The Prayer of Faith: Five Principles

1. the importance of growing in faith
	1. Jesus taught on the importance of faith as a foundational principle in the kingdom of God. We will experience more of what Jesus provided for us and will enjoy our relationship with Him more as we grow in faith. God releases more of His blessing into our life and circumstances according to our faith (Mt. 9:29; 21:21-22; Mk. 11:23-24; 1 Jn. 5:14-15).

13Jesus said to the centurion, “…as you have believed, so let it be done for you.” (Mt. 8:13)

29Then He touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith let it be to you.” (Mt. 9:29)

48He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well…” (Lk. 8:48)

20He said to them, “…if you have faith…nothing will be impossible to you. (Mt. 17:20)

21Jesus said to them, “…if you have faith and do not doubt…even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ it will happen.” (Mt. 21:21)

23Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” (Mk. 9:23)

* 1. The prayer of faith includes prayer with confidence—in the *authority of Jesus* over sickness and the works of darkness, in the *blood of Jesus* to qualify weak people to be vessels to release His power and in *His desire* to bless His people.

15And the prayer of faith will save [heal] the sick, and the Lord will raise him up…(Jas. 5:15)

* 1. We will experience much more kingdom blessing and activity if we believe for more. Some believe for very little and therefore experience so little of God’s blessing. If we believe for a lot and only get part of it, we will experience much more.
1. receiving our prayer requests: Two ways (Mk. 11:24)
	1. Jesus emphasized the importance of praying with faith. He indicated that we receive our prayers in two ways. First, we “receive” them in the spirit realm (v. 24b), and then “have” them in the natural (v. 24c) when we see them with our eyes. We received all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places.

23“…whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt… but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. 24…whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.
(Mk. 11:23-24)

* 1. Faith is the substance and evidence that goes beyond what we see or feel with our natural senses. Faith is substance or title deed of what we already possess in the spirit. Faith is not physical evidence, but it is evidence given by the Spirit.

1Now faith is the substance [title deed] of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen…
3By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. (Heb. 11:1-3)

* 1. The spiritual realm is more powerful than the natural realm (Heb. 11:3).
1. Five principles in praYing in faith
	1. I identify five principles or “steps” related to having a biblical perspective for praying with faith. Though there is no place in Scripture that provides us with a one-two-three formula of how to pray, as we study the whole teaching of Scripture, we find that these five steps are part of the process. They help us to understand how faith and perseverance relate to receiving answers to our prayers.
	2. We often pray for things that are not specifically promised in the Scripture, but that are not in opposition to the Word of God either. For example, a person may pray that it will not rain on his wedding day or that he will be accepted as a student at a prestigious university or that he will make the football team, or be accepted on a worship team or get the job he applied for. Circumstantial prayer requests such as these do not appear as promises in Scripture, but neither do they contradict God’s Word. The Holy Spirit may confirm to your heart that He will in fact grant a specific request.
	3. ***Step One***: Verbalize our requests to the Father. A foundational principle of the kingdom is that God releases more blessing if we ask for it. This means verbalizing our prayers, not just thinking them.

6…in everything by prayer…with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God… (Phil. 4:6)

* + 1. Many times people *think* about a prayer request without actually *praying* for it

2Yet you do not have because you do not ask. (Jas. 4:2)

* + 1. God knows all our needs (Mt. 6:32), but requires that we ask Him for them—asking causes us to connect with His heart and to associate specific blessings from God as His answer to our prayers. It causes us to know that what we say moves His heart and matters to Him.
	1. ***Step Two***: Receive your requests in the spirit realm. When Scripture states that God *hears* our prayers, it means that He *approves* of our requests. When we pray according to God’s will, we know that He approves of the request, so we are to *receive it in the spirit realm* with confidence. Many circumstantial prayer requests are not promised in Scripture, so sometimes we cannot be sure that the Lord has heard or approved of our request until He answers it.

14Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. (1 Jn. 5:14)

* 1. ***Step Three***: Believe that you receive what you ask for. Jesus spoke of the necessity of believing that we receive the things (in the spirit realm) as the condition for receiving them in the natural realm.

24“Therefore, I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them [in the spirit], and you will have them [in the natural]” (Mark 11:24).

* + 1. When we ask something, we are to believe that we have the “title deed” to our answer (we receive it in the spirit realm) and that in God’s timing the answer will be manifest in the natural realm.
		2. The Father has already given us every spiritual blessing that exists in the heavenly realm (Eph. 1:3). These spiritual blessings include the indwelling Spirit; the right to use Jesus’s authority; the promise of God’s provision, protection, and direction to do His will; and more.

3Blessed be the God and Father…who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. (Eph. 1:3)

* 1. ***Step Four***: Remind God of His Word with perseverance. We are to remind the Lord consistently of what He promised us and of what He has already given us in the spirit realm. We need to be aware of the distinction between the spiritual and the natural realms to understand how prayer works.

