayer. If you don't pray, the power remains locked up. If you do pray, but you don't pray the right prayer the right way, the power can't do what it's designed to do.

Even natural power needs to be rightly regulated and directed. We see this with electricity. For example, my electrician will not use an aluminum ladder. He knows that when working with electrical power, that's not a safe thing to do.

There are safe ways, however, to channel electricity that provide the right supply of power and direct it exactly where it is needed. That's a wonderful thing. If you aren't familiar with

the laws of electricity though, or you misapply them, it's much less wonderful. You don't *eat* toast, you *become* toast. (I'm not an electrical expert, but I'm smart enough to know that!)

Prayer itself is powerful because of the great power it releases. To use another metaphor, prayer is powerful like a gun is powerful—because of the ammunition it delivers. But you need to know how to load your prayer gun. You need to know how and where to aim it so that your prayers hit the mark.

Just think how much depends upon prayer!

The salvation of souls depends on it. Souls are not won nor lives transformed without prayer.

Forgiveness depends on it. Without prayer, forgiveness cannot be received and without forgiveness people remain trapped in sin.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit depends on it.

Our nation depends on it. According to 1 Timothy 2:1-4, our prayers for those in authority maintain conditions in our nation that allow us to live peaceful lives in godliness.

All you have to do is look around at society these days to see that somebody, a lot of somebodies, didn't pray. On the other hand, you can look in the Bible at people who did pray and see the many wonderful things that have happened as a result. For example:

- Abraham prayed, and Isaac was born.
- Moses prayed and received from God the first five books of the Bible, including the Ten Commandments.
- Joshua prayed and the sun stood still, and Israel was victorious.

- David prayed and he slew giants, became king, built a natural kingdom, laid the foundation for the Messianic kingdom, and—most importantly—found the heart of God.
- Solomon prayed, became the wisest and wealthiest man ever, built the Temple, and the glory appeared.
- The prophets prayed and fire fell, armies fell and lions went hungry.
- Jesus prayed—and thank God He did, because without prayer there would have been no choosing of the disciples, the Father would not have sent the Holy Spirit, and Jesus would be unemployed because He ever lives to make intercession for you and me (Hebrews 7:25).

No wonder 1 Thessalonians 5:17 tells us to “pray without ceasing”!

### ***Keeping Your Prayer Life on Track***

The phrase *pray without ceasing* doesn't mean you have to literally pray nonstop. It means “remain in constant living communion with God.” Follow Vinita Copeland's example. Don't ever disconnect from the process of prayer. Develop a constant awareness of the Lord's presence. Stay thirsty for the waters of the Spirit. Stay hungry for the bread of the Word. Continually cultivate both the vital and the legal sides of prayer.

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*Develop a constant awareness of the Lord's presence. Stay thirsty for the waters of the Spirit. Stay hungry for the bread of the Word.*

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Emphasizing one and not the other will throw your prayer life off balance. If you emphasize the relationship aspect of prayer without understanding from the Word how the laws of the spirit work, you have no guidelines. You can have the best of intentions and without realizing it, be misled—at a minimum, costing you effectiveness, and at the worst, leaving you vulnerable to deception.

God's Word keeps your relationship with Him on track. He lays out for you there in black and white: "This is who I am. This is what I do. This is how I do it." You can take every relational experience you have in prayer, put it next to the Word, and find out if it's truly of Him.

Over the years, I've watched what happens when people forget to do this. I've seen well-meaning believers attribute things to God that weren't of Him at all. I've heard things called "moves of God" that proved not to be of God at all. Sadly, good people have gone astray because they were looking for outward manifestations without confirming if they fit within the parameters of the Word of God—or the legal side.

Even in worship services, people can get caught up in spiritual-sounding songs, and because they experience an emotional response, they equate those songs with worship. But just singing lyrics that have God's Name in them doesn't mean we're truly honoring Him. Just saying and doing things that seem to look and sound like worship doesn't mean they are.

Remember the account of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4? Cain brought his offering to the Lord and put it on the altar in an act of worship that looked a lot like his brother's. But God didn't accept Cain's offering as He did Abel's. He wasn't pleased with it. The only one pleased with Cain's offering was Cain.

Our great God and our blessed Savior deserve our best efforts to be founded on Scripture. This is the only way to be sure we please Him. If we are casual about what matters in prayer, He can only be casual with His response. “Those who honor me I will honor, and those that think little of Me shall be lightly regarded” (1 Samuel 2:30, *A Faithful Version*).

This is especially true in worship, which can be the highest form of prayer. Whether in private or in a congregation, we often get very excited about some of the songs we sing because they please us. We assume God is also pleased because they sound good to us. Maybe they move our feelings or touch our emotions. That’s definitely not a bad thing in itself. Yet neither is it solely qualifying as worship. To touch the heart of God, we must judge ourselves and our music to keep it in line with His Word.

Consider this: It’s much easier to give someone the perfect gift when they tell you what they really want. Then, armed with that information and your desire to please them, you can best show your love. God has written down for us what He likes, what pleases Him, what will best draw us closer to Him. Then if we are careful to consider that and offer our praise and worship with yielded hearts full of love, we can expect His heart toward us to overflow. The more we understand and employ what He has revealed to us from His Word, the more we will encounter His manifest presence in our praise and every other kind of prayer. It isn’t hard or deep. Just ask Him to show you as you read the Word. Then pay attention.

First John 2:20, 27 tell us we “have an unction from the Holy One” and that “anointing teacheth you of all things.” When the inward witness lines up with the truth of the Word, *POW!* We have contact! Watch for that witness.

Lynne Hammond said, “Check inside to see what the finger of God is resting on.”

How do you discern what is of the Holy Spirit and what isn't?

By having the Word of God built into you. That happens with consistency, over time.

Jesus said, “*Continue* in my word...and ye shall know the truth” (John 8:31-32). He also said His sheep follow Him because “they know his voice” (John 10:4). The more you continue in God's written Word, the better you'll be able to hear His voice and recognize His leading. The better you hear His voice, the better you become at following Him. Being led by God's Word and His Spirit gives the Lord the seat of honor He deserves.



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CHAPTER 3



A Living  
Relationship



## CHAPTER 3

# A Living Relationship

Just as you won't know God's voice or be able to accurately follow the Holy Spirit apart from the written Word, this is also true: Apart from time spent fellowshiping with the Lord, you won't fully be able to understand the written Word. You'll miss the spirit of it.

To truly follow Jesus, it takes both! It takes knowing God's Word *and* knowing Him.

All too often, we fall short of victory in our lives by trying to get by on one without the other. We read in the Bible that we're to pray, for instance, so we start doing it. We start getting up early every morning to spend time in prayer simply because the Scriptures (and maybe the pastor) said we should. But while that's a good reason to begin praying regularly, by itself it's not enough.

Over time, if you continue to press yourself to pray solely out of a legalistic sense of obligation, one of two things will

happen: You will either become a very cranky person, or you'll quit.

Prayer without the presence of God is hard. It's hard to do and it will make you hard. Even though prayer is technically a spiritual activity, if you persist in it without contacting the living Spirit of God, you become a spiritually dry person. You may still be rigorously religious, you may remain convinced you're doing what is right before God, but if you keep praying without Him, without experiencing His living, breathing presence—you are likely to just become mean, mad at God, mad at people, or all the above!

That's what the Pharisees did. They were extremely rigid when it came to keeping rules. They prided themselves on being sticklers for God's Word. But they knew so little of God Himself that when Jesus, the Living Word, showed up, they didn't recognize and receive Him. Instead, they hated and rejected Him, taking it out unmercifully on those to whom they were supposed to show God's love.

As Christians, we don't like to think we could ever be like that, but sometimes it happens to people, usually little by little. I learned a poem in the fourth grade called "Little Things"<sup>7</sup> by Julia Abigail Fletcher Carney. The first two stanzas have stuck with me over many years.

Little drops of water,  
Little grains of sand,  
Make the mighty ocean  
And the pleasant land.

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<sup>7</sup> Julia Abigail Fletcher Carney, 1845, public domain.

Thus the little minutes,  
Humble though they be,  
Make the mighty ages  
Of Eternity.

Little by little. Little by little. Even the slightest contact with God's presence in prayer opens your heart more to Him. Every moment of fellowship with His Spirit makes you more receptive to His Word, and makes it more alive in you.

On the other hand, if you don't have the breath of the Spirit and the presence of God on your relationship with Him, the opposite occurs. What your pastor teaches you from the Word becomes difficult to receive. You hear the Word only by rote or rule, and begin to develop a resistance to it and even an attitude of resentment toward it.

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*If you don't have the breath of the Spirit and the presence of God on your relationship with Him, what your pastor teaches you from the Word becomes difficult to receive.*

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People who slip into this kind of legalism leave churches sometimes, and they don't even know why. They just get so agitated sitting in their seat at church they can't stand it anymore. One time, a lady who'd been in our church for years was walking into the building to hear me teach about healing and said to one of the people with her, "You know what? I've had it. I'm leaving this church. I've had enough."

"Had enough of what?" the person asked.

She stopped, thought a moment, then said, "I don't know."

This lady was a leader in our church, not on staff, but very active in our healing ministry. She eventually left and was gone for eight years. She came back a few years ago and sat in the church service. The day she walked into church she cried and cried. She couldn't think of any reason why she'd ever left. She was well-versed in the written Word, so she knew there'd been no scriptural (or legal) reason. Somewhere along the way though, little by little, she'd let the living presence of God on the Word we were teaching slip away from her. She'd become resistant and hardened to it. And that hardness had moved her out.

My husband, Pastor George, often warns people: "Don't allow yourself to become inoculated against the Word and say to yourself, 'Oh, I've heard that.'" When we have come, by experience, to expect to always discover more of Him in the Word, we will gladly embrace every word, no matter the repetitions.

### *Keep Coming to Jesus*

Those of us who consider ourselves "faith people" might assume that the Word could never make us hard. After all, we love the Word! We live by faith in the Word! We can't get enough of it. Even so, we need to remember what Jesus told the Pharisees: "You search and investigate and pore over the Scriptures diligently, but you don't come to Me so that you might have life." (See John 5:39-40, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition.*)

Shocking as it may sound, as believers we've sometimes made that mistake. Determined to master the prayer of faith, for instance, we've read every scripture about it we can find.

We've studied those scriptures. We've heard sermons galore on them. Many of us can even quote by memory the instructions Jesus laid down for us in Mark 11:22-24:

Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

It's good that we know those verses. They're important. They reveal a spiritual law; but please note that, unlike religious laws, spiritual law isn't legalistic. It's not just something we're supposed to do because the Lord said, "OK, these are going to be the rules." In other words, we may do what Jesus said just because He said it. But He didn't say it just because He wanted to. No, spiritual laws reveal how the spirit realm operates.

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*Spiritual laws  
reveal how  
the spirit realm  
operates.*

*We call them laws  
because they work,  
all the time,  
every time.*

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They're like the laws of physics in the natural. We call them laws because they work, all the time, every time. Take the law of gravity, for example. It's considered a law of physics because it's an unchanging truth: What goes up must come down. It took mankind about 1500 years to figure that out, but now we know that's a law that cannot be changed.

It can be overridden with another law of physics—the law of lift. That’s how airplanes fly. But gravity doesn’t cease to work when we put the law of lift into operation. If it did, the law of lift wouldn’t work. (We know that now because in outer space where there is no gravity, there is no law of lift either, just the law of “float.”)

In Mark 11:22-24, Jesus reveals to us how the spiritual law of faith works. He explains it in a way that allows us to analyze it and figure out, step by step, how to put it into motion: First, we must have the faith of God in our hearts about something. Second, we release that faith by speaking it. Third, we refuse to doubt in our hearts. Fourth, we believe what we say will come to pass.

Studying and learning each step Jesus outlined there can and should be highly productive. And that’s usually how we begin the process of putting faith to work in our prayer lives. Like good pilots go to school to learn the secrets of the law of lift, we read our Bible and go to church to learn the secrets of the law of faith. We take notes and write things down. Then, like good students, we go out and begin to practice what we’ve learned.

We work on it. We do all the things the Scriptures and our pastor tell us we need to do, and that’s good. Sometimes we see it work and sometimes it seems like it doesn’t. But we persist because we’re confident that if we stick with the Word, we’ll keep growing in our understanding and make progress.

Eventually though, we may find we’re stuck. We may get to a place where we think, *I know the law of faith works. I know what God’s Word says about my situation, I believe it in my heart and I’m saying it, but it’s not coming to pass. What’s missing?*



*Why does it seem like I'm operating according to spiritual law and following the rules, and yet not getting the right results?*

The answer to those questions can be found in John 14:11-13. There, Jesus says:

Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me.... I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, if anyone steadfastly believes in Me, he will himself be able to do the things that I do; and he will do even greater things than these, because I go to the Father. And I will do [I Myself will grant] whatever you ask in My Name [as presenting all that I AM], so that the Father may be glorified and extolled in (through) the Son (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

In this passage, Jesus isn't just talking about *things*. He's not just talking about faith. He's not only talking about believing or speaking, or about taking certain actions. No, there are *relationships* involved in this.

Putting Himself personally in the mix, Jesus tells you to believe *in Him*. Then, He brings in the Father. He speaks of their relationship and says, "I'm going to Him." Then He says directly to you that He will do whatever you ask, that the Father may be glorified and extolled through the Son.

There are relational connections being made here! They are very personal, and their purpose is being revealed. What is that purpose? It's not just to get an end result. It's not just to have what you're believing and praying for come to pass. The purpose, Jesus said, is so the Father can be glorified.

Notice God isn't portrayed as an impersonal force here.

He's not just the behind-the-scenes Power that pulls the strings, pushes the buttons and makes sure the law of faith works. He is not just up there with lightning bolts coming out of His fingertips, saying, "Oh, look! They got the faith formula right. *Zap!*"

No, Jesus is talking in these verses about a Father! Rather than calling Him "God," or "The Almighty One on the Throne"—although Jesus is very aware that God is all those things—in this conversation, Jesus calls Him, "the Father." You don't often see God described like that in the Old Testament. People back then didn't really think of Him as a Father. They were more familiar with the legal side of Him.

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*Jesus not only called God His Father; He talked about Him with a passion and emotion that was born out of the loving relationship He had with Him.*

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But Jesus took the legal side of spiritual law and infused it with the vital, making it living and real. He not only called God His Father; He talked about Him with a passion and emotion that was born out of the loving relationship He had with Him.

When I imagine the love that must have welled up in Jesus when He spoke about His heavenly Father, I'm reminded of how I have felt at times thinking about my earthly father, my dad. On occasions, I've been so caught up with love for him, I've just had to call and tell him how much he means to me. Yet as close as I am to my dad, my relationship with him pales in comparison to the love relationship Jesus had, and still has, with His Father. At times, He, too, must have become so caught up with love for His Father that He just had to stop

and talk to Him. That must have been one of the reasons He so often would go off by Himself and pray.

### *Prayer Is About People*

Asking for material things is a scriptural thing to do, but that's not primarily what prayer is about. Prayer is about people. Jesus is a Person—an awesome Person. And our heavenly Father is a very real divine Personality. Their hearts beat as one with a longing for people to be close to them.

That's always been God's heart. Even in the Old Testament, when He brought the Israelites out of Egypt, His great desire was for them to draw near to Him. When they came to Mount Sinai, He told Moses His plan was to speak to them directly so they could *personally* hear His voice. "I'm going to come down on the mountain to meet with them," He said. "I want them to come as close to Me as they can, so you tell them to sanctify themselves. Tell them to do everything they can to prepare themselves to be in My presence." (See Exodus 19.)

Because the blood of Jesus hadn't yet been shed, true spiritual sanctification wasn't yet available. The way had not yet been made for people to be sin free and clean on the inside. So, since they couldn't wash on the inside, God instructed Moses to have them wash on the outside.

He didn't mean for those instructions to be turned into religious laws without purpose to affect the heart. People have done that, but it wasn't God's intent. He was saying, "Moses, you tell My people I'm going to come down and that I want to see them. You tell them I'll talk to them. Tell them to wash their clothes, purge their thinking, and see to it that they don't sin. Tell them to do everything they possibly can to get themselves

right, so they can come as close to Me as I dare allow. Don't let them come too close, though. Put ropes around the base of the mountain to keep them at a safe distance because I don't want to hurt them. My glory destroys sin."

Moses relayed God's instruction to the people, and for three days they got ready. Then, at the appointed time, God came down on the mountain in a thick, lightning-filled cloud. For the sake of the people, the Bible says, God clothed Himself in darkness. Even though the power of His presence shook the whole mountain, He tried to wrap up, to conceal and cloak Himself, so they could come as close to Him as possible.

What did the people do? They did *not* come close.

Instead, they said to Moses, "You go talk to God for us and pass along to us what He says." So, that's what Moses did. He wasn't at all reluctant to meet with God on Mount Sinai. He wanted to do it. Rather than being put off by the power of God's presence, Moses pressed into it. Joshua followed him part of the way up the mountain and then stopped because he couldn't handle the manifestation of God's glory. But Moses went all the way to the top.

It wasn't the last time he did so, either. Over the years, Moses continued to press into God's presence. As he did, his hunger to experience more of God kept increasing to the point where, in Exodus 33:18, he cried out to the Lord, "I beseech You, show me Your glory!" (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). He wasn't saying, "I want to see mist, more clouds and sparkles." Or "I want to see a miracle or some spectacular sign and wonder." He'd already seen plenty of those things.

In Egypt, Moses had seen with his natural eyes more of

God's power on display than any of us have ever seen on this earth. He saw God's wrath poured out on His enemies and His mercy manifested miraculously on behalf of Israel. In the wilderness, he saw water come out of a rock and manna come from heaven. His request wasn't for God to show him more of what He could do; He wanted to see *God Himself*. He wanted to *know* Him. He wanted to be engulfed in His presence.

As an unborn-again man, however, such close contact with God would have killed Moses. So, God had to hold him back. He did reveal more of Himself than ever before, but He told Moses that to do so He would have to hide him in a rock to protect him.

I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim My name, THE LORD, before you; for I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy and loving-kindness on whom I will show mercy and loving-kindness. But, He said, You cannot see My face, for no man shall see Me and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place beside Me, and you shall stand upon the rock, and while My glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take away My hand and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen (verses 19-23, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

The *King James Version* says God showed Moses His "back parts." What does that mean? It certainly doesn't mean He showed Moses His back end! No, He showed Moses what was behind Him, in the past. Moses' record of what he saw became the biblical record of Creation. How else do you

think Moses knew about Adam and Eve? He saw and heard God create them!

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*God is alive in eternity. He is alive in the past, in the present and in the future. He is not boxed in by time.*

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God is alive in eternity (Isaiah 57:15). He is alive in the past, in the present and in the future. He is not boxed in by time, so He opened Moses' eyes to see what He had already done. In the process, He gave Moses a picture of what He would one day do through Jesus.

Jewish scholars teach that God revealed Himself to Moses only as much as Moses had capacity to see, which was His goodness. What Moses really wanted, though, was more of God Himself. He wasn't satisfied to relate to Him only as a divine Person on a throne. Even simply knowing the Law, His Word, wasn't enough. Moses wanted to know Him as a living Being, to experience as fully as possible the reality of His presence and have a vital, intimate, personal relationship with the God who created and upholds the universe.

I want that too, don't you? And even more important, it's what God wants. It's why He sent Jesus. Not just so we can learn the mechanics of faith and get answers to our prayers, but so we can apply those "mechanics of faith" and have what Moses so passionately desired—to be *in* the Father and have the Father *in* us.

### ***Relationship Is a Two-Way Street***

I don't mean to suggest that getting answers to your prayers doesn't matter. It does. As we've already seen, Jesus

promised to do whatever we ask in His Name so the Father may be glorified. The fulfillment of that promise in your life, however, depends on you being arm-in-arm with Jesus and allowing Jesus to be arm-in-arm with you.

This is a two-way street. It's relationship.

On one hand, Jesus says He will do whatever you ask Him to do. On the other hand, He says, "I know you will do whatever I ask of you." In John 14, He says this twice. "If you [really] love Me, you will keep (obey) My commands" (verse 15, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). "The person who has My commands and keeps them is the one who [really] loves Me; and whoever [really] loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I [too] will love him and will show (reveal, manifest) Myself to him. [I will let Myself be clearly seen by him and make Myself real to him.]" (verse 21, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Jesus isn't telling us in those verses to become legalistic law-keepers, like the Pharisees were. He's telling us *how* to have a living relationship with Him. In John 15, He connects that living relationship to our prayer life. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you," He says, "you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit" (verses 7-8, *New King James Version*). I like how the *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition* puts that: "If you live in Me [abide vitally united to Me] and My words remain in you and continue to live in your hearts, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. When you bear (produce) much fruit, My Father is honored and glorified."

You learn to abide or live in Jesus by being conscious that you are with Him and that He is with you. You allow His words to abide and come alive in you by fellowshiping with

Him over them and by responding to do what He requires. As you do those things, Jesus said He would respond to you, doing for you whatever you ask, so that God will be glorified both in Him and in you.

Again, notice the ultimate aim is for the Father to be glorified. Certainly, answered prayer is a means to that end. But here's the problem with being totally focused on wanting miracles to happen when you pray or wanting to receive this thing and that thing. Without the broader context of "nothing would mean more to me than what I can do for You, God," you miss out on the prayer's primary point, which is developing a living, vital relationship *that brings you into union with Him*.

Though the reality of this boggles the natural mind, having you live in vital union with Him is all God is after! It is the reason for the cross, the resurrection and Jesus' intercessory ministry at the right hand of the Father. He longs for relationship with you. He wants *you*.

Jesus said in John 15:14-15: "You are My friends if you keep on doing the things which I command you to do. I do not call you servants (slaves) any longer, for the servant does not know what his master is doing (working out). But I have called you My friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from My Father. [I have revealed to you everything that I have learned from Him]" (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

What a privilege it is to have such an intimate friendship with Jesus! What a thrill to know that He will teach us everything He's learned from the Father! We should never lose sight of what an honor this is. Particularly in times of prayer



and as you fellowship with God in His Word, you should always be watching for Jesus to make known to you the Father's wisdom. That's how His Word comes alive in you.

