

## ***Pray Daily: Connecting with God While Changing the World***

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. The sacred charge commitment is to spend two hours a day in prayer and the Word and to read the book of Revelation once a week for 3 years.
- B. Prayer causes our spirit to be energized, blesses our circumstances, and results in real changes in the world as more people experience Jesus' salvation and deliverance from sin and injustice.
- C. What is prayer? It is talking to God. It is a great privilege, a fierce struggle, and a powerful miracle. The Spirit helping us in our weakness in prayer is a beautiful reality. The only way the Spirit will conquer our soul is as we talk to God. If we will talk to the Spirit, then we will walk in the Spirit. Prayer is the best way out of a life of despair and the only way into the life of the overcomer.
- D. Why does God want us to pray? He wants us to connect with His heart in deep partnership. It is amazing that God pleads with us to pray instead of us pleading with Him to listen.
- E. There are blessings that God has chosen to give, but only as His people ask Him in faith. Most of God's promises for increased blessing are not guarantees, but invitations to partner with Him in holy, believing, persevering prayer (Isa. 59:2; Mk. 11:23; Lk. 18:7-8, Jas. 1:6-7).

<sup>2</sup>***You do not have because you do not ask. (Jas 4:2)***

- F. One foundational principle of the kingdom is that we ask God for everything, both the increase of good things and the decrease of bad things. Prayer does not earn us God's favor, but positions us to receive more through a relationship that is in active intimacy with God.

<sup>6</sup>***In everything by prayer...let your requests be made known to God... (Phil. 4:6)***

- G. God withholds blessing until we ask, to *starve us out* of prayerlessness. Why? He is jealously protecting His relationship with us by not answering us until we connect with Him by asking.

<sup>18</sup>***The LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you...<sup>19</sup>He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you. (Isa. 30:18-19)***

- H. We must offer specific prayers, not just think about our needs with frustration and desperation. God knows all of our needs (Mt. 6:32), but requires that we ask for them because it causes us to interact with His heart. To ask implies that we verbalize our prayers not just think on them. Verbalizing our prayers helps us to control our thoughts in prayer.

- I. We must articulate our love, gratitude, and requests to Jesus in simple phrases. The Spirit will use this to change our life as we say often, "Jesus, I love You, I thank, I trust You, etc."

<sup>2</sup>***Take words with you, and return to the LORD. Say to Him, "Take away all iniquity; receive us graciously, for we will offer the sacrifices of our lips." (Hos. 14:2)***

## II. PRACTICAL ISSUES IN DEVELOPING A CONSISTENT PRAYER LIFE

- A. Three ways to strengthen our prayer life are to set a ***schedule*** for regular prayer times, make a ***prayer list***, and have a ***right view*** of God. A schedule establishes ***when*** we will pray; a prayer list gives us focus on ***what*** to pray, and a right view of God causes us to ***want*** to pray.
- B. Most will pray ten times more with the simplicity of developing a schedule and prayer lists. Many who love God never develop a consistent prayer life because they lack these. I take liberty to deviate from my prayer list or ***omit parts*** of it as the *winds of inspiration* touch me.
- C. Three main prayer themes (Most prayer requests fit into one of these 3 themes):
1. ***Gifts of the Spirit***: God's power and favor being released.
  2. ***Fruit of the Spirit***: God's character formed in us, or others.
  3. ***Wisdom of the Spirit***: God's mind, or the spirit of revelation imparted.
- D. Three prayer focuses:
1. ***Intimacy***: Focuses on giving my love and devotion to God. This type of prayer includes worship, meditation on the Word (prayer-reading it), and fellowshiping with the Spirit.
  2. ***Petition***: Asks for God's blessing on my personal life (heart, circumstances, ministry).
  3. ***Intercession***: Asks for God's power or justice for others (people, places, strategic issues).
- E. Three prayer lists:
1. ***Prayer for our personal life***: Breakthrough on our inner man (heart), circumstances (physical, financial, relational), and ministry that God's power may be released through our hands and words (singing/speaking) as we receive prophetic revelation to help others.
  2. ***Prayer for others (people and places)***: Individuals, ministries, marketplace and governmental authorities, and the destiny of cities or nations (Israel, Egypt, YWAM, etc.)
  3. ***Prayer for others (strategic issues in society)***: Government (elections, abortion), oppression (human trafficking, abortion), natural disasters (hurricane, drought), disease (AIDS, Avian bird flu), social (famine, genocide, etc.) or economic crisis, etc.
- F. ***Obtain these prayer lists***: *Ten Prayers to Strengthen Our Inner Man*: F-E-L-L-O-W-S-H-I-P; *Apostolic prayers*; *Fellowshipping with the Holy Spirit*: T-R-U-S-T. **Notes on**: *Sixteen values of Enjoyable Prayer*; *What to do in Our Personal Prayer Times* and *What is Fellowship with the Holy Spirit? How to Mediate on the Word*. See [mikebickle.org](http://mikebickle.org) for these lists and notes.

