

Secrets to Pray Effectively as We Approach the Last Days

Editor's Note: This is part 2 of a two-part series. For part 1, [click here](#).

Going Deeper Together

As I often meet with different groups of people to pray, I have noticed the different levels of effectiveness that seems to exist with certain people. There is something different when you pray with people with whom you have an established a relationship. You can let your guard down and pray more intimately with one another. There is a trust and intimacy already built between you, and you are able to go into what I call “gut-level” prayer. You’ve been through things together, and you know how to go hand-in-hand into intercession.

In college, I learned about the different levels of communication that exist between people. When you see someone on the street who is an acquaintance, you usually says something like, “How are you today? Aren’t we having nice weather?” This is what we call Level 5 communication. This is not the kind of communication we want to have between us when we gather to pray. We want to go to a deeper level of communicating with one another and with the Lord.

We can have great cordial relationships with people at Level 5, but to experience more effectual prayer, we need to go deeper together to places of trust and unity in the Spirit. I’ve noticed that large, corporate prayer events sometimes don’t have the same kind of effectiveness that you get when you pray with people you know, people who have gone through things with you, and people you know you can trust with the things of your heart.

By no means do I want to imply that large corporate prayer

meetings are a bad thing. It is great to get people together to pray all the time! God sees the unity and the heart in these gatherings, and He is pleased. But there is another level of substance and a depth of power that is released when you gather with people of like heart and like mind, going before the throne together, with one voice and one sound to cry out for breakthrough.

Breakthrough for Our Land

When Elijah prayed for rain, he was praying for breakthrough for the land. We live in a day and a season when we must step up to the challenge to be a people like Elijah. We must pray that our arrows hit the mark. Our land is in need of breakthrough.

All around us today we see crisis and challenge: storms, shakings, wars, and rumors of wars. Natural disasters, human disasters and spiritual disasters threaten our cities and our world. And in listening to many voices within the body of Christ, there is a consensus that these challenges are going to continue to come. We know that from Scripture, as well. We as the church must be prepared and know how to pray effectively.

An Attitude of Gratitude

“Weakness of attitude becomes weakness of character.” –Albert Einstein

With all these challenges facing our world, many are living in fear and anxiety about what is to come. How do we, as God’s people, position ourselves so that we are not overcome by anxiety?

Philippians 4:6 says, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with gratitude, make your requests known to God.”

So many times, our posture in prayer is one of supplication

and petition before the Lord. We are in places of desperation, in need of breakthrough, and we rush to the Lord to beseech Him for what we need. God certainly wants us to come to Him with our needs and even commands it. But I believe we would see greater breakthrough if we remembered to come with an attitude of thanksgiving. As Paul said to the Philippians, "In everything with thanksgiving."

I can remember times of great desperation when I needed personal and spiritual breakthrough. I got home late one night after witnessing on the streets and seeing little fruit. I was frustrated in ministry. I was tired and discouraged. I didn't feel like praying. I didn't want to worship. I could feel my heart getting hard.

I remember falling down on my mattress in that dark room and crying out to the Lord. I sensed Him telling to read about the woman at the well, so I picked up my Bible and began to read the story in John 4. As I did, I heard the Lord speak to my spirit the same words Jesus said to that woman: Give Me a drink.

I responded by thinking, "Lord, I'm the one who needs a drink." But God spoke to my heart once again: "Doug, there are plenty of times to come with supplication. There are plenty of times to ask me for your needs. I want to hear those things. But sometimes you need to just come to me and thank me for what I've already done."

I stood up in the dark, and out of sheer obedience, I began to thank God for what He had done in my life. I still didn't feel like praying, but the Bible says we are to give a sacrifice of praise. I began to sing, "Praise the Name of Jesus." Then I began to thank Him for all He had done in my life.

Then it started to hit me. The Lord began to remind me of where he had brought me from. Suddenly, I wasn't just thanking Him with my mind. My spirit had come alive, and I was praying

in the Spirit and worshipping God. God had brought me the liberation and breakthrough I needed, not because I came with petitions and requests, but because I came with thanksgiving. There are times where we need to realize that a little gratitude can go a long way toward effective prayer. When we begin to appreciate God for who He is, we gain access to His presence in a new way. We enter into the gates of His presence when we enter with thanksgiving. And in His presence, great blessing and power are released.

A New Season of Prayer

My prayer for each of you is to have a new season of prayer in your life, a season of effective prayer. As you align yourself with God's kingdom and His righteousness, and as you align yourself with others He has put in your life, I know you will find new levels of release.

Make a commitment to come before the Lord with thanksgiving. Be diligent in your times of prayer, both individually and in coming together with people of like spirit. Armed with the prayer of faith, we will see God working in us and through us as vessels of breakthrough for our land. {eoa}

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