Think again about Mark 11:22-25 for example. As I noted earlier, those verses are such a cornerstone to our life of faith that many of us can easily quote them from memory. But look at them again:

So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses" (*New King James Version*).

Those verses wonderfully summarize the basic spiritual law of how faith works. Though simply and clearly stated, endless numbers of lessons have been taught after dissecting that truth in light of other verses. But the relationship connection, the living, vital part, is in verse 22: "Have faith in God." Some footnotes say, "Have the faith of God" or "Have the God kind of faith." *Gasp!* God wants to share His faith with us! With me. With *you!*

Some years ago, my dad had a vision of Jesus. When he woke one morning and opened his eyes, he saw Jesus at the foot of his bed, holding an extra-large tray of cookies. "Have

a cookie!” Jesus said. “Your response is ‘I believe. I will. I take it. I have it. I thank You. I forgive.’”

Dad quickly recognized that as the faith process of Mark 11:22-25. But notice, Jesus was personally serving and unreservedly offering something very sweet. Faith works by love, and that love begins with how freely our heavenly Father wants to share of His own faith: the same faith by which He created this world for us to live in. The same faith that created us in His image so that we could walk in fullness of fellowship with Him.

“Have a cookie,” Jesus said. “Have the faith of God.” Faith is one of heaven’s sweetest gifts. So yes, Mark 11:22-25 is the spiritual law of faith. But it literally begins with living relationship.

As you continue to fellowship with Jesus over those verses, you don’t see them as a way to use faith to get something or solve a problem. You see them as God revealing to you how He operates. You think, *So that’s how He does things! Wow, Lord! That’s how You created the universe. That’s how You’re going to create an answer for me. It’s amazing enough to think that You could bring something to pass just by believing it and saying it. But Jesus says I can do that too. I can be like You, Father. Show me more!* By the Spirit, He will guide you and impart His wisdom in how to apply that spiritual law of faith as you pray. It becomes integrated into your prayer life.

Just as He did for Moses, when you ask God to show you more, He does. By looking at His Word with your heart aware of relationship, the Lord causes more of His words to come alive in you. He helps you see how to develop more spiritual skill and maturity.

Perhaps He then begins ministering to you about your love walk. He heightens your awareness of the fact that the laws of the Spirit don't work by selfishness but by the Supreme Law that overrides everything: the Law of love. Suddenly, Galatians 5:6 comes alive in you as never before: "Faith (is) activated and energized and expressed and working through love" (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). So you say, "Father, I see it! Love is the foundation of everything Jesus said about

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*Love is the foundation of everything Jesus said about answered prayer. It's because of the wonderful love relationship I have with Him that I can believe and receive what I ask of Him.*

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answered prayer. It's because of the wonderful love relationship I have with Him that I can believe and receive what I ask of Him. All the wonderful prayer promises Jesus made to us in the Gospel of John rest on love!"

### ***You've Been Granted a Special Place***

In John 16:23, Jesus gave us yet another prayer promise. He said, "I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, that My Father will grant you whatever you ask in My Name" (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). That one, simple sentence reveals both the legal side of prayer and the living side. The legal side of it is that what you ask (so asking is required) the Father (He is the One who answers) in Jesus' Name (not in yours or any other), He gives you. That's a great and exciting spiritual *fact*. It's good to know and build your faith on it.

The living side of that verse, however, is even greater

and more exciting. It reveals that the reason the Father will give you what you ask is because, in Jesus, He is granting you a special place with Him! He is granting you a living relationship with Him so that you have the right to ask things of Him that you didn't have before. And by our relationship with Jesus, He has given us His Name; and no other name is higher nor any gift greater.

We all know what it means to have a special relationship with someone. In the natural, we see such relationships all the time. We see them between husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters and lifelong friends.

Because I have a special place with my dad, for example, there are things I can ask of him that you couldn't ask. By the same token, there are things you could ask of your dad because of your relationship with him that I couldn't.

There are things a wife can ask of her husband that others can't, and vice versa.

Why? Because a wife has a place with her husband that others don't. There's a relationship there that comes out of love, out of covenant, out of like purpose. They understand each other. They know each other, and can work together in both great and small matters of life. Successful couples are keenly aware of each other by listening, speaking and acting with respect until the two of them function as one. We are all familiar with this unique family dynamic. We've lived it, seen it or at least heard of it.

Well, this is the kind of working relationship with the Father that Jesus is describing in John 16:23. He's essentially saying, "In My Name, you can come into the same place in

the Father that I'm coming into. You can walk in and ask things of Him just like I can."

Think of it: Because of Jesus, you have a place in God! You have a place in His heart. You have a *special* relationship with Him. It's yours to walk in. Nothing is being held back on God's part. He's made Himself *totally* available to you. You can fellowship with Him any time you desire and get to know Him, and He will work with you.

The more you get to know and understand Him, the more the working relationship you have with Him develops: What He says, you do. What you say, He does. And all the while faith keeps growing in you.

Why is faith growing in you? Because God is growing in you.

Faith doesn't grow apart from Him.

"I thought faith comes by hearing the Word," you might say. It does; but as Jesus taught in Mark 4, the Word is like a seed, and apart from God the seed has no life in it. Even in the natural world, a seed is nothing without life in it. You can put a peach seed in the ground and get a peach tree; but it's the life in the peach seed that makes the tree grow and produce more peaches.

The same is true spiritually. If you plant the seed of faith without the life in it that comes through relationship with God, you won't get anything. (Well, you will get one thing: frustrated!) But when, through your fellowship with Him, the life of God in your faith seed is quickened, something wonderful happens. As you faithfully put that seed into the ground, it becomes like the grain of mustard seed Jesus described in the parable of the sower:

...which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all seeds upon the earth; yet after it is sown, it grows up and becomes the greatest of all garden herbs and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air are able to make nests and dwell in its shade (Mark 4:31–32, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

To you, as a believer, those words make perfect sense. But they didn't to the people who first heard them. Even Jesus' own disciples didn't initially understand them. They had to ask Him what that parable meant because during His earthly ministry, the Father and the workings of His kingdom were cloaked to some degree.

In the last few chapters of John's Gospel, however, Jesus cast aside the cloak! He spoke about the place He was giving us with the Father and said that although in the past...

I have told you these things in parables (veiled language, allegories, dark sayings); the hour is now coming when I shall no longer speak to you in figures of speech, but I shall tell you about the Father in plain words and openly (without reserve). At that time you will ask (pray) in My Name; and I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf [for it will be unnecessary]. For the Father Himself [tenderly] loves you because you have loved Me and have believed that I came out from the Father. I came out from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and going to the Father (John 16:25-28, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

In other words, Jesus was telling us, “From now on, there won’t be anything hidden from you. God will be just as much yours as He is Mine. You’ll have available the same kind of intimate relationship with Him I do.”

That’s the kind of relationship with God Moses wanted! He wanted to be in God, to know Him intimately. He longed to experience for himself the fulfillment of the promise God made to us as New Covenant believers that’s recorded in Hebrews 8:11: “All will know Me, from the smallest to the greatest of them” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). The word translated *know* in that verse means “to be intertwined,” or “two as one.” It’s the same word the Bible uses when talking about marital relations.

Moses wasn’t satisfied just to be close to God; his heart cry was to be one with God. “Can I get inside of You, Lord?” he said. “Can You get inside of me? Can we have this exchange?” Moses pressed and pressed for that, but the closest he ever came was when God hid him in the rock.

How prophetic was that?! God put him in the rock. Jesus is our Rock! We have been put in Him, not for moments, like Moses, but now and forever. Furthermore, Jesus said, “I came forth from the Father” (John 16:28). He didn’t mean He came from the same neighborhood the Father lives in. Jesus and God didn’t just live next door to each other. He identified Himself in John 1:18 as “The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father” (*New King James Version*). Jesus came out from God, came to earth, then returned to God and took us into God with Him.

## ***Close Encounters of the God Kind***

Jesse Duplantis, a powerful minister of God and a dear friend of our family, was once caught up into heaven. He spent five hours there. You can read about it in his book *Heaven: Close Encounters of the God Kind*. While he was there, he found himself before the throne of God. He said that the light radiating from it is so strong, so bright, so immense, just looking at it made him weak.

Imagine the effect of being in the bright sun all day. Even if you're only lying by a pool, the strength of that light can drain your strength. How much more the light of God Himself! Jesse experienced that loss of strength while looking at God's throne. So much so, he said, that an angel gave him something to eat so that he'd have a stronger capacity to observe.

As Jesse looked toward the throne, he couldn't see God's face, or much of anything else about Him. All he could see was the outline of His little finger and His hand upon the throne. As Jesse describes it, every time God's finger moved even a little, the angels who circle around the throne crying, "Holy! Holy! Holy is the Lord!" were thrown back against the wall. The light and power of God was so immense, it flung them back!

As Jesse was watching this, he said, out of that brilliant light walked Jesus. He literally came out of the Father!

No wonder Jesus told His disciples, just before going to the cross, that if they loved Him they'd be glad He was going back to the Father. "The Father is greater and mightier than I am," He said. "I came out from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and going to the Father" (John 14:28, 16:28, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).



“Father, glorify Me as I’ve glorified You,” He prayed. “Bring Me back into the place where I once was with You, not just as deity but as a resurrected Man! Not for My sake only but for the sake of all who will ever believe on Me, that they all may be one, just as You, Father, are *in* Me and I *in* You, that they also may be one *in* Us.” (See John 17:1, 21.)

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*Jesus paid the greatest price ever paid for anything so that He could bring us into the place He had with the Father.*

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Jesus paid the greatest price ever paid for anything so that He could bring us with Him into the place He had with the Father. He shed His blood, suffered the pains of death and hell, rose again, and ascended on high—all so that we can live, abide and dwell in God. It’s that place in God He was talking about when He said to the disciples in John 14:1-2, “Do not let your hearts be troubled (distressed, agitated). You believe in and adhere to and trust in and rely on God; believe in and adhere to and trust in and rely also on Me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places (homes)” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

The Greek word translated *house* there isn’t describing a building or a structure with doors and windows. It means simply “a place of abiding.” Jesus was saying that inside His Father’s abiding there are many *abiding places*. There are many dwellings. There are places for us in Him. “I am going away to prepare a place for you,” Jesus said. “And...(if) I go and make ready a place for you, I will come back again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also” (verses 2-3, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

The thought of Jesus coming out from the Father and then going back into that place in Him almost staggers the imagination. But in a sense, the same could be said about us. Think about it for a moment: Where did you come from? Your physical life came from your mother and father. But where did your spirit life come from? Is there some sort of shelf in the back of heaven, a warehouse with spirits?

No, your spirit came from God! According to Acts 17:28, we are all “His offspring.” In the beginning, when God breathed into Adam’s body that He had created, He breathed his own Spirit into him. God’s breath, His Spirit, filled Adam and he became a living being. At the same time, God gave him the ability to reproduce these created bodies over and over, each one of them prepared for a breath of God.

You could physically blow into a balloon, take it down to the local laboratory, have them pop it and find out what you are made of, because your DNA is in there. You could look at the DNA and identify who your parents are. You could identify who your kids are, and who your brothers and sisters are. You can trace your heritage back through the generations just by the wet particles of your breath.

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*When you received Jesus, He breathed into you His own God DNA so that you could be an individual part of Him. You can express something of Him that no one else can.*

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God *breathed* into Adam and he came to life. Jesus breathed over the disciples and life, His life, was imparted into them. He has

breathed into you. You came out from Him by His Spirit as a baby spirit born into this earth. When you received Jesus, He

breathed into you His own God DNA so that you could be an individual part of Him. You can express something of Him that no one else can.

Granted, because of sin the image of God in mankind has been marred. Granted, all of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory God created us to have through union with Him. But that's not the end of the story. Jesus came to earth to restore to us that glory.

He said, "I'm going to make it so that you can go back with me to that place in God, so that together we can be in Him. You just follow Me, little brother. You just follow Me, little sister. Watch what I do. I'll show you how this is done: Believe it in your heart. Say it with your mouth."

What do you say?

You follow the example set by Jesus. He only says what He hears the Father say and only does what He sees the Father do. (See John 12:49-50.)

How can you hear and see the Father?

You are in Him! Just look around. When you spend time in the Word of God, say, "Father, there You are! Thank You, Jesus, thank You, Holy Spirit, for revealing the Father to me. I see now what He does. I can hear what He's saying. I get it. I do that too!"

Keep learning. Keep walking and talking with Him. You have the opportunity to stay in fellowship with Him every moment of every day. As my grandmother proved, you can even do it in your sleep.



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CHAPTER 4



Purpose in  
Prayer



## CHAPTER 4

# Purpose in Prayer

Some people define prayer as simply talking to God. But really, it's much more than that. To broaden the field of prayer, I like to define it as spiritual communication. Prayer is living connected to God. Sometimes in prayer you might be led to rebuke the devil, for instance, or declare the Word over some mountainous obstacle that's standing in the way of God's will being done. When you're rebuking and declaring, you're not talking to God. Yet you will do those things sometimes because when you pray, you're doing Kingdom business.

Whatever form that Kingdom business takes, though, God always has an intended outcome in mind when you pray. He always uses your prayer time to advance His purposes, often on multiple levels. Whether you're just enjoying communion with Him, or you're praying for someone or about some circumstance that needs changing, He'll always be developing you spiritually. He'll always lead you in such a way that you grow in Him while you're praying.

Prayer is the greenhouse for spiritual growth. Much like flowers blossom and flourish inside a physical greenhouse, your spiritual life blossoms, flourishes and develops in the place of prayer. Over time, the gifts of the Spirit, for instance, will begin to manifest as you pray. They might not look the same in your prayer times as they would on a platform or in a service, but if you're familiar with them you'll recognize them nonetheless.

It could be that you'll be praying over a situation, wondering how to address it, and have a word of wisdom or a word of knowledge. You may be praying for someone who's sick, and sense gifts of healings in operation. At times I've been praying for someone who needed a miracle, and it will manifest in their life. If you pray in the spirit very much at all, I can almost assure you that you'll have times of praying in tongues and then find yourself praying out the interpretation or prophesying. You may not recognize it, thinking you had simply switched back to your known language.

First Corinthians 12 says that "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." It tells us to not be ignorant of His gifts and identifies them for us as: "the word of wisdom...the word of knowledge...the gifts of healing...the working of miracles...prophecy...discerning of spirits...divers kinds of tongues...[and] interpretation of tongues" (verses 7-10). All of us, as believers, want to learn to walk in those gifts, as He wills, of course. And our prayer closet is the safest place for us to learn to follow His lead!

So what if you make a mistake there? So what if you pray for healing for someone and find out later they actually needed a financial miracle? That didn't hurt anything. Unless you tell them, the person you were praying for won't even



know you missed it. They'll still be blessed, and so will you, because prayer is not just about getting a particular result, it's about what happens in you as you pray—what you learn and how you grow in Him. The journey can be as important as the destination.

Even though healing might not have been what was needed in the situation, while you were praying and releasing your faith for it, your faith for healing was developing. It was working and getting stronger. The Lord was preparing you so that when you're faced with someone who does need healing, you can stretch forth your hand and say, "Be healed," and they will be.

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*Prayer is not just about getting a particular result—it's about what happens in you as you pray. The journey can be as important as the destination.*

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I saw the gifts of the Spirit develop in my grandmother's life this way. During the years she prayed by herself or with just a few others, she grew in her ability to operate in the Spirit. So, when she began teaching Bible studies and ministering to larger groups of people, the gifts manifested powerfully through her. She never talked much about all the supernatural things that happened in her meetings. But I've heard accounts from many who attended of the outstanding and even unusual miracles that occurred.

Among my favorites was one about a young man who came to her very troubled by the fact that he was quite short for his age. "I want you to pray for me that I'll grow," he said. Her first thought (she told us later) was, *Oh, dear God, how do I pray for that?* But she never let such questions show on the

outside or stop her. So, she said to the young man, “All right, we’ll pray for you to grow.”

She told him to stand next to the wall and put a mark on it to record how tall he was that day. Then she laid hands on him and prayed for him. Sure enough, within the next few days he grew...a lot. The following week when he came back to Bible class, his pants were 3 or 4 inches too short. What’s more, he kept growing until he was just the height he wanted to be.

Another extraordinary miracle that took place in one of Nonnie’s meetings involved a woman who had led a very rough life before getting saved. Still very new to the Christian life, when she showed up at the Bible study, she was dressed rather promiscuously. After the meeting was over, my grandmother began talking to her, hoping to give her some guidance. As they talked, my grandmother learned that the woman had undergone breast surgery. The surgeon, it seemed, had done a poor job and had left her much larger on one side than on the other. The disparity had caused the woman pain and embarrassment.

My grandmother felt so bad for her after listening to all she’d been through, she could hardly restrain herself. Stretching out her hand toward the woman’s chest, my grandmother blurted out, “Fill her cup, Lord!” And miraculously, He did.

Those kinds of miracles didn’t happen when my grandmother ministered to people because she was a world-famous preacher. She wasn’t. They were the fruit of her prayer life. She flowed easily in the gifts of the Spirit because she’d gotten to know God in her own private prayer times. She knew how powerful He is. She knew how good and compassionate

He is. She'd learned by working with Him personally in prayer how to recognize and follow the leading of His Spirit.

What she eventually did in public was simply an extension of what she'd been doing for years in the secret place of prayer.

### ***There's Always More***

Psalm 34:8 (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*) says, "O taste and see that the Lord [our God] is good!" The more we learn in the place of prayer, the more of God we can taste.

Habakkuk 2:1 (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*) says, "I... will watch to see what He will say within me..." The more we watch for God and listen for His voice in prayer, the more our ability to see and hear Him increases.

Proverbs 3:6 (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*) says: "In all your ways know, recognize, and acknowledge Him, and He will direct and make straight and plain your paths." The more we practice acknowledging God when we're in prayer, the more we recognize His leadings all the time, everywhere.

I always want the Lord to lead me and direct my paths, don't you? I want Him to direct me in the big issues of life and also in the little details. I want to make the right decisions when it comes to my family, my church, my finances and everything else in my life. Whether I'm deciding where to shop for something I need, how to tackle my to-do list, or what meeting I should attend, I want Him to guide me.

Those kinds of decisions can be very costly if you get them wrong. As you practice following the Lord in the safe place of prayer, though, you'll increasingly get them right. You'll learn to watch for Him on the inside. You'll get to know Him

better. You'll start to become familiar with His promptings and be able to respond to them in every situation.

Of course, you don't ever want to think you've arrived; that you know all of Him there is to know. God is infinite, so with Him, there's always more. When you get to where you're filled with Him to overflowing, that's when you stretch. It's a cycle. He fills you and you stretch. He fills you more and you stretch more.

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*God is infinite,  
so with Him, there's  
always more.*

*It's a cycle.*

*He fills you, and  
you stretch more.*

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Increasing in your knowledge of God isn't just about quantity or how much of Him you know; it's also about quality. It's about how

strong His presence and power are in you. When you speak His Word, what happens? When you pray, how much of His power is released?

Sometimes the answer may be, "Not much." But don't let that discourage you. As Romans 3:23 says, we've all come short of the glory of God, so we've all been there. But in His mercy, God will help us as we're learning. Even when we fall short, He'll make things work out OK for us. He'll strengthen us as we continue to press into Him and hunger for more.

No matter how far we have (or haven't) progressed in our walk with God so far, as praying believers, we want to know more spiritually. We want to see more. We want to follow more. We want to be more in touch, more in tune with the Lord, and more like Him. So we seek out ways to do that in the place of prayer. As we keep encountering the Lord there, we find ourselves changing over time.

The changes that take place in you as you pray may seem barely noticeable for a while. But one day, you look over your shoulder and realize you're nothing like you were. You realize, for example, that things that used to disturb you don't disturb you anymore. At the same time, things that didn't disturb you before now disturb you greatly. Why? Because the closer you get to the Lord, the more holy you become.

There are movies my husband and I watched years ago and got a big laugh out of them. Then a few years later, we started to watch one of those movies again and we thought, *Oh, God, forgive us! How could we have watched this? It's awful.* The movie hadn't changed, but our hearts had. They'd softened over time. We had continued to fellowship with the Lord in the Word and prayer and, as a result, we had become more sensitive to Him.

Ephesians 4:30 says, "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God..." It's when you're praying, and God has your undivided attention, that He can most easily communicate to you what grieves Him. What is His "finger" resting on? Remember, 1 John 2:20 says you "have an unction from the Holy One." If you start to pray about something, or pray a certain way, and that unction is not there, stop. Look inside. Where is He leading? Why did that change, in essence, grieve Him? If you must, pray in tongues *about* what you're praying about. He will show you. By this process you are developing your sensitivity to His leading, to what pleases Him, and what grieves or withdraws His presence.

In prayer, you're always watching on the inside for the little nudge of His Holy Spirit. Then in life, one of those Spirit-directed nudges will alert you to something He wants you to change or let go. It might not even be something big.

Yet obeying that prompting could save your life.

Recognizing the nudge of God's Spirit to alter your normal route to work could save you from a traffic accident. Responding to Him when He nudges you to change some seemingly minor habit you don't know is hazardous to your health could help you avoid a disease. By yielding to those small spiritual nudges, you're delivered from danger because you're dwelling in the secret place of the Most High. You're abiding under the shadow of the Almighty whose power no foe can withstand. (See Psalm 91, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition.*)

You're not the only one who reaps the benefits of your increased sensitivity to Him, either. Others do, too. As you continue to grow in your knowledge of God, the prayers you prayed a year ago that didn't seem to work at all, suddenly start producing results, not only in your own life but in the lives of people around you. Because you've continued to stretch spiritually, the presence of God within you has grown to the point that it's more than enough for you and someone else. Before you know it, God in you is affecting those around you and beyond.