### III. RIGHT VIEW OF GOD: TENDER FATHER AND PASSIONATE BRIDEGROOM

- A. Prayer positions us to be energized to love God and people by receiving the love of God as a tender Father and passionate Bridegroom. We love others far better as we regularly encounter God's heart. In prayer, we gain the "oil of intimacy" by connecting with God (Mt. 25:3-4).  
<sup>5</sup>*"He who abides in Me...bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (Jn. 15:5)*
- B. Encountering the father heart of God is foundational to growing in prayer. The Father has a tailor-made plan for each of our lives. He loves us as He loves Jesus, thus giving us great worth.  
<sup>23</sup>*"...that the world may know that You...have loved them as You have loved Me." (Jn. 17:23)*
- C. The Spirit cries out to God through us as the "Spirit of adoption" crying, "Abba." *Abba* is a term of endearment like *Papa*; it is respectful, yet affectionate and intimate. The "Abba revelation" empowers us to endure difficulty and to reject Satan's accusations that we are hopeless failures.  
<sup>15</sup>*You received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." (Rom. 8:15)*
- D. By our new position as adopted children, we have access to the Father's heart. Our lives are unsettled without a "stabilizing anchor" until we know the embrace of the Father as our Abba. We especially need the assurance that we are enjoyed by God, even in our weakness.
- E. The end-time prayer movement will flow from the Church in a bridal identity that sees Jesus as the "Bridegroom God" and us as a "cherished Bride." The Bridegroom message is a call to intimacy with God (like David, Paul, and John) and not to see Jesus as a "lover/boyfriend."  
<sup>17</sup>*And the Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" (Rev. 22:17)*
- F. As sons of God, we are in the position to experience God's throne as heirs of His power (Rev. 3:21; Rom. 8:17). As His Bride, we are in the position to experience God's heart (affections).
- G. The Bridegroom message includes the revelation of Jesus' emotions for us as a Bridegroom God. Jesus the Bridegroom is filled with tender mercy. He is gentle with our weakness after we repent. He enjoys us even in our weakness (Ps. 18:19, 35; 130:3-4). Many view God as mostly mad or mostly sad, but He has a heart of gladness (Heb. 1:9) and fiery affections (burning desire) for us.
- H. In November 1995, I had a prophetic dream exhorting me to call God's people "Hephzibah." The "Hephzibah message" is that God delights in us and rejoices over us as a Bridegroom.  
<sup>4</sup>*You shall be called Hephzibah...for the LORD delights in you...*<sup>5</sup>*For...as the bridegroom rejoices [enjoys] over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.*<sup>6</sup>*I have set watchmen on your walls...they shall never hold their peace [keep silent, NAS] day or night... (Isa. 62:4-6)*
- I. The threefold cry for Jesus to come:  
1. *Come NEAR US in intimacy* (individual breakthrough of our heart in God)  
2. *Come TO US in revival* (intercession for breakthrough of revival)  
3. *Come FOR US in the sky* (historical breakthrough in Jesus' coming)

