

WOMAN2WOMAN: THE NAOMI & RUTH EXPERIENCE
LESSON SIX

Effectual Fervent Prayer

BIBLE TRUTH

The power of prayer is often misunderstood among those who are lost and without Christ. Quite often, many Christians neglect prayer because they don't fully understand the significance of what their prayers can accomplish through faith. From a human's point of view, it seems that because God is all knowing, all-powerful, ever-present and all wise, prayer is futile. After all, what difference could our prayers ever make in swaying the God of all creation's decision on how to govern our everyday lives?

While this is a valid question that everyone has held in their heart at some point, God's Word assures us that we are very important *participants* in how His Kingdom operates on earth. The power of prayer, as it is mixed with faith, can completely change the course of history in an individual, a family, an organization or a nation.

Are you in the habit of praying to God on a daily basis? Explain.

1 Kings 8:45-50

⁴⁵Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

⁴⁶If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near;

⁴⁷Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness;

⁴⁸And so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name:

⁴⁹Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause,

⁵⁰And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them:

A DEEPER LOOK

Easton's Bible dictionary describes prayer as intercourse of the soul with God. Effective prayer that touches the heart of God should be intimate, sincere and humble. Furthermore, in order for our prayers to move the hand of God, we must *believe* that He is a God who *wants to* answer our petitions with **favor** (Hebrews 11:6).

The word supplication means to humbly *plead* our case before a holy God. Additionally, prayer and supplication (as described in the Bible) should always include *repentance* of known sins. When our repentance is combined with a deep crying-out to the Lord for His mercy and grace, His loving-kindness reaches into the human atmosphere of time to bring about miracles of change in our lives. God promises to be near to – and to save – those with a broken and contrite spirit (Psalm 34:18).

Verses 45 and 49 (**1 Kings 8**) uses two words to describe how we get God to *hear* us. What are these two words?

What do you think Solomon meant when He asked God to “maintain their cause” as stated in verses 45 and 49 of **1 Kings 8**?

List the stipulations for attaining God's favor through prayer that Solomon describes in **1 Kings 8:47-48**?



James 5:16

¹⁶ Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

WORKING IN YOUR LIFE

According to the dictionary, the word *effectual* means that something is capable of – or successful in – producing an intended result. The meaning of the word *effectual* also encompasses the enforcing of a legal or binding document.

With this being said, James is telling us that as we confess our faults one to another and pray for one another, we position ourselves to be healed by God. James goes on to teach us the importance of approaching God's throne with a clean heart when asking something of Him. He tells us to be passionate and enthusiastic in our belief system; knowing that, our Heavenly Father will act according to His Word to bring about blessings in our lives. In other words, according to James 5:16, there are *conditions* to getting our prayers answered favorably.

What are the five conditions that **James 5:16** describes for praying prayers that avail (profit) much?

REAL LIFE EXAMPLES

In Matthew 6:5-13 and again in **Luke 11:1-13**, Jesus gives us an example of how we should pray. He begins by warning us against impure motives and thoughts of wishing to be seen and heard by others who will then think we are super spiritual. Jesus tells us that the only reward that can be expected by someone who prays a pious, religious prayer is that of earthly recognition. God will in no way act upon a hypocritical concern, or insincere petition, uttered from the lips of any well-meaning human being who has impure motives.

The prayer that Jesus models for us was not to be recited with a cold heart of memorization. Instead, the Lord's *model prayer* should be viewed through the eyes of the Holy Spirit as a pattern for which Jesus explains how we should arrange our thoughts when talking with Abba Father.

- 1) First, Jesus tells us to address God by His Holy Names (Hallowed be Thy Name) which define His character. (Matthew 6:9)
- 2) Then, Jesus goes on to tell us to pray for heaven to manifest on earth because that is God's will. (Matthew 6:10)
- 3) Next, we should ask our petition of God. (Matthew 6:11)
- 4) As we petition God for our needs, we should confess our sins to Him. We must also be willing to forgive *everyone* that we have held a grudge against – no matter how just our bitterness may seem to be in our own eyes. (Matthew 6:12)
- 5) We should pray that God would always make a way of escape for us so that we will not fall into the devils traps of temptation. Pray that God will remind us to repent daily from all wrong doing and pray that we will be empowered to avoid doing wrong in the first place. (Matthew 6:13)
- 6) Lastly, acknowledge that God is able, and willing, to answer our prayer and totally change the natural laws of our bodies, our land or our circumstances in order to bring about a miracle on our behalf – and for His glory! This is according to the many promises found in God's Word that should be hidden in the heart of every child of the King. (Matthew 6:13)

Why do you think it is important for us to call out the names of God at the beginning of our prayer time?

In light of the Lord's Model Prayer, how do you view God's will for us on earth?

MAKING IT HAPPEN!

According to 2 Chronicles 16:9, the Lord is seeking someone to bless! Our part in the matter is to remain humble, righteous (right standing) and holy in all of our ways. There are no specific rules to follow for accomplishing a favored stance before the Lord during prayer. *His only requirements are that of sincerity, repentance, faith, and humility.* The Lord desperately wants to commune with us in prayer. He wants us to worship Him with childlike faith that is not ashamed of outward praise and adoration. Whether kneeling, standing, lying prostrate, hands lifted high, head bowed low, crying, singing, or shouting, God wants us to be *real* with Him in all of our ways. In return, He promises to show Himself strong on our behalf (2 Chronicles 16:9).

Memorizing God’s Word, learning about His character, and renewing our minds will boost our confidence in our prayer time. As we acknowledge and agree with His thoughts toward us – instead of our own evil thoughts about ourselves – we position ourselves, by faith, to believe that He truly loves us and **wants to do us good and not harm** (Jeremiah 29:11).

Can you recall a time of which you cried out to the Lord with a broken and contrite spirit and asked Him for something specific of which He answered your prayer with great favor?

According to today’s lesson, what can you do to practice having an effectual, fervent prayer life that has the power to touch God’s heart and move His hand?

2 Chronicles 16:9

⁹ For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him...

2 Chronicles 7:14

*¹⁴ If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and **pray**, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin. and will heal their land.*

Mark 11:22-26

²² And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.

²³ 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.

²⁴Therefore I say unto you, *What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*

²⁵*And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.*

²⁶*But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.*

HOMework

Study Matthew 17:14-21 and Mark 9:14-29. Ask God to teach you about the importance of believing His Word. Ask Him to teach you the principles of fasting for certain issues that cause you great concern.



NAOMI & RUTH REFLECTION

Let's look at a prayer that the elders prayed in Ruth 4:11-12 which says, "... *We are witnesses. The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem: And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman.*"

Here, the city elders pray that Boaz redeem Ruth. They asked God that Ruth be known throughout history as a great woman of courage and of godly character. She was ultimately the great-grandmother of King David!

God answers prayer! Some prayers are answered by miracles and some are answered by God's unfolding of events, but none-the-less, all prayer gets answered by God when prayed with a humble, obedient heart that stands in faith on God's Word.

¹This lesson was contributed by: Deborah Ross

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