### ***Be Strong in the Lord***

How much can prayer actually accomplish? A lot! The prayers of the Apostle Paul confirm it. They were so powerful, God included some of them in the New Testament as part of His written Word. The one recorded in Ephesians 3 is especially thrilling. There, Paul writes:

For this reason [seeing the greatness of this plan by which you are built together in Christ], I bow my

knees before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for Whom every family in heaven and on earth is named [that Father from Whom all fatherhood takes its title and derives its name]. May He grant you out of the rich treasury of His glory to be strengthened and reinforced with mighty power in the inner man by the [Holy] Spirit [Himself indwelling your innermost being and personality] (verses 14–16, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Think about what Paul is asking God to do in those verses! He's praying for believers to be strengthened with the very might of God Himself. He's praying for them to be fortified with God's own glory and power by the Holy Spirit on the inside of them. That's a big request. But Paul makes it boldly. Why? Because he understands that one of the ways God gets that kind of divine strength to us and grows us up spiritually is through prayer.

While it's true that prayer is not the only thing necessary for those things to take place, they're not going to take place without it. A prayerless life is a dwarfed life in God. No matter how much Bible you read, no matter how many sermons you listen to, or how many church services you attend; without prayer, your spiritual growth will remain stunted. Even the Word won't produce much in your life because apart from prayer it will be a seed without water, without presence, without light.

The Word is what teaches us to pray. It's what feeds our prayer life!

Prayer leaders in our church don't ever pray with someone

or lead a group without their Bibles. Pastor Iva Bennett, our prayer director, went to speak at a meeting one time with a woman from another church. Iva was shocked when the woman didn't take her Bible with her to the podium. The first words of the woman's message shocked her even more. "You don't need your Bible to pray," she said.

Iva didn't get a chance to hear much of what was said after that. She spent the rest of the session asking Jesus how she was going to straighten that out when it was her turn to speak. He showed her how to do it without strife and in love. I can think of fewer things more undermining to prayer than leaving God's Word out of it. That's an invitation to the devil to join in!

Prayer and the Word are inseparable. Sometimes when I'm praying, something will come up in my heart and I'll think, *Lord, that sounds a little "far-out" for me. I believe it's You. I have an inward witness that it's right, but I need chapter and verse for it. Two or three verses, if You don't mind.* Invariably, He will respond by bringing scriptures to my mind. They may even include verses I didn't realize I knew.

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*When the Lord Himself quickens a word to me when I'm in prayer, wow! I know Jesus is in the midst of my prayer, and the Holy Spirit has taken hold together with me.*

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Once I know what the Word says about something, faith is ignited in me. And when the Lord Himself quickens a word to me when I'm in prayer, *wow!* I know Jesus is in the midst of my prayer, and the Holy Spirit has taken hold together with me. Without scriptural support, I leave those "out there" promptings "out there."



That's one of the reasons the verses we just read from Ephesians 3 so excite me. They qualify as both prayer and the Word. They provide us with the faith to believe that God will grant us, as verse 16 says, "out of the rich treasury of His glory to be strengthened and reinforced with mighty power in the inner man" (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*); and that He will do it in response to our prayers.

According to verse 17, the reason Paul prayed for this strengthening and reinforcement to take place was so "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Paul was praying there for Christians. As Christians, if we're truly born again, have Jesus in our hearts. So why would Paul pray this for us? Because it's not just about quantity; it's about quality. It's not just about having Jesus in your heart, it's about how strong His presence and power are in you.

Even in the natural, potency makes a big difference. There are some substances so potent that you can't put them in a paper cup, for example. They will eat right through it. Those kinds of substances have to be put in a specialized container. The more intense they are, the stronger or more reinforced the container must be. Would you put nuclear waste in a Dixie cup? Not for long.

The most potent natural substances, however, don't even compare to the spiritual potency of the fullness of the presence of God. Yet Jesus said, "If you love Me and keep My words, then my Father and I"—the two of them!—"will come and We will make our dwelling with you." (See John 14:23.) In other words, they will be in manifestation, a living presence, in you. Paul was praying for God to so strengthen us that we can contain the fullness of that presence!

All believers have Jesus in their hearts, but in many cases His living presence isn't apparent. They assume He's in them because the pastor said that if you ask Jesus to come into your heart, He's there. But they can't tell whether He's at home or not. If they had to go looking on the inside of themselves to find Him, they wouldn't know where He was. They wouldn't be able to locate Him, and neither would anyone else.

For that situation to change, Paul says, there must be a reinforcement, a strengthening of the inner man by the Holy Spirit. There must be an intensifying of His work in the innermost being and personality. We need God in our personalities! Otherwise, our personalities can get in His way. They can hold us back and keep Him from fully expressing Himself in and through us.

### *Fully Grounded in Love*

“Well, I'm just shy and timid,” someone might say. “That's just my personality.”

Then you need Jesus to get in there and straighten that out.

“I know I'm harsh at times,” someone else might say. “I know I shoot my mouth off too quickly and hurt people's feelings. But I've always been like that. It's just my personality.”

Then spend some time with the Lord, and let Him fix that.

I'm not suggesting you need to totally do away with your personality. God made you unique, and the way He moves through your uniqueness is precious. I'm just talking about letting Him deal with aspects of your personality that

don't glorify God. Some of them—such as a fiery temper, for example—may be readily recognizable and should have no place in you at all. Other aspects may simply need to be brought into better balance because you're too much of this and not enough of that.

Whatever personality adjustments are needed, though, we can all be encouraged knowing the Lord will help us make them. As we continue to encounter Him in prayer, we can be strengthened with the aid of the Holy Spirit. We can become more aware of the abiding of the Anointed One, the living, Anointed presence of God within us. As we do, we'll increasingly see in our lives what Paul prayed in Ephesians 3. Picking back up at verse 17, look at what else he prayed for us. He said:

May Christ through your faith [actually] dwell (settle down, abide, make His permanent home) in your hearts! May you be rooted deep in love and founded securely on love, that you may have the power and be strong to apprehend and grasp with all the saints [God's devoted people, the experience of that love] what is the breadth and length and height and depth [of it]; [That you may really come] to know [practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ, which far surpasses mere knowledge [without experience]; that you may be filled [through all your being] unto all the fullness of God [may have the richest measure of the divine Presence, and become a body wholly filled and flooded with God Himself]! (verses 17-19, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

When it comes to being rooted deep in love and founded securely on love, I'll admit, I'm still working on that myself. Just like you, I mess up. I get my feelings hurt on occasion. Some time ago, my feelings were deeply hurt over something. It was no small matter but, in light of what Jesus suffered, it shouldn't have moved me. I should have stayed stable and secure in God's love. Thankfully, through much prayer and the Word, I came through the ordeal stronger in the Lord

and determined to not ever be affected like that again. He helped me get my eyes off myself and on Him and others.

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*When you're fully grounded in His love, no matter what storm comes along, it doesn't uproot you. To experience God's love is to experience God Himself.*

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When you're fully grounded in His love, no matter what storm comes along, it doesn't uproot you. It doesn't shake you. On the contrary, you hardly notice it because you're not focused on yourself, you're focused on being a blessing to others. That's

one reason you want to be strong enough in the Lord to "apprehend and grasp with all the saints...the experience of [His] love." To experience God's love is to experience God Himself. For as 1 John 4:16 says, "God is love."

What do you experience when you encounter that love? For starters, you experience what's referred to in Galatians 5:22-23 as the fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. Most translations put love first in that list, but I learned from my friend Rick Renner, who is a Spirit-filled Greek scholar, that this is a better way to translate it: "The fruit of the spirit is

love, which is joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance....”

This is the reason there’s “fulness of joy” in God’s presence (Psalm 16:11). It’s because He is Love, and joy flows out of love.

What else do you experience when you encounter God’s love? Provision. God is a Provider because the nature of love is to provide. If you’re a parent, you’ve experienced this on a human level. You love your children, so you provide for them. God’s love, however, goes beyond this. His love not only provides from the resources that are available, He creates the provision. How? That’s one of the things God desires to show you as you grow in strength and in the understanding and experience of His love.

I don’t know any born-again believer who isn’t hungry to experience God’s love. We all want to experience it, and He, too, wants us to experience it. We most likely won’t, though, if we think He’s just going to drop that experience on us out of heaven. That’s generally not how experiences with God come.

The Bible says that experiencing God starts with prayer. It starts with our fellowshiping with Him, making us stronger in Him. We may not ever have a God experience at all if we just wait around for one to come upon us. It’s as we press into the living presence of Christ that we become rooted in faith and love and come to the place where we can experience His love and truly encounter Him.

Thank God for His mercy! Thank God that we do at times have experiences with Him because of someone else’s faith. Thank God, if you haven’t been getting into His presence by yourself, you can go to church and get around other people

who have, and let their experiences with Him spill over on you. That's such a help. But the most wonderful experiences in God are not just the ones where something of Him comes on you because of someone else; they're the ones where something of Him comes on someone else because of you.

That's another thing entirely. It's thrilling when God ministers Himself to you, and you know He did it because you came to the place in Him where He could. But when the experience you have with Him spills over into the lives of others, that's absolutely the best!

### *Prayer Lays Hold of God's Blessings*

When I was a student at Oral Roberts University, I often heard Brother Oral Roberts say, "Miracles are always coming toward you, or going past you." I wonder sometimes—how many do we miss? According to the Bible, we don't have to miss any of them. God has *already* blessed us "in Christ with every spiritual (given by the Holy Spirit) blessing in the heavenly realm!" (Ephesians 1:3, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). That means everything heaven has is ours. Nothing is left out.

Part of the aim of our praying is to lay hold of the blessings we've been blessed with in the spirit realm: to pray for God's will to be done in earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10). Pulling something out of heaven into earth where you can see it, touch it, feel it, use it and live it requires potent faith and spiritual strength.

I like how Brother Keith Moore illustrates this. He compares how we use our faith to how "tractor beams" in science fiction movies are used to pull in something from

outer space. The tractor beam zeroes in on something, and pulls it in by a magnetic force. The bigger the thing is, the stronger the magnetic force has to be.

If you're not a science fiction buff, think of the Westerns you've seen: Would a cowboy ever consider roping a cow with a ball of twine? No, it's not strong enough. You might be able to pull in a little dachshund with it, but not a mad bull.

How much of heaven we can bring into manifestation on earth through our prayers depends very much on our spiritual strength as believers. We must keep growing stronger if we want to lay hold of God's blessings, purposes and plans. We must keep developing our spiritual muscles so that we're strong enough to apprehend and pull in with our faith what God has, not only for us but also for our family, church, community and nation.

What do you do about the plans of God that are too big for you to pull in by yourself? How do you garner enough spiritual strength to pray and believe for the Church to mature into the fullness of the stature of Christ, for instance, or for the great last-days harvest of souls to come into God's kingdom? How do you go about praying for things like that?

By combining your faith and spiritual strength with that of other believers. The Apostle Paul prayed in Ephesians 3:18, "that you may have the power and be strong to apprehend and grasp with all the saints" (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). The phrase *with all the saints* indicates there are some aspects of God's plan that we can't pray into manifestation by ourselves. We can only lay hold of them and pull them in by working in prayer together.

We need each other! God designed us, as believers, to function on earth as a body. Just as with our physical bodies certain parts must work together to accomplish certain tasks, God calls certain groups of believers to work together to pray about certain aspects of His will. He'll give one group one prayer assignment, and another group a different one. He'll give some prayer assignments to families. He'll give other assignments to prayer groups. At times, He'll call believers individually to grasp things for one another. On occasion, He'll call very specific individuals together to pray because it's time for a specific part of His plan to be prayed through, and it's going to take the manifestation of the Spirit through those people to get it done.

For us to be strong to apprehend with all the saints what God is calling us to do together, however, we keep moving forward together. We must keep up with the revelations and impartations God is currently pouring out on the Church, and with what He is doing in the rest of the Body of Christ. Otherwise, we'll find ourselves falling behind.

That's why the Bible tells us to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Hebrews 10:25). Mark Hankins has said, "There are some things in God that have 'some assembly required.'" You might think, *It won't hurt if I miss church this Sunday*, but then wind up missing so much you can't catch up. You might realize too late that while you were at home, the miracle that was coming toward you that Sunday went past you. Or the miracle God put in you for someone else went past them because you weren't there.

You don't want that to happen. You want to lay hold of every blessing God has in store for you and be a blessing to everyone around you. You want to be strong together with



all the saints to “grasp the experience of” God’s love and to really come to know, as Paul prayed, “[practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ, which far surpasses mere knowledge [without experience]; that you may be filled [through all your being] unto all the fullness of God” (Ephesians 3:18-19, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

### ***Take the Initiative***

Notice, Paul used the word *experience* three times just in those two verses. We get to know God through experience! We can’t get to know Him just by gathering theological information. We do it by pressing into His presence and encountering Him. Not just sitting around wishing He’d reveal Himself to us, but taking the initiative so that we can increasingly experience Him for ourselves!

James 4:8 says, “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” (*English Standard Version*); and one of the primary ways we draw near to Him is through prayer. Prayer is where we set the very thoughts of our hearts and our beings before God. It’s where we learn to follow Him, to listen to His voice, and say what we hear Him say. It’s where we look at Him within ourselves and let the Holy Spirit develop our awareness of Him until the living presence of Christ inside us becomes real to us.

Prayer is where we become so rooted in the reality of the living presence of the Lord within that nothing can move us away from it. No situation—no matter how big or bad or threatening—can throw us. We’ve spent time fellowshiping with the Lord, feeding our hearts with His voice that speaks to us in His Word. We know from experience that what

1 John 2:27 says about us is true: “The anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but...the same anointing teaches you concerning all things” (*New King James Version*).

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As we draw near to God in prayer, we begin to understand the mystery of Love Himself. We see beyond our own human experience to experience love on His level and to operate and speak on His level. We realize that He is Love, and what He says comes to pass. So, if we can understand the

mystery of love, we can understand more about how to make sure our words come to pass when we say them.

Every time we encounter the Lord in prayer, we're changed by His presence. His every touch is an experience. It might be very subtle, or it might be very grand, but it will always leave an impression: You'll know something you didn't know before. You'll be more aware of His leadings.

The more you follow the Lord in prayer, the more skilled and experienced at it you become. It doesn't happen all at once. But each contact with Him transforms you a little bit more into His likeness. So, patience and persistence are required.

My friend Patsy Cameneti once said to me, “Too often, praying people are in a hurry and a huff for some big prophetic thing to happen. But the prophetic is like a grandfather clock. It marks off one second at a time, chiming once every quarter hour, all the while working toward the top of the hour when it will make a big production and the cuckoo will come out.”

As you pray, be grateful and appreciate every tick and every tock of the clock, because they're all leading us to the next marker. Over time, you'll look back at where you once were and see how far you've come. You'll realize all the steps forward in prayer you took, all the corrections and adjustments you've made in your times of fellowship with the Lord, all that repenting and obedience...all those little experiences with God have culminated in this moment.

Suddenly, there's a chime in your life. You think, *Look! All those things have brought me here.* Then you set your sights on that next quarter hour. You keep drawing near to Jesus through the ticks and tocks, working your way around the clock toward what's waiting for you at the top of the hour.

Even if you're brand-new to prayer, you'll find that, right away, the process has started to work. After one or two ticktocks into the hour, you've grasped something. You've encountered God and experienced something. You know something more of Him. It's not something you can quote; it's something you can breathe. Something you can live. Something you can do. It's entwined with who you are.

You're living this. You're experiencing the presence of the living Christ who is in you. You are tracking with Him. His power is working in you, and by that power He "is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly, far over and above all" that you would even dare to "ask or to think [infinitely beyond]" your highest prayers, highest desires, grandest thoughts, wildest hopes and most outstanding dreams.

"To Him be glory in the Church...forever" (Ephesians 3:20-21, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*)!



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CHAPTER 5



The Heart  
of Praise



## CHAPTER 5

# The Heart of Praise

**B**y now, you might be wondering if prayer is supposed to be an encounter with God, why you've sometimes left a time of prayer disappointed. You might have had occasions you felt like saying, "That was the driest spiritual effort I ever had in my life." Every praying believer—me included—has felt like that at one time or another. Sadly, for a lot of Christians, dry, lifeless prayer is the norm. Way too many assume that's just how prayer is supposed to be.

But it's not. On the contrary! When our prayer times are dry, it's a sign that we're missing it somehow.

I'm not saying that every time you pray you need to be overcome by something spectacular. People often miss the supernatural by only looking for the spectacular. There may be very few of your prayer times marked by dramatic spiritual demonstrations or manifestations. Sometimes they will be, but feelings and spiritual manifestations aren't what

make prayer wonderful. What makes it wonderful is simply experiencing God.

How can you make sure you experience Him when you pray? By taking time, when you enter into prayer, to locate His presence.

My husband and I have been blessed with a good-sized, two-story house. When the Lord first blessed us with it, our children were still at home. Now,

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though, they're grown and have their own families, so my husband and I are the only ones living there. When I first walk into the house after being out somewhere, I'm not always sure whether he's home or not. I'll think, *Is George here?* And almost invariably, within seconds, I'll know the answer. If he's home, I'll sense his presence.

If he's not, when he does come home, I'll suddenly sense he's there, even though, at the time, I may be in another part of the house.

I first realized how powerful a godly person's presence can be as an 18-year-old student at ORU. As part of the television crew there, I had the privilege of being around Oral Roberts. At the time, the television programs were being taped in the Mabee Center, which is a very large auditorium that seats more than 9,000. Although we sectioned off parts of the auditorium with big curtains, the whole gymnasium floor served as the set for the program, so the area we used was very large.

As crew, we would get everything ready, then wait for



Oral Roberts to arrive. We couldn't see him when he first got there, because the door he used didn't open right into the auditorium. As in most large arenas, the outside entrance was across a lobby and down a long hall. The interior walls were solid cinder block, and made the space unusually impervious to outside sounds. As we all sat in semidarkness with the lights turned down, waiting for Brother Roberts, the moment he came into the outer ring of the building, everyone would turn toward the door because we knew he'd arrived. His personal presence was so strong and dynamic, we could locate him before we ever saw or heard him. Because we were watching for him, we could sense he was there.

That's what you do in prayer. You watch for the Lord and locate His presence.

Jesus said that if we love Him and keep His commandments, He will "show (reveal, manifest)" Himself to us. He will let Himself "be clearly seen" by us and make Himself "real" to us (John 14:21, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). That means if you're walking with God, you'll be able to identify His presence. You'll be able, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to develop the capacity to recognize and follow the Lord. Jesus also said that seeking, knocking and asking are essential to His revealing Himself to us (Luke 11:9-10).

He isn't moody, the way people sometimes are. But He does have various temperaments. Scripture describes Him from gentle to fierce, from the still, small voice to a voice that thunders, and all points between. Part of locating His presence in prayer is discerning, as some might say, "where He's coming from." Is He serious today? Is He lighthearted? What's on His mind? Which way are we going in prayer today? Is this going to be a blessed, tender moment between

me and the Lord? Or are we about to shake the devil's teeth out? What's going to happen here?

If you think about it, you already know how to exercise this kind of discernment. You do it all the time in your relationships with other people. Especially if you're close to someone, you can usually sense what's going on with them. You might sense one day they just want to chat and have a good time. Another day, you might sense they're very serious and want to talk to you about something more weighty.

We want to be so in tune with the Lord that we can detect not only His presence, but what's on His heart. He sometimes makes this easy for us. If we're new in our walk with Him

and we're just beginning to develop in prayer, He may help us at times by revealing Himself and His intentions to us in a distinct and dynamic way.

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*We want to be so in tune with the Lord that we can detect not only His presence, but what's on His heart.*

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We always hunger for those dramatic experiences with Him. As we mature in Him however, He doesn't always make His presence

as readily detectable. Because He's training us to watch for Him, He interacts with us more subtly. His desire is for us to develop to the point where we can detect and respond to the slightest manifestation of His presence.

Ultimately, He requires such maturity of all of us, because the more sensitive we are to Him, the closer we are to Him. The more in tune we are with Him, the more we understand Him. The more we say what we hear Him say and do what we see Him do, the more like Him and entwined with Him

we become, and the better we're able to follow Him wherever He goes.

### ***Entering His Presence With Praise***

One reason my grandmother was so sensitive to the Lord is because she praised and thanked Him so much. The Sunday school songs she was always singing, and her continual outflow of gratitude to the Lord, made her continually aware of Him. Rather than her prayer times being dry, they were alive with God's presence, in part because she did what Psalm 100 says: "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD.... come before his presence with singing.... Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise" (verses 1-4).

Following the instructions in those verses is key to enjoying a vibrant prayer life. Although we, as New Testament believers, don't have to go physically to some special place to be in God's presence, we can learn a lot from what that Psalm said to the Old Testament saints who did. They had to literally go to the Temple to be as near Him as allowed. And because the Temple was surrounded by walls, to reach its courts they first had to pass through the Temple gates.

Gates are very significant. Passing through a gate indicates you're leaving one place and going to another. It tells you that what's behind the gate is special and worth protecting. When the Old Testament Israelites entered the Temple gates with thanksgiving, they were leaving earthly things behind and coming to God. When they came into the Temple courts praising Him, they became aware that "God is here!"

The Old Testament Temple was composed of three parts: the outer court, the inner court, and the holy of holies where

God's strongest presence dwelt. I find that interesting, because we are also composed of three parts: We are a spirit, we have a soul, and we live in a body. Our bodies and souls might be likened to the outer and inner courts of the temple. Our spirits, or innermost part, is our holy of holies. It's the part of us where God dwells and makes His presence most known to us.

Our relationship with God is spiritual. We fellowship with Him in the spirit. That might sound intimidating to you, but it doesn't need to be. Remember, you're created in His image. You are, by His design, perfectly suited to fellowship with your heavenly Father, who also happens to be the King of the universe! He is a Spirit, but so are you! First Thessalonians 5:23 defines us as spirit, soul and body; but Proverbs 20:27 says, "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." In other words, your spirit, or your heart, is where He will light you up with Himself! Since that holy place is within you, you can always go there. One of the best ways to do that is by acknowledging God's presence with thanksgiving and praise.