#### IV. THE FOUNDATION OF JUSTICE: NIGHT-AND-DAY PRAYER

- A. God has chosen intercession as essential in releasing His government (power) through Jesus and His people (now and forever). We need revelation of the majesty and mystery of intercession.  
<sup>25</sup>*He always [forever] lives to make intercession for them. (Heb. 7:25)*
- B. ***The mystery of intercession:*** Tell God what He tells us to tell Him as the means of releasing His power. It is profoundly simple in its “weakness”, simplicity, humility, and accessibility to all.
- C. ***The majesty of intercession:*** The central means of releasing God’s power is intercession. Jesus operated in this “principle of intercession” when He created the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1).
1. The Father has deep plans in His heart. He ordained that Jesus speak (intercession) them out as the way to release the Spirit’s power (Gen. 1:2-11; Ps. 33:6, 9; Heb. 11:3). Jesus is the creator who said “let there be light” in Gen. 1 (Jn. 1:3; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2).
  2. Jesus upholds or sustains the created order by speaking the Word (type of intercession).  
<sup>3</sup>*...who [Jesus]...upholding all things by the word of His power... (Heb. 1:3)*
- D. Jesus uses intercession to govern the universe in partnership with His people. The governmental center of the universe is in the “prayer ministry,” which includes all the Spirit-inspired prayers on earth and in heaven that converge before God.
- E. We are most effective in doing works of justice in the context of night-and-day prayer because works of justice are to be confirmed with power, through believers who stay connected to God.  
<sup>7</sup>*Now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night...? <sup>8</sup>I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. (Lk. 18:7-8; NAS)*
- F. Intercession for power on the weak: We contend for power to confront the demonic forces behind injustice. Power to heal the sick is better than only helping the sick with care or finances.  
<sup>12</sup>*We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness...in the heavenly places. (Eph. 6:12)*
- G. Intimacy with Jesus in the workers: Prayer positions us to be energized to love God and people.
- H. God has chosen to use the things that men consider as weak to triumph over darkness. He uses the “so called weakness” of praying to triumph over human might. God’s choice to use the simplicity of intercession, that anyone can do, expresses His desire for partnership with us.  
<sup>27</sup>*God has chosen the [so called] foolish things of the world to put to shame the [so called] wise, and God has chosen the [so called] weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty...<sup>29</sup>that no flesh should glory in His presence. (1 Cor. 1:27-29)*

- I. Intercession causes us to ***internalize*** God's Word by saying it back to Him throughout our life. Each time we say what God says, it ***marks*** our mind and spirit and changes us. This process progressively renews our inner man. I compare it to a computer programmer who rewrites thousands of lines of code when developing a computer program.
- J. God's words are ***spirit and life***. They impart God's life to us. Each time we say what God says, we receive a small impartation of His life that illuminates our mind and tenderizes our heart.  
***<sup>63</sup>The words that I [Jesus] speak to you are spirit, and they are life. (Jn. 6:63)***
- K. Intercession ***unites our heart*** to the people and places that we pray for. We love those we pray for. Intercession helps produce community with people and ownership of God's purposes in various cities and nations. One reason that most of the NT prayers are for the Church instead of the lost is so that we grow in love for the Church, that we tend to despise due to being overly familiar with it. An anointed Church will always bring many into the kingdom (Acts 19:10-20).
- L. Intercession is a practical expression of love for people that releases deliverance to the needy.  
***<sup>11</sup>...you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many. (2 Cor. 1:11)***  
***<sup>19</sup>This will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer... (Phil. 1:19)***
- M. Intercession ***renews our hope and faith*** as we continually speak God's Word back to Him while waiting for the release of His promises.
- N. Intercession for others causes ***multiplied blessings*** to return back on the life of the intercessor. Every prayer of blessing for another is a prayer that God returns back on you and your family. The law of the kingdom requires that we receive more than what we give in faith (Lk. 6:38).
- O. The process of intercession ***humbles us*** so when God answers us we are protected from pride.
- P. Intercession ***changes the spiritual atmosphere*** of cities and nations and thus prepares the way for the presence of God. It releases anointed ministry to bring blessing and deliverance to many.
- Q. Intercession positions us to ***hear from God*** about our calling and destiny. In intercession, we receive revelation into the destiny of others (loved ones), cities, or nations so that we may stand with them in contending for God's fullness for them.
- R. ***Summary***: Intercession is God's brilliant strategy for including the saints in ruling with Him in power. It has great impact on us—it draws us into intimacy with God, protects with humility, transforms with holiness, anoints with power, unifies in community, releases revelation, increases our inheritance, and trains us to rule with His wisdom.