6…you who remind the Lord, take no rest for yourselves; 7and give Him no rest until He establishes [what He promised]…” (Isa. 62:6-7, NAS).

* + 1. In prayer put the Lord in remembrance of His Word and what He has already given us in the spirit realm in Christ or of what He has promised to give us related to our circumstances.

26Put Me in remembrance; let us contend together; state your case… (Isa. 43:26)

* + 1. Our requests move from the spiritual realm to the natural realm in context to our persevering prayer. We believe God has approved of the prayer and released it to us in the spirit realm; therefore, we never stop reminding the Lord of it or thanking Him for it. As we remind God of His promises with thanksgiving, we position ourselves to receive them in the natural realm.
		2. Jesus emphasized the value of perseverance and persistence in asking Him to release His blessings (Mt. 7:7-8; Lk. 11:5-10; 18:1, 7). The verb He used is in the present continuous tense, meaning that we are to ask and keep on asking. Luke 11:5–10 records a parable Jesus taught to show the Father’s willingness to answer prayer and the value of continually asking.

8I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. 9“I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. (Lk. 11:8–9)

* + 1. The idea is for us to ask for the request to be manifest in the natural realm. We do not ask God to give us the spiritual blessings that He has already given to us in the spirit realm (Eph. 1:3); rather, we ask Him to release them to us in a greater measure in the natural realm. So we ask for the release in the natural of the things that we already have in the spirit.
		2. We do not *earn* answers to prayers by our persistence or obedience. Prayer is not about informing or persuading God, but about connecting with Him in relationship. When we ask casually, with little focus or effort, it shows that we do not value what we are praying for. When we highly prize something, we will search for it with all our heart (Jer. 29:13).
		3. Paul called us to pray *with all perseverance.* Therefore, we should never stop asking, reminding, and thanking God until we see the answers with our eyes.

18…praying always…being watchful to this end with all perseverance…for all the saints.
(Eph. 6:18)

* + 1. Some circumstantial blessings are subjective rather than directly promised in the Word, so we must be careful not to be presumptuous and then become angry if the answer does not come. Biblical promises are like a “title deed” to what we already possess in the spirit.
	1. ***Step Five***: Receive your requests in the natural realm. Prayers that are in God’s will are always answered in God’s timing and in God’s way, so do not give up too quickly or become discouraged if the answer to your prayer is delayed. There are reasons God delays answers, as we will see.
	2. We can trust His leadership in the timing and method in which He answers our prayers.
	3. ***The value of 90-second prayers***:Short prayers are effective. Even 90-second prayers matter and can connect our heart with God and release the answer to us. Do not put off praying until you have an hour to pray. Even while we are rushing to an appointment, waiting at a stop light, or standing in line at a store, we can offer 90-second prayers that will make a difference in our life.
	4. ***The value of “unanointed” prayers***:Some assume that if they do not feel anything when praying, then God does not feel anything either. They conclude that such prayers are ineffective. The good news is that though we offer our prayers in weakness, they ascend to God in power because of the sufficiency of the blood of Jesus and because they are in agreement with God’s heart. Instead of measuring the effectiveness of our prayers by the emotions that we feel when we pray, we measure them by their agreement with God’s Word and will.
	5. David was zealous to experience *all* the benefits of God’s grace available to him (Ps. 103:1-5). I believe David saw a kingdom continuum between this age and the age to come. It is one salvation and one reality. The fullness of our covenant blessings will come in the age to come. However, we must not draw back from seeing the partial blessing in this age as a down payment of more to come.

2Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: 3who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, 4who redeems your life from destruction… (Ps. 103:2-4)

* 1. We do not always know the “measure” of covenant blessing that we will receive in this age, so I encourage people to seek for a “double portion” of whatever they are currently being blessed with.
	2. Abraham believed in God’s promise when it was impossible in the natural to happen (Rom. 4).

19And not being weak in faith, he [Abraham] did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. 20He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, 21and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. (Rom. 4:19-21)

1. Growing in faith
	1. We grow in faith by learning *who we are in Christ* and *what is available to us in Christ*. The most common lies of the enemy are that we are guilty and disqualified, that our small efforts do not make a difference, and that our difficult circumstances will not turn out for our good.
	2. Joy or enjoying God comes by believing in the Word. Someone can get to heaven without learning to walk in mature faith, but they will not enjoy their relationship with Jesus to the fullness.

13Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 15:13)

* 1. Our thoughts, words, and emotions are deeply interconnected. What we think and say greatly affects our emotional condition. We do not have to bow down to emotions that dictate how so many live. We can talk ourselves into anxiety, but just as surely we can talk ourselves out of it and into faith.
1. questions for small-Group discussion ***(e. g., FCF Friendship Groups)***

1. Identify one point that inspired or challenged you. Why? What will you do differently to apply it?
2. Identify one point that you want to impart to a younger believer. Why? How will you approach this?
3. Identify one point that you would like to gain more understanding of. How will you seek to gain it?