A number of years ago, my husband taught on praise for several weeks in our church. He began by instructing us to write the word *praise* vertically on a piece of paper, with one letter on each line. Over the course of the series, he listed some of the things praise does for us and had us write them down, listing each benefit beside a corresponding letter of the word. By the time we finished, our page looked like this:

- P: Push back the enemy
- R: Release God's power
- A: Access the presence of God
- I: Increase your capacity to receive
- S: Sustain you in tough times
- E: Establish and encourage your heart

Just looking at the list, you would probably say, “Amen. That’s right.” You might agree that praise does all those things because Pastor said so, or because you read about them in the Bible. You might even agree because you’ve seen the power of praise work to some degree in your own life or someone else’s. But you might still have some unanswered questions.

You might wish you could ask, after hearing a sermon series like my husband preached, *How does praise accomplish all those wonderful things? How is it that I can experience all those benefits just by coming to church and singing some songs on Sunday morning?*

There was a time I asked those questions myself. Although I believed what the Bible says about praise, I felt like I was too often missing something. Sometimes during the praise portion of the church service, I’d even get frustrated. The worship leader would say, “Everyone lift your hands and praise the Lord,” and as a congregation we would do it. But after a little while of “Praise You, Lord. Hallelujah. I love You, Jesus. Praise God. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord,” everyone’s hands would go down. So, the worship leader would say to us again, “Oh, come on! Let’s praise the Lord!” And for a while we would.

After a few more hallelujahs, however, I would think, *What else can we do?* Looking around, I could tell many others were thinking the same thing. They were looking at me not praising the Lord, and I was looking at them not praising the Lord. All the while, we were all fervently wishing the worship leader would just go to the next song.

Within ourselves, we were all saying silently, *Please give me something to sing. Put some words in my mouth. I don’t know*

*what else to say other than, “Praise You. Praise You. Hallelujah.” And what does “Hallelujah” mean anyway? And “Glory to God”? I don’t really know what that means either, other than that’s what you say in church. As a child watching Nonnie, I had easily praised the Lord. But somehow as a young adult, that *alive* part of praise had mostly gone missing.*

It wasn’t always like that, of course. Sometimes, something fresh would seem to come up in my heart that I could lift to the Lord as praise. Maybe a particular song might stir me, touch me, or remind me of God’s goodness in times past. Maybe the presence of the Lord would seem to be really strong on a certain song and I’d think, *Wow! The worship leader really got it right with that one.* But then the next song wouldn’t do as much for me, so I’d revise my opinion and think, *I guess maybe the worship leader didn’t get it so right after all. Maybe he didn’t pray enough today. Maybe he was too busy last night to really prepare for church.*

Come on, be honest. Those kinds of thoughts have crossed your mind at one time or another, too.

Eventually though, I had to acknowledge that perhaps the problem wasn’t the worship leader. Perhaps there’s something about praise and worship I (and the other mystified believers around me) hadn’t learned. As Christians, we know we should have a well of gratitude springing up within us because of all the Lord has done for us, but maybe we haven’t learned how to draw on that well. Once we’ve exhausted our limited praise vocabulary, we don’t know what to say. We don’t know what to do.

Why don’t we know?

Because spiritual things must be learned, just like things in the natural must be learned. You had to learn to speak, for example. You weren't born knowing how. You were born with the capacity, but that capacity had to be cultivated. You had to practice and practice. Because you did, now you can speak effortlessly. It's just automatic for you.

You can cultivate your spiritual capacity to praise the Lord much the same way. You can develop it until God's praises flow out of your heart and mouth like a river. You can practice praising Him until you don't have to work at it. It just comes naturally to you.

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*You can develop your capacity until God's praises flow out of your heart and mouth like a river. You can practice praising Him until you don't have to work at it.*

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### ***Praise Releases You From Yourself***

I read in a book one time that "praise releases you from yourself." I don't know about you, but that sounds good to me. Sometimes I just want to get away from myself. But there aren't too many ways to do that, because wherever I go, there I am!

Jesus said, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it" (Luke 9:24), and He wasn't only talking about our life in the usual sense. He was also talking about our selfish way of thinking. He was saying that whoever protects and clings to thinking all the time about himself will lose out on life.

Most of us would prefer to believe we're not self-centered.

But we often are. We spend great quantities of time thinking about ourselves: *How do I feel? What do I think?* Listening to our own thoughts. Listening to our own words. Not just the words we say aloud but also the “thought talk” that seems to never stop.

You know what I mean by thought talk. It just keeps going and going. We see someone and, in our heads, without even realizing what we’re doing, we’re making judgments about what that person said or did. Way too often, we start talking to ourselves about them and sizing them up—always from our own point of view. We’re highly developed in that point of view!

However, as we praise God, setting our minds on Him, the perspective shifts. Instead of seeing through the eyes of

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our own experience, we begin to see from His all-gracious point of view. The reason for this, as the book I just quoted explains, is that “praise demands a shift of center from self to God.” You can’t sincerely praise God and be centered on yourself. Praise takes your attention off yourself and puts it on the Lord, so that rather than being self-centered, you become God-centered.

You experience a form of this in the natural when you pay someone a compliment. The very act of saying something kind to that person moves you momentarily away from self-centeredness. It causes you to notice someone else, and esteem that person as precious, valuable and worthy.



I have a friend whom I have known for forty years. When I first met Sue Tubbs, I couldn't help but notice her graciousness. Whenever she was around other people, she always found something nice to say to someone. It was a wonderful trait to witness; yet initially it bothered me. Why? Because I didn't do that.

I might have something to say, but it wasn't *always* nice. You've heard the expression, "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all." I've known people who would change that and say, "If you can't say something nice, come sit by me." Thank God I wasn't like that, but then I wasn't quite like Sue, either. She was always looking for something nice to say. She could find things to appreciate about people that maybe someone else wouldn't even notice.

When with a group of other women, I've heard her say things like, "You always wear the loveliest shades of lipstick." "Your hair always looks so nice." "Your tone of voice is always sweet." "I so admire the way you take care of your family." Sue developed this into a lifestyle. She had practiced taking note on purpose of people's virtues and commenting on them. She watched everything. And if you were ever around her even for a moment, you would walk away feeling good.

Although I've never asked her about it, I imagine her faithfulness to compliment other people leaves her feeling good, too. Even in a natural sense, that's what happens when you praise someone.

When God is the One you're praising, it happens to an even greater extent because when you praise Him, you experience His goodness at a higher level. You can't feel bad for long when you are sincerely praising God. You can't praise

and thank Him and remain sulky or stay in self-pity. You can't stay stressed or in despair.

Even though we know this to be true, however, most of us haven't practiced praising God as we should. We haven't purposely become skillful in worshipping the Lord.

### *Praise Takes You From Despair to Joy*

How exactly do you go about becoming skillful in praising and worshipping God? You start by looking at Him. You open up your Bible, read what it says about Him, and let the Holy Spirit reveal Him to you.

People who don't know what the Bible says about God have trouble worshipping Him because they don't know how wonderful He is. They may even think He's behind a lot of the bad things that happen in the world. I remember encountering one very famous man who thought this way.

While I was working on Oral Roberts' television crew, his program was among the top rated in the country. Besides his weekly broadcast, four times a year Brother Roberts would host a one-hour special featuring various celebrities. Occasionally, they were unsaved entertainers he invited as a way of reaching out to them, while at the same time attracting a broader audience. Customarily, he would use the opportunity to talk to them about Jesus. Several had eternity-impacting experiences.

One particular celebrity was a well-known comedian and a champion for children with disabilities. He was an interesting, remarkable person, so Brother Roberts asked him to speak in chapel. In front of all the students at chapel, this

comedian commented on why some children are born with disabilities. “I guess God just makes some mistakes,” he said.

Instantly, all the air seemed to be sucked out of the room. No one moved, and of course, all eyes went to Brother Roberts who was on the platform. He just crossed his arms and didn’t say anything, but I’m sure this comedian could feel the lack of oxygen in the room. He hadn’t meant to disrespect God, of course. He just had some wrong ideas about Him. He was looking at God as though He were limited, and even subject to human frailties. He had an incorrect view of God. That image of God does not produce praise or relationship of any kind. If anything, it undermines trust and compromises faith.

While we, as believers, have a more accurate picture of God, even we can succumb to wrong mindsets about Him. As children, we might have been taught something that left us with a negative impression of Him or been presented with simply an underdeveloped, even silly idea of God. And though as adults we might disregard childish ideas, if we don’t see God in the Word for ourselves, our immature concepts of God will remain. Without the Word and a living connection with Him, we will struggle to find things to say about Him in praise and worship, or to even try.

When I think about what it’s like to look at God in the Word, what comes to my mind is the description of the four living creatures described in the book of Revelation that fly around God’s heavenly throne. Not only are those creatures amazing worshippers, they’re also very unusual. They each have six wings and they have “eyes all over and within...their wings” (Revelation 4:8, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Think about how much those creatures must be able to see

with all those eyes looking out in every direction! As human beings, we have only two eyes, and they both face the same way. Although they work together to allow us to perceive depth and dimension, we can only look in one direction at a time. We can only view things from a single perspective. So, our brains must take the limited information our two eyes provide, analyze it and tell us what we're seeing.

Not so with the four creatures around God's throne. They're massive and have eyes in front, in back and all around. They have a 360-degree view of God, and as they look at Him they ceaselessly cry out, over and over, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty (Omnipotent), Who was and Who is and Who is to come" (verse 8, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Maybe you're one of those who have thought how boring it must be, just repeating the same phrases time and again forever. Then I heard our dear friend Jesse Duplantis share about the experience he had in heaven.

He said that when he was brought before the throne of God, he saw the four living creatures which Revelation 4:8 says are "full of eyes around and within" (*New King James Version*). As they circled the throne, with all those eyes looking at God, they continually saw something new about Him. They saw Him in the past, present and future. Every time they circled around Him, they beheld something more about Him. And each new perception of Him left them so awestruck that all they could say was, "Ah! Holy! Holy! Holy is the Lord God Almighty. He was, He is and He is to come!"

I don't know how long they've been doing that. They haven't always existed, because the Bible says they were created. So, at some point, God made them, and they've been

saying the same words recorded in Revelation 4:8 ever since. Yet, they never tire of saying them because in looking at Him, they never see the same thing twice in the same way.

Throughout the Scriptures, but especially in the Psalms, men and women cry out, “Holy is the Lord!” In Psalm 22:3 for instance, the psalmist David says, “Thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.”

You see, something very different happens when such praises are lifted to God by a person. God Himself inhabits them. His presence fills both the praises and the people giving the praise. He doesn't inhabit the praises of the four living creatures in heaven. They recognize His greatness. They see it and respond to it. But they aren't changed by praising Him. They're the same today as they were the day they were created.

This is not true of you. When you, as a born-again believer, see something in God, when you recognize one of His marvelous attributes and acknowledge it, He becomes to you what you see. This is praise. But as you yield fully to what you see by faith, *you* become what you see. This is worship (more on this in Chapter 6).

The Bible says that when we see Jesus, we'll be like Him (1 John 3:2). It also says that as we behold Him in the Word, looking into it to find ourselves, like looking into a mirror, the glory of the Lord changes us into His image. Every time this happens, we are moved from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3:18). When you really look into the Word of God and see, for example, that God is *the* Creator of all, you realize He can create in you and for you whatever you need. His creative power becomes personal to you. It becomes more than just a fact in your head or something someone told you. It becomes

real to you in a way that changes your life or even can save your life.

The reason many people, even some Christians in our day, believe that, as humans, we evolved from monkeys is they've never really seen God through the eyes of revelation. They may have a mental concept of Him as the Creator. They may have been told that Genesis 1 says He is, but if they've never encountered Him as Creator, the monkey theory seems more plausible.

If they had truly *looked* in the Word, searching for God, they would have found Him! They'd know God created the earth and everything in it because of His lovingkindness; that He made it all for us as His children and created a plan for each one of us. People, created in His image, are what give purpose to everything else. Someone who has seen God as the loving Creator could never be convinced human beings came from monkeys.

If someone tried to tell you that, you'd say, "That's ridiculous! Even I could have come up with a better plan than that—and I know for certain God did. In fact, I believe I'll just praise Him for it right now. Lord, thank You for creating me! Thank You for creating such marvelous plans for me and creating in me everything of You that I need to fulfill them! Lord, You're amazing! You're good, holy and perfect in all Your ways. You always were. You still are. And You always will be!"

Praise that results from seeing God for who He is and what He's done is so much more sincere than the kind of praise routine described earlier. Can you see how much more from the heart it is? Do you think it's possible to experience the same results from just mechanically saying, "Praise You, Lord.

Praise You. Hallelujah. Thank You, Jesus...” just because the worship leader tells you to?

No, you won't, because mechanical praises can't come out of your heart. True praise comes up out of you because you looked intently at God with the eyes of your spirit. You saw something awesome in Him and responded.

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*True praise comes up out of you because you looked intently at God with the eyes of your spirit. You saw something awesome in Him and responded.*

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This isn't hard to do. You have the capacity and need only to develop it. So, purpose to do it. Practice walking through the Temple gate, so to speak, into God's presence and behold Him in the Word and in the spirit. Leave self-centered thoughts behind and

purpose, as one author put it, “to center your thoughts on the infinitely lovely and infinitely happy God.”

### *Heaven's Notetakers*

The reason my friend Sue Tubbs seemed to compliment people so easily is that she purposed to do so. She made it a practice to spend time thinking about how she could bless others, not only when she was with them, but in advance.

One time my daughter, Aubrey, went to her house to borrow some things for a baby shower she was giving. Upon arriving, she found that Sue had redecorated her house. Eager to see all the changes, Aubrey asked for a quick tour. So, always the consummate hostess, Sue showed her around.

Afterward, Aubrey told me about their visit. “Mom, I stayed for hours!” she said. “I got to look at all Mrs. Tubbs’ beautiful new things. As I was telling her how gorgeous they all were, I asked her where she got a certain lamp that I thought was especially lovely. She said to me, ‘Aubrey, do you really like that lamp? How much do you like that lamp?’”

“I told her I thought it was the prettiest thing in her house. ‘Aubrey, my parents gave me that lamp,’ she said, ‘but I’ve been praying and watching for something I could give you. I’ve been waiting all day for the Lord to show me, and now I know. I want you to have my lamp.’”

Initially, Aubrey protested. “Mom,” she said, “I tried to tell her that I couldn’t take her lamp. But then she called me ‘Aubrey Lin,’ and you know what that means. With Mrs. Tubbs, when the middle name comes out, you might as well give up.”

“Did you take the lamp?” I asked Aubrey.

“Of course! I had to...it was *Mrs. Tubbs!*”

I’m still amazed by how much thought Sue put into blessing Aubrey in that instance. She spent the entire day going through her house and saying, “Jesus, what is it I have that I can give her?” That lamp was probably an heirloom. It was precious. And when she gave it, it became more than just a sweet gift to Aubrey from Mrs. Tubbs.

Jesus was in the midst of it!

What if we, as believers, were to give that much thought to how we can bless the Lord? What if we constantly watched for things we could say to express our love and appreciation



to Him? What if we centered our minds so much on Him that we didn't have enough time in the day to recount and praise Him for all the things we've noticed about Him?

Our praises would get so big, we'd be like the four living creatures who fly around God's throne. They don't just praise God when He does something for them. They're like heaven's notetakers; they observe God all the time and take note of His greatness. They see something new about Him with every pass around His throne. With all those eyes, they're always seeing more, and they've never come to the end of all there is to see in God.

We don't need more eyes spiritually. We just need to open the ones we have! How? By asking the Holy Spirit to help us see more of Him and appreciate Him more. He is sent to reveal God our Father, and Jesus the Son, to us (John 16:13, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Some years ago, I realized I wasn't as full of gratitude as I should be. "Lord," I said, "I'm grateful for the good things I notice. But I don't notice as much as I'd like to. I want to notice more." In response, the Lord did three things that helped me immeasurably. If you ask Him, I'm sure He'll do them for you too.

1. He'll show you things He's done for you so that you can praise Him for them.
2. He'll show you things about Himself so that, even apart from what He's done for you, you can praise Him just because He's awesome.
3. He'll lift the level of your praises by helping you to notice where you might be lacking in your love and appreciation for other people.

I'll never forget how one time, many years ago, He helped me with the third thing on that list. It was before George and I started pastoring, and we were in a service at Jerry Savelle's church. We were praising the Lord, and with my hands lifted toward heaven I was saying, "Lord, I love You. I love You."

I thought I really meant it. But suddenly I heard the Lord speak on the inside of me in a very straightforward and blunt manner. *No, you don't*, He said. *You don't love Me because you don't love people.*

My initial reaction was shock. What did He mean, I didn't love people? I certainly didn't hate them. After all, I was in the ministry, and I certainly wasn't in it for the pay or the hours. But as I considered what He'd said, I began to understand. He meant that loving people wasn't *my motivation* in life. Maybe I loved people in a way, but I wasn't loving them like God does.

Jesus said, "I give you a new commandment: that you should love one another. *Just as I* have loved you, so you too should love one another." It was safe to say I wasn't loving "just as" Jesus does. He also said, "The person who has My commands and keeps them is the one who [really] loves Me" (John 13:34, 14:21, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). That day in church, although I was saying I loved Jesus, my lack of love for people belied my words. So, He turned down my expressions of love for Him. He didn't receive my praise.

I made an adjustment, fast! I recognized, admitted and repented for not loving people the way God does, and in that moment, something opened up on the inside of me. Up until then, even though I'd been raised to care about people, there had been a hidden hardness there. Thankfully, God softened

me that day. He did a work within me that I let Him do.

I'm not saying I always love people perfectly now. Although I've come a long way, there's always plenty of room to grow. But that encounter with God transformed me more into His image. There was a yielding to His words instead of self-justifying. Praise was turned into worship which was a life-changing encounter with Him. Instantly, my inner man became rooted in the love of Christ to a greater degree than ever before. And I will never be the same.



A decorative border with floral motifs in each corner and a double-line rectangular frame.

CHAPTER 6



With Your  
Whole Heart



## CHAPTER 6

# With Your Whole Heart

**M**ost Christians are under the impression that the only difference between praise and worship is the tempo of the music. They think the fast songs they sing at church are praise and the slow ones are worship. But there's much more to it than that.

To praise God is to recognize something that He is or that He's done and acknowledge it by speaking (or singing) about it.

To worship God is to yield to Him. By definition, *worship* means "to bow the head." It means to become subservient to someone, not because you're whipped or because you were forced, but in honor. The custom of bowing the head to a king or queen is common in countries ruled by monarchs. It's a symbolic way of saying, "By my choice and my will I am yielding, or giving over, my will to your will."

This is what the Apostle Paul told us we're to do in our

relationship with the Lord. “Make a decisive dedication of your bodies,” he wrote, “[presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God.” Paul called this our “spiritual worship” (Romans 12:1, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

When you worship God, you give yourself over to who He is, to His will and to His plan. You submit yourself to Him, as I submitted myself to His love that day at Jerry Savelle’s church. You go beyond simply recognizing and praising Him for His wonderful attributes, and yield to them. You let those attributes become part of you. You put yourself aside and make room for God to manifest Himself in and through you.

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You might not have ever thought about this, but when you received Jesus, it was an act of worship. Why? Because you didn’t just recognize Him as God and Lord. Even demons recognize Jesus as God (Matthew 8:29), so that wouldn’t have been enough to get you saved. What you did was yield yourself to His Lordship. You

said, “Jesus, I receive You as *my* Lord,” and He moved into you and became Lord in *your* life.

That’s worship!

Really, receiving and yielding to anything God wants to be in us or do for us is worship. Think about healing, for example. You praise God for His ability to heal by saying, “Lord, You are the Healer.” But saying, “Lord, thank You for being *my* Healer,” is worship. It takes us to a different level.



When you truly worship the Lord as your Healer, you let go of sickness and yield to God's healing power. You submit to Him "by whose stripes you were healed" (1 Peter 2:24, *New King James Version*), by believing more in Him as *your* Healer than you believe the symptoms in your body.

As you continue to do that and keep looking to Him in faith, your experience of Him as Healer increases and your faith in sickness decreases. You receive more of Him and less of it because He is inhabiting your praise. He's growing in you as a result of it. He's rising up within you, becoming in you that which you are worshipping in Him. What you're saying, what you're giving over to Him and opening up to in Him, is making a way for Him.

Isaiah 40:3 says, "Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make...a highway for our God." When you worship, you do that. You give God an inroad into your heart and life so that He can become in you, to you and for you, all His Word says He is.

A lot of believers know what the Word says, yet they aren't experiencing the reality of it. They see that Psalm 16:11 (*New King James Version*) says, "You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy," and say, "Hallelujah. There's fullness of joy in the presence of the Lord." But then nothing happens. They go away wondering, *Why don't I have joy?*

Most likely, the reason they don't have joy is because all they did was learn about it. All they did was get excited and shout when the pastor preached about it. They didn't actually enter God's presence with praise and worship so they could experience the joy that's there.

That's like me standing in front of a supermarket telling people, "There are groceries in that store." I could go down the list and describe everything that's available there. I could describe with great gusto the canned goods on aisle 1, and everyone could shout, "Amen!" I could tell them that on aisle 2 are all the baking goods they could ever desire, and they could shout again, even louder, "Preach it, sister!" But if they never go into the store and partake of the groceries, they'll go away thinking, *Why am I hungry? I guess this grocery store stuff just doesn't work for me.*

I've heard Christians say something similar when they don't experience the things that they hear their pastor preach about healing, prosperity and other blessings of God. Although they were initially excited about those things, because they didn't understand how to partake of them, they eventually got discouraged. They decided, *This faith stuff doesn't work for me.* They got condemned and left the church saying, "I just can't do it." Or they kept coming to church and faking it the best they could, hoping for the best.

But it doesn't have to be like that for you. Through His Word and by His Spirit, God has prepared a table for you (Psalm 23:5). All the blessings laid out in the Word are on that table. They're yours and, anytime you choose, you can come and partake of them. Through praise and worship, you can come to the table and dine!

## *More Than Just Head Knowledge*

Psalms 9:1 says, “I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). Remember how we talked about locating the presence of God when you pray? To truly praise and worship Him, you must also locate your heart. In my experience, this is one of the biggest problems believers have these days: They’re so busy with their heads, they don’t know how to access their hearts.

