

7 Things You Need to Know About Effective Prayer

When prayer is edited out of our services, the beacon of light will fade, and the salt will lose its savor. A deathlike slumber has overtaken the church: “I know your works, that you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead” (Rev. 3:1b). God help us. It’s time to reignite passion for prayer—to go full throttle.

Full-throttle prayer begins with knowing who God is. In Genesis, He spoke the universe into existence. He holds the world in the palm of His hand. In Exodus, He split the sea and annihilated the most powerful army on the planet. In Numbers, the earth swallowed up the enemies of Moses. Joshua said, “Sun, stand still,” and it stood still. King Solomon prayed for wisdom, and God answered his prayer with plenty to spare. Elijah called down fire from heaven as the result of prayer. Elisha, his protégé, raised the dead to life. Ezra brought back worship to Israel, and Nehemiah rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem because of prayer. Job prayed, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him” (Job 13:15). Regardless of his situation, he was a man of prayer. Hezekiah came to God in desperation and prayed for supernatural help. As a result, the death angel slew the entire Assyrian army of 185,000. That’s power. That’s prayer!

When you’re filled with passionate prayer, He will answer. “Behold, He who guards Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep” (Ps. 121:4). With His help, “A hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight” (Lev. 26:8b).

Where does our help come from? It “comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth” (Ps. 121:2). He inclines His ear to the brokenhearted. God says, “Is that a cry of desperation I hear?” He runs to weakness and answers the prayers of His

people who cry, "God, we need You." Psalm 34:17 says, "The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles." Ask Him to deliver you as well: "Ask whatever you desire, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7b).

Prayer cannot be a footnote at the end of a sermon. We cannot say, "We've got five minutes; let's try to squeeze it in." That will not work—we need full-throttle prayer. Prayer is not one of several priorities; it is the priority that drives the church. If prayer is not a vital part of church, then the church will die. You may have numbers, but do you have depth? You may have programs, but do you have spiritual life?

Leonard Ravenhill rightly noted that the Cinderella of the church of today is the prayer meeting. The prayer meeting, if she exists at all, is relegated to a dark corner somewhere in the church on an off night, so there is little expectation that anyone will pay her any attention. She goes about unnoticed, unloved and uncelebrated, yet she is the one that keeps the house clean. It's time for Cinderella to go to the ball—get dressed for our King and celebrate what He has done.

Prayer is not one of many weapons—it is the weapon. "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9). God cannot fail. He says, "Try Me. Test Me in this." You cannot fail when He is with you. The weapons of our warfare are not physical but spiritual weapons, "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:4b). To "pull down" means "to demolish, to destroy, to hunt down and to overcome."

The devil's not always after you—you can go after him! Hunt him down with prayer, fasting and worship. We are called to hunt down the enemy. How? By getting on our face before Almighty God and praying until He hears. Hunt down the enemy! Pull down strongholds of addiction. Cast down sexual sin—hunt

him down! When you're filled with the Spirit of God, and prayer is your weapon, the enemy runs for cover. He hates worship. He hates prayer.

God's not in heaven saying, "Let's make a deal," He's saying, "This is the deal." "If My people humble themselves, pray, seek My face and turn from sin, I will heal, restore, and rebuild." In the Old Testament, fear gripped God's enemies. They would faint from fear and cry, "Do you know what He did to Pharaoh? Do you know what He did to the Egyptians? Do you know what He did to all the other nations?" But now we often walk in fear. Be encouraged: ISIS and North Korea don't even control their next breath—God does. What reverses fear? Returning to God. What reverses an impotent prayer life? Returning to God and worshiping Him. Put your prayer life back into full throttle.