## V. HOW TO MEDITATE ON THE WORD: PRAY-READING THE WORD

- A. The most substantial way in which we can bolster our spiritual strength is by feeding on God’s Word. Many are in the spiritual intensive care unit with a sick heart and a diminished spiritual appetite due to a lack of taking in the Word of God. We do not earn God’s power; we put our cold heart before the “bonfire” of God’s presence.
- B. It is not enough to study the Word, we must give our heart to God and receive from Him as we read it. Bible study must create an active dialogue in our heart with God. Scripture gives us the “conversational material” in our prayer life. Using the Word makes prayer easy and enjoyable.  
*<sup>39</sup>You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have...life; these are they which testify of Me. <sup>40</sup>But you are not willing to come to Me [dialogue] that you may have life. (Jn. 5:39-40)*
- C. Two broad categories of truth related to pray-reading the Word (meditating on Scripture): Scriptures that focus on promises *to believe* and Scriptures that exhort us *to obey*.
- D. We actively dialogue with God by praying promises that we are *to believe* from His Word. First, *we thank God* for a particular truth, turn that truth into declarations of thanksgiving or trust. For example, we say, “Thank you that You love me, forgive me, lead me, and provide for me.” Second, *we ask God to reveal* particular truths to us (Eph. 1:17). For example, pray: “Father, reveal to me the certainty of Your love, forgiveness, direction, and provision for me.”
- E. We actively dialogue with God by praying truths back to Him that exhort us *to obey* His Word. First, *we commit ourselves to obey God* in the specific way set forth in a passage. We make declarations of our resolve to obey, saying, “I set my heart to obey in speech, time, and money.” Second, *we ask God to empower us to obey* a particular truth. We ask God for help to give us wisdom, motivation and power to obey in specific areas. For example pray: “Father, help me to love You, to bridle my speech, or use my time and money in full obedience.”
- F. We speak in prayer to God on His throne (Rev. 4) and to God who is the indwelling Spirit.  
*<sup>14</sup>The love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Cor. 13:14, NASB)*
- G. *Mediating and fellowshiping with the Spirit:* Take time to linger in His presence and to speak affectionately (intermittently say to God, “I love You”). Speak slowly and softly (not shouting or preaching at the indwelling Spirit), briefly (short phrases not paragraphs) and minimally (listen more than talk) with many pauses and silence (on occasion for a few moments) along with gently sighing (Rom. 8:26) and much praying in the spirit as Paul did (1 Cor. 14:2, 18).
- H. *Journaling:* Take time to record thoughts and prayers as you “pray-read” through Scripture. This helps us capture the truths that the Spirit gives us and to grow in our prayer dialogue with God. The anointing of the Spirit in you is your best teacher. When you pray the Word in spirit and truth, you and the Spirit work together to provide you with a tailor made teaching in the Word.  
*<sup>27</sup>The anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things... (1 Jn. 2:27)*