While it’s good to fill your head with the Word of God, if you only get it in your head, you’ll only get head results. You’ll think you’re doing the right things and saying the right things; you’ll generate a lot of mental noise and excitement, but it will be like a big rocket...that’s actually just a firecracker. You light it and there’s a lot of smoke and noise but then *Poof!* That’s it. Nothing more happens.

Jesus said in Mark 12:30, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.” He put the heart first, because that’s where truly powerful encounters with God take place. If you’re going to experience Him, you must locate your heart.

One time, I was working on sit-ups with an exercise trainer, and he kept telling me I was doing them wrong. *How do you do a wrong sit-up?* I wondered. He tried to show me by doing some himself, correctly. I’d watch him, try again and get the same feedback. “No, that’s still not right.”

Mystified, I said, “I don’t know how to change what I’m doing. I don’t get it.”

He pointed to my midsection. “Put your focus there.

Locate that muscle. Then, on purpose, use it to sit up.” Sure enough, I focused on the muscle and “found” it! I knew it because I could no longer do a sit-up—even an incorrect one. I wasn’t accustomed to using that muscle, so it was underdeveloped, but it was there. Although I really had to concentrate to connect with it, I kept working at it and eventually I got to the place where I could correctly do an entire set of sit-ups. (That was a big goal at that time!)

Just as God created my body with the capacity to do sit-ups, spiritually you were created by God to have a rich worship life. You weren’t created to be thin in your praise. Your relationship with Him wasn’t meant to take place just in your head. You have the capacity to praise and love the Lord with your whole heart; you just have to practice locating and activating your heart.

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*Expressing heartfelt love for God isn't hard. Stop and literally consider His blessings. Then just tell Him very simply how much He means to you.*

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Expressing heartfelt love for God isn’t hard. You don’t have to come up with a lot of profound and poetic phrases. Stop and literally consider His blessings. Then just tell Him very simply how much He means to you.

One of my favorite nonspiritual examples of how this is done is the letters written by American President Ronald Reagan to his wife, Nancy. He was passionately in love with her, and said so to her all the time. Before he passed away, she published a book called *I Love You, Ronnie*, filled with love letters she had received from him. They were precious.

He wrote to her every day. Sometimes many times a day. He wrote love letters to her while sitting next to her. He wrote them to her when they were sitting across the room from each other. He wrote them on napkins. If they were ever apart, he would send them to her by telegram.

Notice the thought and care he put into his love letters. In one of them he wrote: “Two thirds of my life was spent in a holding pattern awaiting the happiest landing ever made: Now it’s twenty-one years later—twenty-one years so wonderful I’d do it over and over again if each flight led to you. But I still wouldn’t be able to tell you how much you mean to me. I just want to start each day by opening my eyes and seeing you and end each day seeing you before I close them. In between times, I’ll just look in my heart. You are always there.”

Another time he simply wrote, “I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. And besides that—I love you.”<sup>8</sup> Once he said, “I love you even in my sleep.”

That’s not hard. It’s not rhyming poetry. The words in those notes flowed naturally from President Reagan. They were just simple, genuine expressions of his devotion to his wife. He had a deep, heartfelt love for her, and he loved to tell her so.

### ***Finding Things in God***

In Psalm 16:11, David wrote to the Lord, “In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand there are pleasures forevermore” (*New King James Version*). He didn’t just sit down and think those words up in his head. He didn’t

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<sup>8</sup> Nancy Reagan, *I Love You, Ronnie—The Letters of Ronald Reagan to Nancy Reagan* (New York: Random House Inc.) p. 112, 142.

say to himself, *Mmm, I think in heaven there is joy. I think I'll write that down. I'm sure there must be pleasures there as well, and because God is eternal, they probably last forever. So, I'll write that down too.*

No, those words came out of David's love for the Lord. He experienced those things in the Lord's presence. He saw them not with his physical eyes but with his heart. He drew near to the Lord in praise and worship and found fullness of joy there! He experienced it and said so to the Lord.

If David could do that, certainly you can, as a New Testament believer. As we saw in Ephesians 3:19, you can "[really come] to know [practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ" (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). To experience things in God, though, you must look for them in Him. You must find them in His presence. You don't have to be filled with emotion every time you find them. You don't have to be overwhelmed and carried away with feelings every time you worship and experience the Lord. That would wear you out. It would be like feeling every day of your marriage the way you felt walking down the aisle on your wedding day. It would be too much!

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*All you need to experience God is to turn the eyes of your heart toward Him, and when you see something about Him, respond to it.*

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All you need to experience God is to turn the eyes of your heart toward Him, and when you see something about Him, respond to it. I recommend you do this when you're reading the Bible. Rather than just mentally agreeing with what you read, look for God in the Word, and when you see something about Him in

it, pause and respond with gratitude.

Let's practice doing that right now, with Psalm 16:1-11 as it reads in the *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*. The words are already Spirit-led, so read each line as if it is a perfect expression of what's in your heart. Do it by faith, knowing this cultivates a richer relationship with your heavenly Father and that when you engage His Word this way, He will respond to you.

As you read the verses, respond to each one by adding your own words to David's. Make the Psalm personal from you to God, so that it comes out something like this:

- 1 Keep and protect me, O God, for in You I have found refuge, and in You do I put my trust and hide myself.

*"Oh God, my God, keep me close to You. Protect me. Draw me into You. For in You I find refuge. I'm trusting in You. I'm hiding myself in You. I'm running to You, Lord."*

- 2 I say to the Lord, You are my Lord; I have no good beside or beyond You.

*"I say of You, 'You are my Lord.' I'm looking at You. I have no good beside or beyond You. Lord, I'm not going to look anywhere else. I'm not going to listen to anything else. I'm not going to look for satisfaction anyplace else. You are my satisfaction. You are my protection. I'm not going to look to defend myself. I'm going to trust and hide myself in You. Show me how."*

- 3 As for the godly (the saints) who are in the land, they are the excellent, the noble, and the glorious, in whom is all my delight.

*“Oh Lord, as for the godly, as for the Church, as for the Body of Christ, all of those, Lord, who are around me, they are excellent. Lord, they are noble. They are glorious, and I delight in them. I love them. I treasure them and value every Christian relationship.”*

- 4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied who choose another god; their drink offerings of blood will I not offer or take their names upon my lips.

*“Those who choose another God will experience multiplied sorrows. Oh Father, I pray for them. They don’t know that without You their pain and hurt will increase. Lord, they’re on a path that ends in hell. But my path is bright for it leads to You, and in You there is no ending.”*

- 5 The Lord is my chosen and assigned portion, my cup. You hold and maintain my lot.

*“Lord, You are my choice. I choose You over everything else. You’re my portion. You’re all I need. Sometimes it looks and feels like I need other things, but I know that You are enough. You’re enough not only because You’re God, but You’re enough for me because You’ve given Yourself to me. Everything You require of me You’ve provided for me. You’ve given me all of Yourself.”*

- 6 The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; yes, I have a good heritage.

- 7 I will bless the Lord, Who has given me counsel; yes, my heart instructs me in the night seasons.

*“I have a good spiritual heritage. I come from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I’m the seed of Abraham because I’m in*



*Christ. Father, I'm born of You, so things will go well for me. You give me counsel, Lord. You fill me with Your wisdom. Even if problems wake me in the night, I do not worry. I know what to do because of You."*

- 8 I have set the Lord continually before me; because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

*"You are always before me. You're always going in front of me. You're always making a way for me. Lord, I think it's so wonderful. I'll never be moved from following You. I'll never change that. You're too good. Why would I follow anyone else? Why would I look to anyone else? Why would I allow myself to look to the world, Lord, when You are sufficient? Not barely sufficient, but You are more than enough! You are more than enough not to just put me over but to cause me to live in abundance."*

- 9 Therefore my heart is glad and my glory [my inner self] rejoices; my body too shall rest and confidently dwell in safety.

*"My heart is glad, and my very inner self—my mind and my soul and my being—is ecstatic about it, Lord. The thought of all You are and all You do for me quickens even my natural body. The more I think about how good You are to me, how wonderful You are to me, how big You are, how small the devil is, how small the problem is, and how You are God Almighty on the throne thinking about me, the more excited I get."*

- 10 For You will not abandon me to Sheol (the place of the dead), neither will You suffer Your holy one [Holy One] to see corruption.

*“Lord, I remember You said in Psalm 139 that Your thoughts about me are more than the sand of the sea. You think about me and know my situation. You know what I’m made of. You know the very smallest elements of my being. You know my weaknesses and have given all of Your strengths for my weaknesses. You’ve supplied me every resource of heaven, and if what I needed didn’t exist in heaven, You would make it for me.”*

11 You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy, at Your right hand there are pleasures forevermore.

*“Just being here in Your presence fills me with joy unspeakable and full of glory, Lord. Oh, what a pleasure it is to be in Your company. And to think, eternity means there is no end to being with You. Oh, my wonderful, wonderful God!”*

When you read and amplify the scriptures like this with your own words that come from your heart, they come alive inside you. They become so much a part of you, they not only get in your mouth, they get in your hands and cause you to lift them (without the worship leader even having to tell you to). They get in your feet and cause you to dance in the spirit, and show up on your face in a great big smile.

What’s more, it’s easy to do! You just start with words like these written by David. You see that he said to the Lord, “Keep and protect me,” so you think about what that means to you. You ask yourself, *What do I need protection from? The flu? Thieves? The consequences of my own dumb mistakes?* Then, you tell the Lord how wonderful He is to protect you from such things. If you seem “stuck,” pray in tongues with the

intent of opening the storehouse of your spirit. 1 Corinthians 14:17 says with tongues "...you indeed give thanks well" (*New King James Version*). Tongues by faith will "prime the pump," drawing out glorious praise from the well of your salvation.

Once you get started, you'll be amazed how quickly your heart fills up with gratitude and overflows with words of love, praise and worship. All because you simply purposed to look in the Scriptures, see God in them, and respond to all the good things in and about Him that you see.

You can do that! The Holy Spirit will even help you do it. He's right there inside you, and one of the things He's there to do is help you develop and express the gratitude for God that's in your heart. He is there to help you be thankful, and He's there to answer your questions. As you read and respond to scriptures, it is certain you will find verses you question, don't understand or don't know how to respond to. The place of worship is perfect for telling Him you don't understand. Ask your question, thanking Him for His willingness to teach you and give you His wisdom. You'll be amazed how freely insight will come and how easy it is to hear from Him. The place of worship and prayer is a fertile training ground to recognize His presence and hear His voice.

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*The place of  
worship and prayer  
is a fertile  
training ground  
to recognize  
His presence  
and hear His voice.*

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## ***Turning the Mall Into a Place of Worship***

Do you know where I like to be thankful the most? In the mall. I began learning to connect with the Lord there, years ago, right after George and I got married. As newlyweds, pretty much all we had was love. So not only were there times I went to the mall when our checking account was nearly empty, there were times we had to believe God just to be able to put gas in the car. (God never failed us though. Not once!)

Sometimes, back in those days, just looking around in certain department stores in the mall, I would almost hyperventilate. The prices looked so expensive! I remember one time I took a few things into a dressing room, and when I saw how much they cost, I could not breathe. The price tags on them intimidated me so much I had to leave the store.

I made up my mind right then that no price tag was going to talk to me that way! But still, it took a while for me to get to where I could go to certain higher-priced stores and not feel like I was going to pass out. One thing that helped me get there was gratitude. As I walked around the mall, I'd fellowship with the Lord, and when a price tag would start to mock me, I'd tell the Lord how thankful I was for all I had. I would worship Him and say, "Lord, You're so good. You're such a wonderful Provider."

As George and I began to increase financially, I kept practicing this. Even after I did have enough money, I'd praise the Lord for how abundantly He blesses us and say to Him, "I'll do whatever You want me to do today, Lord. Lead me to the things that I need. Show me where they are so I don't waste my time. Lord, I'm available to You. If there's someone You would like for me to bless while I'm here, then lead me to that person."

One time after I prayed this, the Lord drew my attention to a grandmotherly looking woman who was standing at a counter gazing at a purse. I walked up to her and said, “Do you like that purse?”

“Oh yes, baby. I like that purse,” she replied.

“You know what? I’m going to buy that purse for you,” I told her.

“What? What’d you say?”

“I said, ‘I’m going to buy that purse for you.’”

“Really?”

“Yes, Jesus put it on my heart to buy that purse for you because He loves you.”

Her face lit up. “Why, yes, child!” she said. “He does love me!”

We walked over to the sales counter, and I told the saleswoman that I wanted to buy the purse. “Oh. Are you two friends?” she asked.

I said, “No,” and turning to my new grandmotherly acquaintance, I asked, “By the way, what is your name?”

The saleswoman looked confused.

As I gave that precious lady her new purse, I said to her, “You know the Lord, don’t you?”

She answered, “Oh yes, baby. I’ve known the Lord for a long time.”

For both of us that was an experience with God. What

set it in motion? Worship! As I fellowshiped with the Lord through worship while walking through the mall, I was changed. I opened up to Him as my Provider, and I heard Him tell me to provide for a sweet elderly saint. In that place of communion with the Lord, the price of the purse seemed like nothing. It seemed like such a small amount compared to His ability to provide for me that I thought, *Of course, God can do that for me. Of course, He can get that amount of money to me.*

More precious than the money, though, was the fellowship I had with the Lord that day, and the fellowship I saw this woman have with Him, plus the lovely exchange between us. The treasure was the witness that it was to the woman behind the counter. It was a joy and a pleasure. In His presence is fullness of joy and pleasure forevermore. Forever, we will experience those things when we're in His presence.

I don't have those experiences every time I go to the mall, but still there are times when I do. On some occasions, I've gotten so caught up in the presence of the Lord there, I've had to find some place to be alone. I've had to put my nose against the wall or go sit somewhere and just watch people and pray for them.

That's the presence of the Lord, and it's a treasure!

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CHAPTER 7



Different Ways  
to Pray and Praise





## CHAPTER 7

# Different Ways to Pray and Praise

**P**roverbs 20:27 says that the spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord “searching all his innermost parts” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). Your inner man, or your spirit, has *parts*, plural! But if you’re not watchful, you can tend to always pray from the same part. You can get into a spiritual routine that always takes you the same way. When praying with your understanding, you can find yourself repeating the same words. When praying in tongues, the language may start to sound monotonous.

If you keep going like that, after a while you can slip into such a rut that your prayers aren’t even coming out of your heart anymore. Instead, you’re just repeating a learned behavior. And that’s not only boring for God, but it’s also boring for you.

You don’t want your prayer life to become boring! You want it to be varied and interesting. The Lord told a friend

of mine, Gina Lynnes, “If you’re not enjoying your time with Me, don’t think I am, either!” Each time you pray, you want to have a fresh encounter with the Lord. To do so, though, you must let Him lead you in different ways. You must watch for elements in prayer that you might be missing, and let the Holy Spirit help you locate new places in your heart.

Remember He is our indwelling Guide (John 16:13).

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*Watch for elements in prayer that you might be missing, and let the Holy Spirit help you locate new places in your heart. Remember He is our indwelling Guide.*

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This became very real to me some years ago when praying with Gina. She is quite a powerful woman of prayer, yet every time we prayed together, I noticed a tenderness about her. She would be so tender with the Lord that she would cry. She didn’t mean to; she just couldn’t help it. I also noticed that tenderness didn’t show up in my life very much. So, I decided

to find it in my heart, too. I purposed to locate the tender place within me that I saw she had in her. I thought, *I’m going to love God like she does. I’m going to look for that love and express it.*

So while praying in tongues, I looked inward. I listened to my own tongues, while at the same time listening to the tender worship coming from Gina’s lips, and by faith sought the same warm tone of tenderness to come up in me.

As we continued to pray together, I found that part in my own heart. I noticed the more I practiced, on purpose, praying from that part, the more tender I became in other areas of my life. Now that I’ve learned how to seek and find

different parts of my inner man, the Holy Spirit can better direct me to any flow as He wills.

I don't always purpose to go to that sweet place when I pray, but I can. Now, if the Holy Spirit leads me that way, I can quickly find that kind of love for the Lord and experience the kind of Spirit-inspired expressions I saw in my friend.

Gina would tell you that she has explored new places in Him while praying with me, as well. It has served us both for many, many years. Gina is a marvelous editor. Who else could have been better suited to work with me on this book?

The bond that kind of prayer exchange creates is profitable in all manner of relationships—from marriages to ministry to the workplace. It contributes to the unity of our faith and never grows old.

What about times when the pressure is on, or you're anything but feeling sweet—and you don't want to? This is when you follow the example set by the psalmist in Psalm 103. He said:

Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies (verses 1-4).

The word *bless* means “to say something good about.” So when you tell your soul to bless the Lord, you're saying, “Soul, you are going to say good things about the Lord. You're not going to gripe and complain. Emotions, you get

in line. You will bless the Lord. You will honor Him.”

You can say that to your soul anytime you choose, no matter how you might be feeling. Even if you're in a bad mood, you can say, “Soul, remember what the Lord has done for you! He has forgiven every single sin you've ever committed. He hasn't held even one against you. Soul, don't you be thinking about your mistakes. Don't be thinking about sin. Think instead about God's love, bless Him for His forgiveness, and be grateful.”

As verse 4 says, you can remind your soul that God crowns you with His lovingkindness and tender mercies. You can bless Him for that and say, “Lord, You're so merciful and loving. You're so kind and tenderhearted. Thank You for putting Your tender mercies on me.”

Before long, you'll find that kind and tender part in you. It will rise up and start to come out. God's tender mercy feels so much better than being mad. Emotionally, it's so much more uplifting, and as you yield to it, you'll find you truly do feel thankful. You truly do feel like blessing the Lord.

### *Finding the Five Points of View*

One way to keep things interesting when praying the Psalms is to watch for the various perspectives from which they're written. There are actually five different points of view in them:

1. The psalmist might be speaking to himself, as we just saw in Psalm 103.
2. He might be speaking to God, as we saw in Psalm 16:11 where David said to the Lord, “You will show

me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

3. The psalmist might be speaking of or praising God to others.
4. He might be praising God in the presence of his enemies.
5. God might be the Speaker; and the psalmist, the listener, repeats what he’s heard.

In addition to watching for the changes in points of view, it’s also helpful to remember that the Psalms are not written from an American or Western way of thinking. The flow of thought and the words have been translated into English in our Bibles, but they came through people who had an Eastern mindset. They didn’t think as sequentially as we usually do. So, at times, a Psalm will change tones, points of view or direction right in the middle.

Take, for example, Psalm 9. In the *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*, the first two verses say, “I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will show forth (recount and tell aloud) all Your marvelous works and wonderful deeds! I will rejoice in You and be in high spirits; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High!” Then, in verses 3-6 there’s a change in tone. The psalmist shifts his focus from how good God has been to him to how severely He has dealt with his enemies.

He says, “When my enemies turned back, they stumbled and perished before You. For You have maintained my right and my cause; You sat on the throne judging righteously. You have rebuked the nations, You have destroyed the wicked; You have blotted out their name forever and ever. The enemy have been cut off and have vanished in everlasting ruins,

You have plucked up and overthrown their cities; the very memory of them has perished and vanished” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

In verses 7-8, there’s another shift in tone. Looking away from the past toward the future, the psalmist says, “But the Lord shall remain and continue forever; He has prepared and established His throne for judgment. And He will judge the world in righteousness” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

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*Wait on the Lord,  
and purposely  
praise Him until  
you have expanded  
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and more of your  
heart is engaged.*

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In just eight verses, this Psalm went from talking to the Lord about His marvelous deeds, to proclaiming His righteousness in dealing with past enemies, to declaring the things He will do in the eons to come. Those topics are not disconnected. But when you’re gleaning things out of the Word during prayer, don’t feel you have to worship the Lord over the entire Psalm and everything in it.

Sometimes, the best thing to do is find two or three verses that flow in a context and focus on those. Pull out Psalm 9:1 (*Amplified Bible, Classic Version*), for instance: “I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart,” and just focus on that. Wait on the Lord, and purposely praise Him until you have expanded in praise to the point where more and more of your heart is engaged. Pray in tongues and when you’ve worshipped the Lord as far as you can, say, “Holy Spirit, help me locate my heart. Help me stretch it. Help me take hold with my whole heart.”

Then, look for other verses that take you further. Perhaps go on to the phrase in verse 2 (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*): “I will rejoice in You and be in high spirits.” Rather than just zipping past those words, think about them. Ask yourself, *What does it mean to rejoice in God?*

For me, rejoicing in God might sound like this: “Father, I am so glad I’m saved. I’m so thrilled and grateful that I get to spend eternity with You. Lord, if You hadn’t redeemed me, I would be headed to hell. Hell would be in me, and I would have to go there. I wouldn’t see Your face. You wouldn’t hear my prayer. I wouldn’t hear Your voice. I’d be lost. I’d be falling. I’d be hopeless and in despair. I’d be trapped with no way out, nowhere to turn and nowhere to go.

“But You snatched me out of that dark place! You made a way of escape for me. You delivered me out of the kingdom of darkness and translated me into the kingdom of the Son of Your love. You made me Your own, and there’s nothing the devil can do about it. Hell can’t have me now. Hell can’t have me later. Hell can’t have my children or my home. Hell can’t have my joy. Hell can’t have my peace. Hell can’t steal Your plan for my life. Hell can’t take You away from me. Hell can’t take me away from You.

“Hell can’t stop me. Glory to God! Lord, I’m so happy in You! I’m so happy to be in You. I’m so delighted with You, Jesus. You are wonderful and marvelous. Jesus, You’re something else!”

Once I get going like that, I get so excited about everything the Lord has done for me, I’ll start asking Him to reveal more to me about it. I might say, “Jesus, show me what happened when God raised You from the dead and You secured our

redemption. Show me how You put the devil down, how You put Your foot on his neck and put him under Your feet.

“Show me how You stopped him. Show me what You said, Jesus. What was it like when You whipped him in hell? What did he do? What did he say? What was it like with all those around watching You defeat him? What was it like when glory came down and lifted You up out of hell? What was it like to once again be in the presence of God after being away from Him? Oh, Jesus, tell me about it!”

I got all that out of half of a verse. Think what you can do with the whole Book! You can praise God with it forever. You can start out with no inspirational feelings at all and wind up so full of the power of the Holy Spirit that you break out singing that old Pentecostal chorus, “I’ve got it in my hands. Got it in my feet. Got it all over me!”<sup>9</sup>

After praising and worshipping the Lord by talking to Him about how wonderful He is, you can shift to one of the other five voices of praise. You can come out of your prayer place and talk to other people about how wonderful God is. You can say to the first person you see, “I’m telling you, the Lord is good!”

That kind of praise is important. Malachi 3:16 says the Lord listens when we talk to each other about Him. He pays attention to what we say and it gets written down in His book of remembrance.

All through his Psalms, David talks about praising God to other people. He writes about praising Him “in the midst of the congregation” (Psalm 22:22). He speaks to other people

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<sup>9</sup> Rhema Singers and Band, mix: “Look What the Lord Has Done/I’ve Got It/God’s Not Dead,” circa 1981.



and says, “O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.... Let those who favor my righteous cause... be glad and say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, Who takes pleasure in the prosperity of His servant” (Psalm 34:3, 35:27, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

As you can see from those verses, not all praise is upward. Sometimes praise flows outward to whomever happens to be listening. So, always be watching for ways to acknowledge the Lord in your daily life. Wherever you are and whomever you're with, always be looking to give God glory. If you find a dollar bill on the ground, instead of saying to someone, “Hey, I found a dollar,” say, “Look what the Lord gave me. Isn't He good? Do you need this? I'll give it to you.”

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*Even if you're the only one praising Him, God will respond with His presence, and everyone will be lifted. Your praises could be the match that lights the fire of His glory!*

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Imagine being part of a room full of people whose praise has developed beyond “Praise You. Praise You.” It would be the worship leader's dream! More than that, it would gladden the heart of God, and surely His glory would fill the temple! Even if you're the only one praising Him, God will respond with His presence, and everyone will be lifted. Your praises could be the match that lights the fire of His glory!

## ***When Psalms and Prayers Become a Conversation***

Watching for and recognizing the different voices or points of view in the Psalms can greatly enrich your encounters with the Lord. Neglecting to do so, on the other hand, can cause you to miss things. For years, I missed out on a lot that's in Psalm 91 because of this. Even though I read the Psalm often and appreciated it, I didn't get from it all I could have, because I simply thought it was the psalmist praising God for His protection. But it's more than that. It's the record of a conversation.

There are three voices in Psalm 91: the psalmist, God the Father and the Lord Jesus. The first person to speak is the psalmist. He begins the Psalm by saying:

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall remain stable and fixed under the shadow of the Almighty [Whose power no foe can withstand]. I will say of the Lord, He is my Refuge and my Fortress, my God; on Him I lean and rely, and in Him I [confidently] trust! (verses 1-2, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Then, there's a shift. Someone else begins speaking. Who is it? I believe it's Jesus. I believe He's declaring what God is going to do for the psalmist, in response to what he said of the Lord. Starting in verse 3, Jesus says to the psalmist:

He will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. [Then] He will cover you with His pinions, and under His wings shall you trust and find refuge; His truth and His faithfulness

are a shield and a buckler. You shall not be afraid of the terror of the night, nor of the arrow (the evil plots and slanders of the wicked) that flies by day, nor of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor of the destruction and sudden death that surprise and lay waste at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand, but it shall not come near you. Only a spectator shall you be [yourself inaccessible in the secret place of the Most High] as you witness the reward of the wicked. Because you have made the Lord your refuge, and the Most High your dwelling place, there shall no evil befall you, nor any plague or calamity come near your tent. For He will give His angels [especial] charge over you to accompany and defend and preserve you in all your ways [of obedience and service]. They shall bear you up on their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the serpent shall you trample underfoot (verses 3-13, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

In verse 14, another shift takes place in the conversation. This time, although everything that's being said is coming through the psalmist—out of his own mouth or through his own pen—God the Father is replying to Jesus, and saying to Him about the psalmist:

Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he knows and understands My name [has a personal knowledge of My mercy, love, and kindness—trusts and relies on Me, knowing I will never forsake him, no, never]. He

shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him My salvation (verses 14–16, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Those verses reveal the covenant between God and Jesus that we as believers have been invited into. We can hear in that portion of the Psalm the conversation they're having with each other. We get to hear the promises God is making to Jesus about us!

I'm glad the psalmist recorded that conversation, aren't you? What if he hadn't? What if he'd heard and prayed out Psalm 91 but hadn't taken the time to write it down?

It's always good to have pen and paper handy when you're praying and worshipping the Lord. Sometimes, you'll see or hear something in prayer and in the presence of God, and you'll think you'll remember it. But then you don't. You move out of that place in the spirit and you forget. If you write it down, however, you can reread it later...and when you do, you'll often be amazed.

You'll realize it wasn't just your own thought you were recording; it was the voice of the Lord. You'll say, "Oh my! That was God."

## *The Marvelous Tool of Music*

What role does music play in praise and worship?

It can be a wonderful help!

Praise and worship are not confined to or defined by music, of course. We can worship God with the Psalms and

other scriptures without ever singing a note. But as most of us know from experience, anointed church music can be a marvelous tool.

Songs filled with the Word can stir our faith. They can also impart spiritual instruction into us. All through the Psalms, we see the psalmist saying things like, “Teach me Your ways, Lord. Show me Your paths.” When we sing about His ways and His paths, we learn more about them and see them more clearly.

Songs about the awesomeness of God can open the eyes of your heart to who He is. They can cause you to want to cry out, like the four living creatures in the throne room, “Holy is the Lord!”

Even in the music itself there can be an upward draw of the Spirit. If you’re sensitive to it and respond, that upward draw can lift you into the manifested presence of God. If you’re singing, “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord; God of power and might, heaven and earth are filled with Your glory,”<sup>10</sup> you can ride that song into heavenly places.

You can ride the music. You can ride the words, if they are really coming out of your heart to the Lord, and they will become for you an ascension into Him. You can come to a place in Him where you’re not just singing, “Holy,” you’re actually encountering His holiness. You’re sensing the

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*What happens when the presence of God’s holiness, becomes real to you? You’re changed. The impact of His holiness on you makes you more holy.*

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<sup>10</sup> “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord (Hosanna),” Kent Henry, Integrity Music, 2007.

greatness of it. It becomes real to you, and suddenly you get a deeper revelation of what holiness is: It's not just steering clear of sin. There's power in it, as well as astounding beauty.

It's because God is holy that He can defeat things that are unholy. He takes "no pleasure in wickedness," Psalm 5:4 says. He has zero tolerance for it, and when you grasp the ramifications of that, you'll be grateful. One degree of

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*One moment  
worshipping in the  
presence of God,  
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your body, your  
future, the world.*

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wickedness, even the tiniest bit of evil, if the Lord took pleasure in it, He'd be subject to it...and then so would you.

What happens when you're singing and worshipping in the presence of God's holiness, and it becomes real to you? You're changed. The impact of His holiness on you makes you more holy.

What's more, the revelation of His holiness becomes for you a sword of the Spirit. You can go from singing "Holy is the Lord" to turning toward things that are unholy and defying them with His holiness. You can become an instrument of His holiness. You can declare by faith through song, "Holy is the Lord God Almighty, and the whole earth is filled with His glory,"<sup>11</sup> and become a carrier, a delivery mechanism, of His glory, so not only are you changed, but the very atmosphere around you is changed as well.

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<sup>11</sup> "Holy Is the Lord," Chris Tomlin and Louie Giglio, album *Arriving*, track 2, Sparrow/sixstep, 2004.

Obviously, those kinds of transformative experiences in God don't just fall on you automatically because you showed up at church and sang along with the worship leader. You must watch for them by staying alert and sensitive. As you're singing about God's holiness, it must be for you like a signpost that says, "There's something here for you. Don't miss it."

Once that signpost flashes across your spirit, grasp it with strength. Grasp it with faith. Grasp it with the Anointing and with that presence of the living Christ. Don't look around to see what other people are doing. Something might be happening in you that's not happening in anyone else in the congregation. Don't miss the unction. Don't miss that upward draw. Let it lift you higher and higher.

As you do, the words of the song will become far more than just religious words on a page or a screen; they'll be alive with God. They'll be the sword of the Spirit coming out of your heart and your mouth, the weapon of His warfare that is mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

One moment like that worshipping in the presence of God, and your spiritual enemies will fall backward and run from you. One encounter like that can change your life, your body, your future, the world.





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CHAPTER 8



Watching,  
Waiting and  
Working Out



## CHAPTER 8

# Watching, Waiting and Working Out

One of my favorite prayer verses in the Bible is Habakkuk 2:1. I think it should be a banner scripture for any person who prays. In it, the prophet Habakkuk, troubled by conditions in his nation and waiting on the Lord to show him how to pray about them, says, “I will [in my thinking] stand upon my post of observation and station myself on the tower or fortress, and will watch to see what He will say within me and what answer I will make [as His mouthpiece]” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Notice Habakkuk says he’s stationing himself to pray on the “fortress.” What’s a fortress? It’s a place of strength! That’s the place all of us are to take in prayer. We’re not to take just any position. We’re to station ourselves on our Fortress, to position ourselves on the Solid Rock, who is Jesus. We’re to come up by faith into Him. We’re to wait on God, and watch to see what He will say within us and what we’re to say in response.

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*When we say  
in prayer only what  
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God's power just as  
Jesus' words did.*

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Jesus did this when He was on earth. "I only say what I hear My Father say," He said. When we say in prayer only what we hear God say, our words release God's power just as Jesus' words did. But if we're going to hear what God is saying to us, we must learn to wait on the Lord—and that's not always easy.

Remember what happened to the three disciples who went with Jesus to wait on God in prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane? They couldn't do it. They fell asleep because, as Jesus warned them, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41).

What does it take to develop the spiritual strength to overcome that weakness? Much the same thing it takes to overcome physical weakness. It takes exercise.

If you've ever started a workout program at the gym, you know exercising can really be a challenge. Especially in the beginning as you're running around the track or lifting weights, you're fighting thoughts: *What is this good for? This hurts. I don't like it. It's hard. It is not fun.* You're thinking about all the other things you could be doing and wondering, *Is this really worth my time?* But you set those thoughts aside, finish your workout, and the next morning you get up and notice a difference. You think, *Well, I must have accomplished something. I'm sore! I can feel muscles I didn't know I had.*

Still, you aren't yet totally sold on working out. One part of you says, "I don't think I ever want to do that

again.” But the other part of you says, “Stay with it a while longer.” So, you persevere and eventually start to experience the benefits: You get stronger, and people start telling you how good you look.

That’s how it is with working out spiritually. It can be challenging, especially in the beginning. And experiencing the benefits takes time, effort and perseverance. The Bible says everything in the kingdom of God is like a seed. God gives the increase, but for Him to do that, you must plant the seed. You must water it in worship, prayer and waiting on Him. You must do your part.

We are co-laborers with the Lord. (See 1 Corinthians 3:9.) He doesn’t just slap spiritual strength on us while we sit around doing nothing. He doesn’t work out our spirits for us while we spend all our time just tending to natural things. He increases us spiritually as we spend time in His Word and His presence. He develops us in prayer as we watch and wait on Him.

When we get too busy to wait on Him, we can lose ground. Spiritually, we can start to dry up. I’ve seen it happen to good people without them even noticing. I remember Dr. Snow, a wonderful ORU Bible instructor and man of God, told us how it happened to him. Speaking to a group of ministers in a fatherly way, he shared that as a young man, he, too, had pastored for a few years. He had poured everything he had into it—much of it unwisely. After a while, his body started to break down. His health deteriorated and things started going wrong.

He went to the doctor, who told him the reason. “Pastor,” he said, “you have pressed and pressed and pushed yourself to

such a point that your mind accepts this behavior as normal, but your body knows differently.”

It's easy for us to do that in today's culture. Spiritually, we can get accustomed to the carnality and negativity of the world around us and begin to accept it as normal. We're so barraged these days with a constant parade of sin and the flesh through the 24/7 news cycle, the entertainment industry and social media that our minds can begin to adjust to those things. We can actually start to adapt to the atmosphere they create.

In some ways, this is a defense mechanism. But it's dangerous, nonetheless. If we start thinking of the world's carnality as the norm, we'll get a little bit of God and think we have a lot. We'll make a tiny bit of spiritual progress, and because we look so much better than the world around us, we won't realize how far we still have to go. We can be way more like the world than we realize.

As believers, we aren't to acclimate ourselves to the world. We're to focus on God and His Word. Jesus is our standard to live by. We are to recognize, in our spirits, His higher ways and press into them. How do we know if we're making progress? In part, by the results we're getting.

In my own life, for example, one thing I consistently believe for is the grace of God to manifest as I preach. I pray not just for the right words to say, but for them to carry enough power to cause those words to come to pass in people's lives. It's one thing to say to a sick person, "Be healed." Anyone can do that. Any believer has the potential for healing to come through them. But it's another thing to get the desired result.

When Jesus was on earth and said to a sick man, "Be

healed,” He always got the desired result. Jesus’ words always carried the grace and empowerment of God to bring forth what He said. We, as believers today, aren’t quite there yet. We’ve made some progress, but we have a way to go.

Proverbs 4 tells us that out of our hearts flow the forces of life. But while we may have some degree of life flowing out of us, there’s a big difference between a little mist and a mighty river. We want to come to the place where the forces of life that flow out of our spirit man are so strengthened and powerful, when they’re released by what we say or do, they accomplish the objective.

To get to that place, we must grow and develop spiritually. We must follow the example of Jesus. Even He had to grow and develop. As He did, according to the Bible, He “increased in wisdom” and “learned...obedience” (Luke 2:52; Hebrews 5:8).

Obedience is the same thing as yielding. Just as Jesus grew by yielding to God, we do too.

Granted, we have a lot more ground to make up than Jesus did. He was born without a sinful nature. We weren’t. As sinners, not only were we born

into the world, we were also born with the world in us. When we received Jesus as our Lord, however, we changed on the inside. We became the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. So, although we were still in the world, we were no longer of the world. (See John 17:16.)

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When we were sinners, we all were more wicked than we imagined, yet Jesus was still able to save us. So, now that we're

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*We can keep working out spiritually so that when faced with a challenging situation, there arises within us a faith and divine power sufficient to supply whatever is needed to walk in victory!*

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saved, even though we may have tolerated or even indulged in worldly ways and sins, Jesus can help us rise above them—thank God! He is far stronger than we could have ever hoped to be on our own.

This helps us keep things in perspective. Because Jesus is in and with us, we don't have to settle for being spiritually mediocre. We can keep yielding to God, following the Holy Spirit,

and exercising our inner man. We can keep developing our spirits so that the divine life forces flowing out of us are strong. We can keep working out spiritually so that when faced with a challenging situation, there arises within us a thrust of faith and divine power sufficient to supply whatever is needed to walk in the victory that overcomes the world!

### *Exercising Your Spiritual Muscles*

There are many ways to exercise our spirits. Probably more ways than we could count. And though you may not know them all, the Holy Spirit does, and He's been sent to you by Jesus to be your Comforter, Teacher and Guide. The Holy Spirit is also your Trainer. He is there inside you, and He knows exactly what you need to do to develop spiritually.

Because we're all unique, He has a program tailor-made



for each of us. So, He may lead you at times to do different things in prayer than He leads me to do. But there are some spiritual exercises we can all do, anytime. There are certain instructions He gives us in the Word that we can continually use as spiritual workout equipment because they always increase our strength when we obey them.

You can work on developing your spiritual muscles right now by reading Psalm 37, for instance. It's a great workout to help you develop peace. We're living in times when there's a lot of trouble in the world, and Psalm 37:1-11 tells you what to do to stay in good enough shape to triumph over it.

Each one of the things mentioned in those verses can be used as spiritual gym equipment in your prayer time. Three times in them God reminds you, for instance, not to worry. Don't let yourself be troubled, He says. Don't get upset about the world and why worldly people seem to prosper. Don't fret over a wicked person's promotion. Don't get mad because you think politicians from the wrong political party got elected. Don't focus on what the agitators and the naysayers and the complainers are saying.

Other people can try to upset you, but they can't force you to fret. Fret comes from within you. You fret yourself. So, to build your spiritual strength, you can purposely refuse to fret. You can check for any worries or cares you might be carrying, and cast them on the Lord. Practice doing that right now as you read these wonderful verses from the *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*. Take some time to think about each instruction and check up on yourself to see if you have actually done what it says—don't just ask yourself, ask the Lord if you have! If the answer is yes, put a checkmark in the box beside it.

- ❑ <sup>1</sup>Fret not yourself because of evildoers, neither be envious against those who work unrighteousness (that which is not upright or in right standing with God).
- ❑ <sup>2</sup>For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.
- ❑ <sup>3</sup>Trust (lean on, rely on, and be confident) in the Lord and do good; so shall you dwell in the land and feed surely on His faithfulness, and truly you shall be fed.
- ❑ <sup>4</sup>Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He will give you the desires and secret petitions of your heart.
- ❑ <sup>5</sup>Commit your way to the Lord [roll and repose each care of your load on Him]; trust (lean on, rely on, and be confident) also in Him and He will bring it to pass.
- ❑ <sup>6</sup>And He will make your uprightness and right standing with God go forth as the light, and your justice and right as [the shining sun of] the noonday.
- ❑ <sup>7</sup>Be still and rest in the Lord; wait for Him and patiently lean yourself upon Him; fret not yourself because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass.
- ❑ <sup>8</sup>Cease from anger and forsake wrath; fret not yourself—it tends only to evildoing.
- ❑ <sup>9</sup>For evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait and hope and look for the Lord [in the end] shall inherit the earth.
- ❑ <sup>10</sup>For yet a little while, and the evildoers will be no more; though you look with care where they used to be, they will not be found.
- ❑ <sup>11</sup>But the meek [in the end] shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

Practice delighting yourself in the Lord and in the abundance of His peace! Practice committing your way to Him. Practice ceasing from anger. Practice being still and waiting on Him. Practice means if you slip up, don't give up. Repent and ask the Lord for His help.

Speak those verses as a confession of faith. Say, for example: "I do not fret because of evildoers. I trust in the Lord. I do good. I feed surely on His faithfulness!" Much like we discussed responding to the Word in worship, declaring God's Word in faith over ourselves releases the power of that Word to work within us. Again, as we respond to God, He responds back to us!

I'm persuaded that if we, as believers, really grasped the kind of spiritual strength that can come to us if we'll just practice being still in God's presence and waiting on Him, we'd do it a lot more. Regardless of how busy we are, we'd make time for it. We'd build our schedules around our daily time of fellowship with the Lord rather than trying to fit Him into our schedules.

We'd get so excited about the spiritual strength that rises up in us as a result of the time we spend watching, praying and waiting on the Lord, that we'd be encouraging everyone we know to do it. We'd be saying to them what Isaiah said in chapter 40:

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Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, does not faint or grow weary; there is no searching of His understanding.

He gives power to the faint and weary, and to him who has no might He increases strength [causing it to multiply and making it to abound].

Even youths shall faint and be weary, and [selected] young men shall feebly stumble and fall exhausted;

But those who wait for the Lord [who expect, look for, and hope in Him] shall change and renew their strength and power; they shall lift their wings and mount up [close to God] as eagles [mount up to the sun]; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint or become tired (verses 28-31, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Look again at verse 29. It says God increases strength to those who have no might. And the might He supplies is of His own supply. Praying effectively requires spiritual might because at times in prayer you must resist the devil. The Bible says to resist him, and he will flee from you. If you resist him and nothing happens, it's because you're underdeveloped in the power of God coming out of you. There's a little but it's not enough. It needs to be multiplied or increased so that it abounds.

Remember what I said about the four living creatures in God's throne room in chapter 5? Apparently, they're not changed by the presence of God. It seems they are just what they are. But we're not like that! We go from glory to glory

when we get in God's presence. His presence changes us increasingly into His likeness. It can't do otherwise because the presence of God demands that whatever comes before Him must be changed into what He intended it to be—and He intended for us to be like Him!

In the beginning, He created Adam in His exact likeness. But because of sin, that likeness was fatally marred. Through defiant disobedience, Adam lost the presence of God for the rest of mankind until Jesus could regain it. The glory of God departed from Adam's spirit, and the rest of mankind fell with him. Adam couldn't live in God's glorious presence anymore because his spirit man had been infected with sin. Any spiritual contact with God would have destroyed the sin and consequently the man who was carrying it. Without connecting to God, Adam was no longer capable of changing or growing in God.

This was the case with all of God's Old Testament people. He accounted righteousness to them and told them how to act righteously on the outside, but they couldn't be made righteous on the inside. So, their righteousness was based on their behavior, actions and performance. We, as New Testament believers, on the other hand, are in a wonderfully different situation. Our inner man has been changed. We've been made the righteousness of God on the inside so that we might have power to perform righteous works on the outside, just like Jesus did.

"But we're not saved by works!" someone might say. No, we're not. But though good works don't save us, being saved does cause us to do good works.

We are to do those works, however, not by our own power

but by the power of His Spirit within. That's why waiting on the Lord in prayer is so important—because, as Isaiah 40:31 reminds us, those who wait on the Lord are changed and fortified with God's power. They receive a strengthening from Him that enables them to get up and go forward. We saw this confirmed in Ephesians 3:16 where Paul prayed we would “be strengthened and reinforced with mighty power in the inner man by the [Holy] Spirit [Himself indwelling your innermost being and personality]” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

In a moment of weakness, you can spend time in God's presence and receive strength in your soul. You can even be strengthened physically. What's most thrilling, though, is the effect God's presence has on the spiritual capability of your inner man. It will enable you to “mount up [close to God] as eagles [mount up to the sun]...run [with Him] and not be weary...walk [with Him] and not faint or become tired” (Isaiah 40:31, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

### ***Deliverance From Trouble***

There are two reasons to wait on the Lord: the trouble you're in now, or the trouble that's coming. That's not a bad confession. It's just reality. Jesus said we'd have trouble in this world (John 16:33). You can't change that. As long as you're on this earth, you're always going to be facing some challenge that can only be overcome by faith.

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*There are two reasons  
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that's coming.*

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When those challenges arise, if you haven't taken time to wait

on the Lord in advance, you may find yourself struggling. You might find yourself concerned, for example, about your personal situation, your family or your job. Though you keep telling yourself you're in faith, really, you're in fear. You're constantly thinking, *What am I going to do?* You're fretful, worried and anxious, all of which are signs you aren't trusting the Lord.

Thankfully though, you can recognize those signs and apply the remedy. You can go to the Lord about whatever is troubling you and take time to wait on Him. You can say like David did in Psalm 27 when he was faced with what seemed like overwhelming trouble:

The Lord is my Light and my Salvation—whom shall I fear or dread? The Lord is the Refuge and Stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even my enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

Though a host encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, [even then] in this will I be confident.

One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek, inquire for, and [insistently] require: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord [in His presence] all the days of my life, to behold and gaze upon the beauty [the sweet attractiveness and the delightful loveliness] of the Lord and to meditate, consider, and inquire in His temple.

For in the day of trouble He will hide me in His shelter; in the secret place of His tent will He hide

me; He will set me high upon a rock.... [What, what would have become of me] had I not believed that I would see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living!

Wait and hope for and expect the Lord; be brave and of good courage and let your heart be stout and enduring. Yes, wait for and hope for and expect the Lord (verses 1-5, 13-14, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

This is how vital waiting on the Lord is: Your faith and your deliverance from trouble depend on it! As David put it, "How would the Lord have delivered me if I hadn't trusted in Him? And how would I have trusted in Him if I had not waited upon Him?"

Really, we should be trusting in the Lord all the time. We ought to be so accustomed to relying on Him that whenever anything happens in our lives our first thought is, *What does God's Word say about this? What has He promised me about it? What would He have me say and do?* Our first inclination, when there's trouble in our families, ought to be to get everyone together around the dinner table, open the Bible, and say, "Let's go to the Word and agree in faith about this situation."

As we can all testify, however, that's not always our first inclination. When things start going wrong, the pressure is on, and people all around us are all upset, trusting the Lord and His Word is not as easy as it might sound. But you will have the strength to do it if you've already been waiting on Him.

Why would something as seemingly passive as "waiting" strengthen you? Because when you're waiting on the Lord, you aren't passive at all. You're waiting on Him in faith with purpose, expecting to receive His strength. You aren't just



wishing something would happen. Wishing doesn't accomplish anything. Anytime God and His mercy and His blessing show up in your life it's because of someone's faith. It's because someone somewhere prayed and believed God for it to happen.

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When you wait on God under the leading of the Holy Spirit, you purpose to connect with Him. By faith, you entwine yourself with Him. You don't just sit there, quiet and inert, like you're waiting for the bus, waiting to see if He shows up. You don't just watch the clock and when nothing happens think, *Well, I guess God is just trying to test me.*

No, that's not what waiting on God means at all. The Hebrew word translated *wait* actually means "to bind together as in twisting, to become one, to be merged with, to be intermingled with." First Corinthians 6:17 says, "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" with Him. How could that be true? The same way it can be true that Jesus can be one Spirit with the Father. He said, "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me." They're two different Persons with distinct personalities, yet they're intertwined so perfectly that in looking at Jesus, you see God.

That's how it's meant to be for us as believers. The intent is for us to be so intertwined with the Lord that when people look at us, they see Jesus, which is to see God.

I've been with a few people who, to a great degree, were like this. The magnitude of being in their presence was so

impressive that I knew they had been with Jesus. One of them, of course, was my grandmother. Another was a minister from South Africa named Justus du Plessis.

A powerful man of God, he was in his 80s when I met him. He had an amazing spiritual heritage. His parents had studied under Andrew Murray, and he'd grown up in Murray's church. He'd served as an interpreter for Smith Wigglesworth, as well as many of the other Pentecostal forerunners who ministered during the early 1900s.

His brother, David du Plessis, was one of the pioneers of the Pentecostal movement. He became known as Mr. Pentecost because he opened the Catholic world to the infilling of the Holy Spirit by making contact with the pope. At the time, Catholic laymen weren't allowed to read their Bibles. Only priests were permitted to do that. During one of his visits with the pope, David du Plessis was asked, "What would you have the pope do for you?" he said, "I would, sir, that Catholics be able to read their Bibles."

His request was granted, and the Catholic world changed.

Out of that came the infilling of the Holy Spirit for many Catholic people in the 1960s and 1970s. A few years ago, my dad spoke to a group of Catholic priests in Italy, and they told him that there were more than two hundred million Spirit-filled Catholics in the world that they knew of.

Justus du Plessis, like his brother David, was a powerful minister of the gospel. He was also a man of intense love. He came to visit us at Kenneth Copeland Ministries so that my husband could interview him about his life. I invited a small group of women I prayed with to come listen to him. When

he walked in the room, I asked, “Pastor Justus, would you please pray for us?”

He opened his mouth, and everyone in the room instantly burst into tears. The weightiness of the love of God he carried was overwhelming. I don’t mean it brought sweet little tears to our eyes. I mean, we *sobbed*. The presence of God on Brother du Plessis pulled something out of all of us. We were totally unsuspecting. It was the weightiest thing I’ve ever experienced, yet it was also the most lovely and delightful. It came through a man who’d spent much time in the presence of the Lord.





CHAPTER 9



Silence,  
Meditation and  
Anticipation





## CHAPTER 9

# Silence, Meditation and Anticipation

**W**e saw in Psalm 27:4 that David wrote, “One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek, inquire for, and [insistently] require: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord [in His presence] all the days of my life, to behold and gaze upon the beauty...of the Lord and to meditate, consider, and inquire in His temple” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). In learning to wait on the Lord, two words in that verse have proven to be especially helpful to me—the words *seek* and *meditate*.

*To seek* means “to research or study; to consider, ponder, look at, or look into.” As human beings created by God, we are naturally equipped to study and investigate things. And as believers, we are spiritually equipped to study and look into God. You don’t have to be a theologian to do it. Jesus has been made unto you wisdom, and you have the Holy Spirit within you to help you.

Seeking the Lord and meditating on Him in prayer begins with you turning your thoughts toward Him. Some

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*Seeking the Lord  
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religions teach meditation starts with letting your mind go blank, but that's not God. He never created your mind to be blank. He gave you the ability to direct your thinking wherever you choose. Therefore, scriptural meditation means setting your mind on God and His Word.

One reason people get frustrated trying to wait on the Lord is they haven't trained themselves to do this. They pray for a couple of minutes, and then realize their minds are off somewhere else. What you have to do when that happens is pull your mind back and turn it toward the Lord again. You have to deal with your mind like it's an old manual typewriter. Have you ever seen one of those things? The top part (called a carriage) moved to the left as you typed. By the time you finished a line, the carriage would be all the way to the left. So to type the next line, you had to pull it back to the right. (If you're unfamiliar with this now-antiquated piece of equipment, it'd be worth it to take a moment and do an internet search.)

That's a lot like what you have to do with your mind when you first start praying. When it wanders, you must grab it and get it centered on the Lord again. You must train it to stay on track. Otherwise, your mind will just go with whatever distraction comes along.

Kids are this way. You can ask them something and they'll start to answer, but before they finish, they'll get distracted



and start talking about something else. Or maybe they'll ask you a question, and while you're answering, they'll ask you another question about something totally unrelated. Why? Because their young minds aren't trained. They just say whatever crosses their minds.

Although it's sad to say, the same is true of even a lot of adults these days. The world's media has shortened people's attention spans. Think about how many commercials come on during a single television show. I read somewhere that most people don't stay on a channel more than seven minutes at a time. That could be because what they're watching isn't worth more than seven minutes, but it's also likely they can't concentrate on one thing for any longer than that.

Waiting on the Lord in prayer takes concentration. To do it, you must develop your spirit and allow it to be in charge of your mind. You must keep putting your attention back on the Lord, bringing it back to Him just like the carriage on a typewriter. You may have to bring it back a lot, especially in the beginning; but don't let that discourage you. Don't cave in and give up.

Instead, remember that working out spiritually is a lot like working out physically. It's harder at first. Initially, your mind will complain. So will your body. They'll say, *This is uncomfortable; I don't want to do this!*

Once you get still, suddenly your body will get restless. It's amazing, really. As adults, all we want to do is sit down, until it comes time to pray. When we start to pray, all we want to do is get up. We think of all the things we need to do. We start mentally making out our grocery list and remembering phone calls we need to return.

It reminds me of how my children were at bedtime. I'd put them to bed, and immediately they'd begin coming up with things they needed to do before going to sleep: "I need to brush my teeth again." "I need a drink of water." "My ant bite itches!" To keep them in bed, I had to say no to all those things they wanted to do other than go to sleep.

To wait on God in prayer, you have to do the same to your mind and your body. You have to say no to all the distractions they start coming up with. You must tell your body and your mind they are going to be still and wait only upon God, and refuse to let them do anything else. Here's where Psalm 103 comes in. You say, "Soul! Mind! Body! You *will* bless the Lord. And you will think on Him and Him alone!"

I realize in our entertainment/distraction-oriented culture, this takes discipline. But you have what it takes. You have the Holy Spirit and His grace supply. So you can do it if you choose. If you don't do it, you can forget about being strong in the Lord and the power of His might. When trouble hits, you won't be ready for it. You won't be like the psalmist who overcame trouble because he waited on and believed the Lord. Instead, you're likely to wind up wondering why your foes overcame you and blaming God for it, when it was not His fault.

### *Singing and Praying in Other Tongues*

Many different things can happen in waiting on the Lord. Sometimes a song will come up on the inside of you. That's what happened to David when he was waiting on the Lord in the face of the trouble he wrote about in Psalm 27. After seeking and meditating on the Lord, he said, "Now shall my

head be lifted up above my enemies round about me; in His tent I will offer sacrifices and shouting of joy; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord” (verse 6, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

He also referred in Psalm 59 to singing while waiting on God for deliverance from his enemies. “O my Strength, I will watch and give heed to You and sing praises,” he wrote, “...I will sing of Your mighty strength and power; yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy and loving-kindness...for You have been to me a defense (a fortress and a high tower) and a refuge in the day of my distress. Unto You, O my Strength, I will sing praises” (verses 9, 16-17, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Singing when you’re waiting on the Lord isn’t like the kind of singing you do when you play a CD or open up an app and just sing along with someone else who’s recorded a song. There’s certainly nothing wrong with that. But it’s not necessarily waiting on the Lord. Relying too much on outward influences and stimuli won’t always help you locate your own spirit.

It’s hit-and-miss if you’re always dependent on something or someone else to take you to a place of prayer. You can listen to a song that emotionally moves you and think you are in the spirit, when it’s really just your soul that’s been touched. Your spirit, or your inner man, may not have been activated much, if at all.

One of the best ways to activate your spirit, besides meditating on the Word, is to pray in other tongues. As 1 Corinthians 14 says, when you pray in tongues, your spirit prays and communicates with the Lord directly. “For one who speaks in an [unknown] tongue speaks not to men but

to God” (verse 2, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). Praying in tongues also builds up your inner man. It “edifies and improves” you spiritually (verse 4, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Jesus said everyone who believes on His Name has access to speaking in other tongues. Tongues is a doorway to the supernatural. While tongues is not the focus of this book, everything laid out here is enriched and better enacted with the glorious aid of tongues.

If you’ve never been filled with the Spirit, yielding to the fullness of His earthly ministry, speaking in other tongues, please see “A Prayer to Receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit” in the back of this book.

To get the most out of praying in tongues when you’re waiting on the Lord, don’t just do it at a surface level. Sit down and pray on purpose, focusing your attention on the Lord. Pray like you did the first time you ever spoke in other tongues. Look inside you for the words. As you speak them, watch to see what the Lord will say within you.

When I think about Jesus telling us to “watch and pray,” I imagine Him saying, “Watch how I pray. Watch the Holy Spirit within you. Be sensitive to what’s going on in your heart. Watch the atmosphere. Watch what you should say. Watch how you should say it. Watch how you should do it. Watch for every impulse of the Spirit and then follow it.” I’ll mention again Habakkuk 2:1. I will “station myself on the tower...and will watch to see what He will say within me and what answer I will make [as His mouthpiece]...” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Just as there are many different things that can happen as you wait on the Lord, there are also many ways to go about it. In Psalm 69:3, for instance, David said, “I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched; my eyes fail with waiting [hopefully] for my God” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). He was waiting on the Lord in a way that brought forth from his heart strong crying. He was seeking God’s help in the midst of a desperate situation and drawing on Him with yearning and longing.

You might be waiting on the Lord regarding a specific situation. If you are, no matter how you’re led to pray, set your mind on the Word. Look into what the Scriptures say about your situation and meditate on it as you’re watching for the Lord’s direction. Also, be patient. The Lord’s direction doesn’t always come in one moment. Sometimes, you may wait to receive direction over a period of days or a period of prayer times.

As human beings, we tend to think about time in terms of seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks and months. But the Spirit of the Lord is looking at things over a lifetime and over generations. He is focused on getting you to where He ultimately wants you to be, and He’s always building toward that. One prayer time becomes a building block for the next. Sometimes you may find yourself waiting on the Lord one way, and other times you’ll wait on Him differently. But all the while, as you’re waiting on the Lord and watching for Him on the inside, He is working.

## ***Strong, Silent Expectation***

Additional definitions of the word translated *wait* in the Bible include “to look narrowly; to observe or to adhere to; or to rest.” It can also mean “to look for, hope for, or expect.”

Expectation should be a very big part of your prayer life. It shouldn't be just a gentle undercurrent, but a strong force. I think of it as the kind of expectation children might have knowing their grandparents are coming to visit. There's a difference between watching out the window because you're expecting Grandma and Grandpa to come, and deciding to wait for them at the end of the block. Waiting at the end of the block means that if there's something you can do to get them here quicker, you're going to do it. It says, “As soon as they are in my sight, I will make contact with them.”

In the Bible, such eager, strong expectation is referred to as *fervent hope*. It's the kind of hope that draws on your spirit. It's hope that causes you to reach out with your faith and take hold of what you're praying for by believing it is happening. As you wait on the Lord, you learn to identify this kind of hope and employ it on purpose. At first, it might not seem like much, but as you grow in faith, you'll realize how powerful real Bible hope actually is.

That's how it is with almost everything in the spirit. Take praying in tongues, for instance. If you've ever helped someone pray in tongues for the first time, you may have seen a look of puzzlement on their face. They're thinking, *Is this really a spiritual language? It doesn't sound like anything I've ever heard. Can it really be accomplishing anything?* But over time, as that person gets a scriptural foundation, the faith behind their praying in tongues increases. They sense the power of

God within them being released through their tongues. And under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, they learn how to release that power on purpose as they pray.

In Psalm 62:5, David puts fervent hope and strong expectation to work while he's waiting on the Lord, not through strong crying or singing as in other Psalms, but in silence. He says, "My soul, wait only upon God and silently submit to Him; for my hope and expectation are from Him" (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). Being silent before the Lord is not only a wonderful way to wait on Him. It's also very wise. We do too much talking in prayer sometimes.

A pastor by the name of Rufus Mosely realized this one day while he was lying on the floor crying out to God. Right in the middle of his prayer, it occurred to him: *Here is someone who knows nothing doing all the talking to Someone who knows everything!*

Isaiah 26:3 says God will guard and keep in perfect and constant peace the person whose mind is stayed on Him. Only when your mind is set completely on the Lord are you truly quiet. If you're not thinking on the Lord, your mind is noisy, which makes it difficult for you to hear from Him.

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*Only when your  
mind is set  
completely  
on the Lord are  
you truly quiet.  
When you wait  
on the Lord in  
silence, you give  
God an opportunity  
to speak to you.*

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When you wait on the Lord in silence, you give God an opportunity to speak to you. Silence can also be a way for you to submit to Him. More than just being quiet, submitting to

God in silence means you're intentionally yielding to Him by demanding that your thoughts focus only on Him. In that place of silence, something is happening. You're locating your inner man and submitting yourself to the Lord.

You might need to submit to Him in a very specific way. Maybe you're facing a court case or having trouble at work. Maybe someone has spoken ill of you, or your life has been threatened, or you live in a dangerous neighborhood. Whatever the problem is, as you wait in silence on the Lord, you are yielding and submitting to Him as your Defense. You are getting under the truth of what His Word says about that and taking refuge there.

On the other hand, the Lord might be dealing with you about obeying a directive He's given you. Maybe He's been leading you to go back to school, change jobs or make some other change in your life, and you've resisted that leading. So, as you wait on Him in silence, you yield and submit to what He's told you to do.

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*How much of  
yourself can you  
yield to Him?  
You can never get  
to the end of it!  
You're an eternal  
being, He's an  
eternal being,  
and you never come  
to the end of either.*

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Your submission might even be more all-encompassing. You might be led to yield your all to Him; to commit yourself afresh to Him and purpose to give yourself to Him more and more. How much of yourself can you yield to Him? You can never get to the end of it! You're an eternal being, He's an eternal being, and you never come to the end of either. You never get to the bottom of yourself or the bottom of Him.



As you keep intentionally yielding and purposely submitting everything you are to Him, all the while you are hoping and expecting Him to meet you. You have an expectation that this silent submission is accomplishing something powerful.

While in silence outwardly, your mind and heart are still set on Him. Your silence is a state of receiving. While watching, waiting and listening, as I've already said, in the beginning you may not feel anything. But as by faith you persist in silently waiting on and submitting to the Lord, a sensitivity to Him begins to develop in your spirit man.

You become more aware of Him. You increasingly experience His presence and, as you do, you come to the same conclusion that David did in his time of silent waiting and submission. You come to the place where you can confidently say of the Lord: "He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved" (Psalm 62:6).

### ***Watching for the Move of God***

Psalm 123:2 reveals something else we can watch for as we wait on the Lord. It says, "Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, and as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, until He has mercy and loving-kindness for us" (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). This is different from silently submitting. You're always prepared to submit, but this is waiting for God to move. It's watching Him attentively for the slightest breath, the slightest change in the Spirit's direction, and flowing with Him.

One time, after attending a meeting, I was in a large back

room of a church with a number of ministers. Among them were the Rev. Kenneth E. Hagin and his wife, Oretha; and Keith and Phyllis Moore. Brother Hagin had been ministering in the meetings, and Keith and Phyllis were there to serve him and Mrs. Hagin.

Phyllis is one of the most proficient servants I've ever met. She takes serving to a level beyond any I've ever seen. Her ability to discern a need or desire and respond to it is remarkable. As she and I talked that day after the meeting, she was constantly watching Oretha Hagin. Although Phyllis' chair was facing me, and Sister Hagin was several feet away talking to someone else, Phyllis's eyes were always on her.

At one point during our conversation, Phyllis looked at me and said, "She wants her purse. I've got to go." Instantly—*whoosh!*—it was, "See you later," and Phyllis was gone. She grabbed Mrs. Hagin's purse, took it to her, and out the door they went.

While talking to Phyllis, I'd been looking at Sister Hagin all that time, as well. But I didn't see what she did. She saw a glance flash across Mrs. Hagin's face. Just some tiny little motion that signaled to Phyllis that Sister Hagin wanted her purse and was ready to leave.

Phyllis was not only watching for some motion or indication, but she also knew what it meant. It could have meant a hundred different things. How did she know Sister Hagin didn't want a drink of water, or something else? I have no idea. But clearly, Phyllis didn't have to guess what was on Mrs. Hagin's mind. She knew, and when she responded she was right on. One hundred percent right.

That's a wonderful illustration of what happens when, *as a maid [looks] to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord*. In those waiting times when we're watching Him, we become increasingly attuned to Him. We learn to recognize His movings, to know what He wants, and move with Him.

Jesus said in John 7:38-39, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" The Holy Spirit flows through you like a river. He's always moving. Your assignment, your pleasure, is to follow that movement.

Sometimes it's dramatic, and you sense a big and sudden change. You have a strong awareness that you're to move from silent waiting to praying and declaring with boldness and volume, or that there's to be a demonstration of some sort. When God moves like that, in a big and obvious way, knowing how to respond is easy.

But some of the most precious movings of the Spirit are gentler. They're like watching for the slightest little shift in the breeze. They're not outward. They're not marked by great feelings, nor are they mental. There may be pictures and thoughts that come to your mind, but while that's fine, you don't want to get preoccupied with thoughts and pictures. You don't want to let them distract you so that you stop looking on the inside at what God is doing in your spirit. You just want your mind to come under His influence so you can keep moving with Him.

Sometimes, you'll know things on the inside that you have no mental picture for at all. I remember one time in

prayer, for instance, for a very brief few seconds my inner man opened up and I knew I made contact with Love itself, Himself. It wasn't a feeling at all. It was more like a person had walked into the room, and suddenly I knew Him. I didn't see anything. No image came to my mind, but I recognized it was Love.

Often, we experience the effects of love and call it love. But that day I made contact with love in a different dimension. I encountered love in a way that I still cannot describe. I knew what it was, yet I have no words to explain it. I can tell you

this though: Love is rich, and it changes you. It gives you things to hope and believe for.

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*My encounter  
with Love  
was an  
encounter  
with God.*

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My encounter with Love was an encounter with God.

As I waited on the Lord, one moment I was in contact with Love in that magnificent way. The next moment, I wasn't anymore. But even a brief moment in Love's presence makes you long for it. It makes you release your faith for it on purpose.

Sometimes when you're waiting and watching for the Lord, He will give words to wrap around the way He's moving. When He does, recognize and accept them. Keep developing your receptivity to Him by continuing to watch Him, and respond to His slightest move and quietest whisper. You can do it. You have an unction from the Holy One. You have the Holy Spirit. He's there. You just have to believe it and wait expectantly for Him to lead you.

Psalm 130:5-6 says, “I wait for the Lord, I expectantly wait, and in His word do I hope. I am looking and waiting for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, I say, more than watchmen for the morning” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*). If you’ve ever worked a night shift, you know what it’s like to wait for the morning. You look for it constantly. You can hardly wait for dawn to come.

Years ago, I worked the night shift at a Christian radio station. I was an evening DJ, midnight to 7 a.m. That seven-hour programming block included music and teaching. So much of it was far from the faith and victory I was accustomed to, but I had to play it anyway. What’s worse, I had to deal with calls from the kind of people who have nothing better to do than call radio stations in the middle of the night to complain. I played a teaching broadcast out of sequence and oh, my! You would have thought I had committed the unpardonable sin on the air.

Talk about a clock watcher! I counted the minutes back then like you wouldn’t believe. I knew this was not the long-term career choice the Lord had for me, but I needed the experience. So, I was always eagerly watching, not only for my shift to end, but for a new day to dawn in my life. I’m not sure that’s the best example, except that we are to long for Him and know His response is coming as surely as the morning follows the night.

### ***Wait With Expectation in the Name of Jesus***

It really helps to take the Bible literally. You can have wonderful times in prayer by simply reading a verse and

doing exactly what it says. Psalm 52:9, for instance, says, “I will thank You [Lord] and confide in You forever, because You have...[delivered me and kept me safe]. I will wait on, hope in and expect in Your name, for it is good...” (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Most of us would agree with that verse, but we don’t often take the time to act on it. Instead, we either pass right over it or think, *Yes, Lord. I’m waiting on You, in Jesus’ Name...* and then rush off to do something else. So, right now, let’s take some time to actually practice that kind of waiting. Let’s wait on the Lord by putting our expectation in His Name.

How do you do that?

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*Let’s wait on the Lord by putting our expectation in His Name.*

*Start by finding out what God has named Himself. Then meditate on one of His Names and put your expectation in it.*

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You start by finding out what God has named Himself. Then you meditate on one of His Names and put your expectation in it.

According to the Bible, He has a lot of Names! Some of them He specifically identifies as Names He calls Himself. For instance, in Exodus 15:26, He said, “I am the Lord, Named *Jehovah Rapha* [the Lord who heals you]. In Jeremiah 23:6, He said, “I am the Lord Named *Jehovah Tsidkenu* [the Lord your righteousness].” In other scriptures, He says, “I am the Lord that...” and then He describes something about Himself and what He does.

It’s best to practice meditating on God’s Names before

you're in a situation that pressures you into doing so. Although it's good to wait on Him as *Jehovah Rapha* when you're sick, it's far better to have an expectation developed in the Lord your Healer in advance. Then, when you do need healing, you don't have to just expect it; it's there!

Here are some Names of God (or *Jehovah*, which means "the Self-Existent One") that you can meditate on and put expectation in:

*Jehovah*, The Lord, our Provider

*Jehovah*, our Shepherd

*Jehovah*, our Healer

*Jehovah*, our Righteousness

*Jehovah*, our Sanctification

*Jehovah*, our Peace

*Jehovah*, our Banner

What else does the Bible say He is?

He's your Refuge, a Strong Tower, your Strength, your Help, your Deliverer, your Salvation, your Ever-Present Help in time of trouble, your Defender, your Protector, the Glory and the Lifter of your head.

He's your Provider, your Song, your Relief, your Hope for the future, your Hope for satisfaction. He's your Increase, your Cup, the Most High and the Everlasting. He is the Creator, King of the universe and Lord of Hosts. He cannot lie. He does miracles. He raises the dead. He's the King above all kings. He has a habitation of justice, and He is the One who fills everything, everywhere with Himself. He is your Delight. He is your Light. He is your Good Pleasure and your Security.

And that doesn't even scratch the surface!

You can add to all those Names, the Names of Jesus: He's the First Begotten of God, the Prince of Peace, the Wonderful Counselor and the Redeemer. He's the Rose of Sharon, the Balm of Gilead, the Good Shepherd, the Word made flesh, the Lamb of God, the Bright and Morning Star. He's the Firstborn from among the dead, the Head of the Church, the Soon-Coming King, and He holds the keys to hell and the grave.

He is Lord. He is Wisdom. He is Righteousness. He is Perfection and He is High Priest. He's the Author and Developer of your faith and your Intercessor. He is your Hiding Place. He is the High Priest over the household of God. He is the Bread of Life. He's the Captain of our salvation. He's the Lord's Christ and He is Christ in you, the hope of glory. He's a Friend like no other. He is our Guide, our Example, our Teacher, our Rewarder. He is the Faithful and True Friend.

That's a lifetime worth of meditation, right there!

It's no surprise to me that it was David who wrote in Psalm 52:9 about waiting on, hoping expectantly in and meditating on the Lord's Names. He did it a lot, because he knew it unlocks great and powerful revelation. That's how he came to write Psalm 23. He wasn't just looking at the sheep and trying to come up with something to say about God when he got those words. He was watching for the Lord. In his watching, one of the Lord's Names exploded within his spirit and he realized, *The Lord is my Shepherd!*

As he meditated on that revelation, the Holy Spirit unfolded it before him until it became so big inside him that



the rest of the Psalm began to flow out and he wrote:

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

David's faith in the Lord his Shepherd is what developed in him the courage it took to kill the lion and the bear. His understanding of what the Lord as His Shepherd does is what enabled him to bring down Goliath. David had powerful strength and a strong spirit because of what he knew about his Shepherd.

Can you develop that kind of spiritual power and strength? Sure. Just follow David's example. Practice waiting with expectation on the Name of the Lord your Shepherd. On purpose, with your spirit, draw on all that Name means to you. Watch for the Lord as you meditate on the revelation that He's not just a shepherd who happens to be your shepherd; He is the Most High. He is the Self-Existent One, the Self-Sufficient One.

Think of it: The Lord your Shepherd does not need to look anywhere else for any resource you need. He has it all! He

knows where all provision is. If it doesn't exist, He can create it. He knows every way of escape from trouble. He knows how to get you from where you are to where you need to be. He knows where your prosperity place is in life. He knows His plan for your future and how to get that plan across to you. He knows how to lead and instruct you. He knows how to speak your language. He knows how to say what you can hear.

As you wait on Him, recognize those things about Him. Meditate and draw on them. By faith, take hold of them, and submit to Him as your Shepherd. Do it on purpose, over a certain situation. Do it in a general way as you watch and wait on the Lord your Shepherd in order to further develop your faith.

Personally, I've noticed as I do this and think about my future, little insights pop up in my heart, little glimpses of what the Lord has in store for me. I don't try to see a lot of details or figure anything out. I just receive by faith whatever He shows me and say to Him, "You're my Shepherd. You have my future. I believe it."

I might think about John 10:27 (*Contemporary English Version*), where Jesus said, "My sheep know My voice," and respond by saying to Him, "Lord, I know Your voice." Then I might purposely picture myself as a person who knows and continually expects to hear His voice in every area of life.

I've found there's a patience that settles in when I draw on the Lord as my Shepherd. It's my defense against anxiety. Hearing from and following the Lord is so much easier when, instead of being anxious and wrought-up about your future, you're just trusting and following your Shepherd.

A decorative border with floral motifs in each corner, framing the text.

CHAPTER 10



Simple...  
Yet Limitless



## CHAPTER 10

# Simple...Yet Limitless

One of the most amazing things to me about prayer is that it is both simple...and limitless. As a child, I saw the simplicity of it in my grandmother. The secret to her power in prayer was that she always sought God in her praying. For her, prayer wasn't just something she did. It was communion with the Father.

I saw in her what the living, relational side of prayer looks like. She may not have known how to explain it to me, but she showed me by example how wonderfully simple it can be.

Over the years, I've also learned that prayer, as spiritual communication, is as vast as God Himself. It's as multi-dimensional and broad as the realm of the spirit in which He dwells. While exploring that realm with the Lord can be fun, to the natural mind spiritual things can sound complicated, or even confusing because, as 1 Corinthians 2:14 says, "The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God,

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It's as  
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and broad as the  
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which  
He dwells.*

---

for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (New King James Version).

I remember one time a lady who came to hear me at Prayer School had such difficulty grasping what was taught, she left afterward never intending to come back. As she walked out, she looked at the friend who had brought her and said, “I didn’t understand a thing she said. I don’t ever want to hear her again.”

Over the next few days and weeks though, the spiritual truths she’d heard kept working on her. They kept stirring her spirit until she couldn’t help but come back. To this day, she couldn’t tell you a thing that I taught that first day in Prayer School. It absolutely did not connect with her head at all. Now, however, she is a strong believer, a good friend, a woman of prayer and has been in our church for many, many years.

As I conclude this book, I trust that the truths I’ve shared on these pages will also keep stirring in your spirit. I trust that just as my friend did after that first day in Prayer School, you too will keep learning and growing in the wonders of Spirit-led prayer. My aim has simply been to paint a broad picture of it for you. To help open your eyes to a world of prayer that many believers know nothing about. To identify some of the great variety of things you can do in prayer—to discover the height, the depth, the breadth, the adventure, the power and the opportunity in it.

Spiritual truths conveyed through spiritual words can take time to assimilate. So, I encourage you to keep going back to the things I've shared on these pages. The Holy Spirit will keep shedding more and more light on them as you give Him the opportunity. That's really the key—giving Him opportunity. He is, after all, the Teacher of the Church. He's our Revealer of our heavenly Father and Blessed Savior.

You'll be praying someday and remember something you read here and think, *Oh, that's what she meant. I get it!* You'll see prayer a little more clearly and realize afresh that communing with the Lord in prayer is fascinating, exciting, challenging, full of purpose and very rewarding.

It is an encounter with Him.







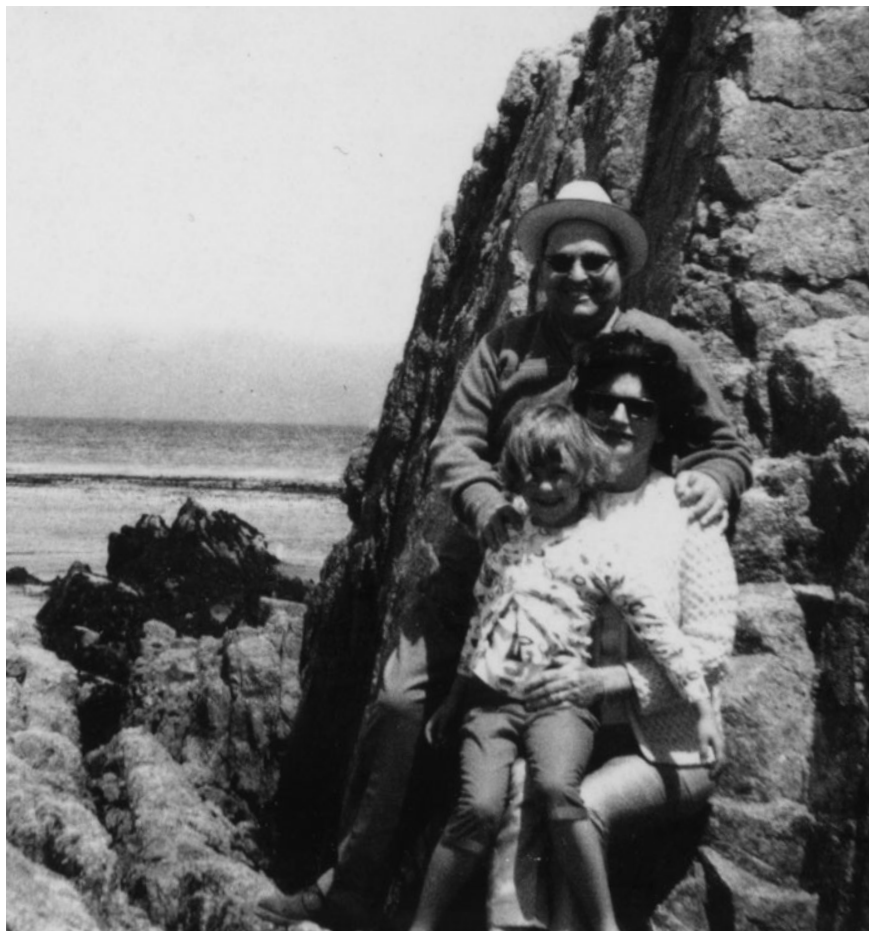
*Being with Nonnie made everyone want to praise the Lord...  
including one-year-old me!*



*I had a tendency early on to go for the microphone.  
My grandfather stopped taking me to his sales meetings (pictured here)  
because he said I always took over.*



*One of my favorite memories with Nonnie and Grandad was our trip to California, starting with three days on a train.*



*The three of us on the California beach. My first supernatural encounter with the Lord happened during that trip.*



*This is the publicity shot of my dad that launched a thousand prayers!*



*Nonnie by my side at one of my bridal showers,  
this one given by her sister, Mackie.*





*Someone asked Nonnie to pose for a picture at her prayer pillow. Though it isn't exactly live action, it does help one envision her spending hours with her Bible on her knees. The only thing missing was the basket of photos, the lists of names...and me!*



*This is probably Nonnie's last time on stage with Dad.  
You can tell how she adored him by the look and smile on her face.*





*Our family, our ministry, and countless others owe their spiritual lives to the combined faith, love and steadfast prayers of A.W. and Vinita Copeland.*



*This is one of my favorite pictures with Dad.  
Producing the Believer's Voice of Victory television program  
was a dream come true, as well as a mission fulfilled.*



*Prayer Everywhere meetings are one of the things I love to do most—  
and evidence of what the Lord told me: “There is something about it when  
people who know how to use their faith come together to pray.”*



*Leading our congregation in a time of communion before entering the new year is always a precious moment. Whether preaching or praying, it's an honor to stand in a pulpit with both of these men of God. They have my admiration and my love.*





# *Making the Great Exchange*

## A PRAYER FOR SALVATION

How do you open the door to the kinds of encounters with God I've described in this book? By praying the most life-changing, eternity-altering prayer anyone can ever pray—the prayer of salvation. This prayer is where life in God begins. It's where you make the great exchange. Where, by receiving Jesus as Your Lord and Savior you exchange—

Your low life for His high life.

Your guilt for God's forgiveness.

Your unrighteousness for His righteousness.

A death and hell-doomed future for a future of unending life in the kingdom of God.

This is the reason Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth! It's why He bore the sin of all mankind on the Cross, went to hell in our place, then rose again and ascended to reign forever in victory. He did it all so that anyone could believe in Him and make this great, glorious and wonderful exchange.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:16-17).

If you've never received this marvelous gift of salvation, you don't have to go another moment without it. You can receive it right now by praying a very simple prayer. When you do, the Holy Spirit takes out of you that old sin nature and imparts God's life in its place. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Pray:

*Heavenly Father, I come to You in the Name of Jesus. Your Word says, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21). I am calling on You. You've offered me Your divine life, and I choose that life today by choosing Jesus. I give my old life to You in exchange for new life in Him.*

*Romans 10:9-10 says "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (New King James Version). I do that now. I confess that Jesus is Lord, and I believe in my heart that God raised Him from the dead.*

*Thank God, I've been born again! I am a Christian—a new creation in Christ. I am saved, and my life is now Yours, Lord. Take it and do something with it. Use it for Your glory. Use it in Your plan. From this point on, by trusting in Your grace, I will live my life for You.*

If you just prayed that prayer, welcome to the family! You are now a child of Almighty God and ready to receive yet another gift He has promised all who believe on Jesus—the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

# *A Prayer to Receive*

## THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus is God's gift to the world. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is God's gift to the Church—that's you!

The moment you were born again, the Holy Spirit came to live *inside* you. But when you receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, He rises up within you and fills you to overflowing with His power.

How important is that overflow of power?

It's so important that it was the last thing Jesus talked about before He left the earth! It's so important that He told His first disciples to not leave Jerusalem until they received it. "For John truly baptized with water," He said, "but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now... You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:54, 8, *New King James Version*).

When Jesus said that to the disciples, they had already been born again. They already had the Holy Spirit *within* them (John 20:22). Yet they needed something more. They needed the Holy Spirit to come *upon* them. Fifty days later, on the Day of Pentecost, He did. As 120 of Jesus' disciples were assembled together praying...



Suddenly there came a sound from heaven like the rushing of a violent tempest blast, and it filled the whole house in which they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues resembling fire, which were separated and distributed and which settled on each one of them. And they were all filled (diffused throughout their souls) with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other (different, foreign) languages (tongues), as the Spirit kept giving them clear and loud expression [in each tongue in appropriate words] (Acts 2:2-4, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

Notice, the first thing those 120 believers did when they were filled with the Holy Spirit was speak in other tongues, in languages given to them by the Spirit of God! At the time, this was unprecedented. Unlike some of the other manifestations of the Holy Spirit's power which had been seen in Old Testament times, speaking in tongues was something new. The believers in Acts 2 were the first people to ever do it.

They were not, however, the last! From then on, speaking in tongues became the norm for Spirit-filled believers. We see it time and again in the book of Acts.

Acts 10 says, for example, that when Peter preached the gospel at Cornelius' house: "They...were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" (verses 44-46).

Acts 19 says that when the Apostle Paul laid hands on the new believers in Ephesus: "The Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (verse 6).

The ability to speak in tongues is the hallmark of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. It has been throughout Church history, continues to be today, and it will be in your life as well. According to the New Testament, when you pray to receive the overflow of the Holy Spirit, you can expect Him to come upon you and fill you, and that you will begin speaking in other tongues.

What's more, once you receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit you'll be able to pray in other tongues any time you choose. That's a tremendous blessing because when you pray in other tongues you can communicate with God perfectly. You can go beyond the limitations of your natural understanding and speak to Him with words given to you by the Holy Spirit.

What happens when you speak those words?

A lot! According to the New Testament, when you pray in other tongues—

- You speak “mysteries” to God (1 Corinthians 14:2). You can pray mysteries in tongues about everything from God’s plan for your day to His plan for your future and the destiny of the Church!
- You build yourself up spiritually. For “he who speaks in a [strange] tongue edifies and improves himself” (verse 4, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).
- Your worship of the Lord is enhanced because when you express your gratitude to Him in tongues you “give thanks well” (verse 17, *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*).

It’s no wonder the Apostle Paul said, “I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all” (verse 18)! The ability to speak in tongues is a priceless gift, a gift that becomes yours

the moment you are baptized in the Holy Spirit.

How do you receive that Baptism? It's very easy. All you have to do is ask, and you can do that right now by praying this simple prayer.

*Heavenly Father, Jesus said just as earthly fathers know how to give good gifts to their children, much more will our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him (Luke 11:13). So, as Your born-again child, I am asking You now to baptize me in Your Holy Spirit. I thank You that as I lift my voice in praise to You, the Holy Spirit will rise up within me and fill me to overflowing. As He does, I fully expect to speak in other tongues. In Jesus' Name. Amen.*

Once you've prayed that prayer, continue to praise and thank God, but instead of using your known language, speak to Him in the language given you by the Holy Spirit. Don't wait for God to make you speak. He won't do that. You must use your own voice by faith and speak out the syllables that well up from within you. Don't expect those "words" to come from your head. Just open your mouth by faith, trusting Him to supply the words.

"But if I do that, won't that just be *me* talking?" you might ask.

Yes, it will be you talking, just as it was the first group of believers who did the talking when they received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. Remember what we read in Acts 2:4? "*They...began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*"

Sometimes I compare this to how I taught my daughter to pray when she was just a toddler. She was too young to know what to say on her own, so I provided her with the utterance. I'd say, "Aubrey, let's pray," and then have her repeat after me.

"Heavenly Father, thank You for this day," I'd say.

And she'd say, "Heavenly Father, thank You for this day."

"Thank You for Jesus," I'd say.

And she'd say, "Thank You for Jesus."

And so on until we finished and said, "Amen."

When my daughter prayed with me like that, she was the one talking. I just gave her the words. That's what the Holy Spirit does for us. We do the speaking, but He gives us the words. He keeps on giving them to us, too. Because no matter how much we grow up in the Lord, we always need help finding all the right words. We always need the Holy Spirit to help us because there are always things we don't know.

Granted, the Holy Spirit doesn't help us pray in exactly the same way I helped Aubrey. He likely won't speak to you audibly so you can hear His voice with your physical ears. Instead, He will cause the words to come from deep inside you, from your spirit, and as you give voice to them, you'll be able to hear them.

When you first begin speaking in tongues, the words may sound strange to you. That's because the language the Holy Spirit gives you is a heavenly language. But don't be concerned about how it sounds or about being confident in it. Be like a little child who's just learning to talk and realize the more you speak in tongues, the more confident you'll become.

Jesus described the ministry of the Holy Spirit by saying, “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water” (John 7:38). Or as the *Amplified Bible, Classic Edition* puts it: “From his innermost being shall flow [continuously] springs and rivers of living water.”

Don't put it off! Jesus said, “Ask!” and you did. (If not, go back to the prayer I gave you on page 206.) Now, by faith, begin to speak. Don't let the devil talk you out of it, and don't question anything. God promised, so just act on the promise and SPEAK! Don't hold back. Start letting those rivers flow out of you as you speak in other tongues. Then continue to let them flow every day. You will never be the same again!

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The eldest daughter of internationally known minister Kenneth Copeland, Terri first discovered the adventures of prayer as a little girl praying at her grandmother's side. Drawing on that rich heritage of faith, she connects people with the living presence of God, teaching them who they are in Christ Jesus and how to pray from that position.

Terri and her husband, George Pearsons, serve as senior pastors of Eagle Mountain International Church on the grounds of Kenneth Copeland Ministries, where they have pastored since 1993. Pastor Terri serves as KCM's Chief Visionary Officer, alongside the ministry's Chief Executive Officer, Pastor George. They have an international commission that takes them all over the world.

Pastor Terri is also President of Kenneth Copeland Bible College, teaching the next generation how to use their faith to live victoriously. Since 1995, Terri has brought life into the prayers of believers world-wide, and ignited the fires of prayer at EMIC through Prayer School and a dynamic network of prayer groups.

Since attending Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in the late 1970s, Terri has supported her father's commission to take the Word of God from the top of the world to the bottom and all the way around the middle. For thirteen years she developed the *Believer's Voice of Victory* television broadcast as its first producer, helping establish Kenneth Copeland as a forerunner in television ministry.

Terri and George have two children: Their son, Jeremy Pearsons, and his wife, Sarah, pastor Legacy Church in Green

Mountain Falls, Colorado, and have two children, Justus and Jessie. Their daughter, Aubrey Mitchell, is a Creative Strategist at KCM. She and her husband, David, have five children, Madison, Eiley, Kayelin, Brooklyn and Piper.

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