

UNLEASH GOD'S POWER: PERSEVERE IN PRAYER

JANUARY 21, 2024

WORSHIP

We Give Thanks, In Control,
Blessed Be, O God Our
Help in Ages Past, Mighty
to Save

WELCOME

Have you asked someone
for help and did not get the
help you needed? How did
you react?

WORD

LUKE 11:9-10

⁹ "So 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. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened.

We tend to give up when our prayers are not answered. Don't give up, keep praying! Ask God to help you persevere; to keep on even though you don't feel like doing it anymore. To persevere in prayer, we need:

I. PERSPECTIVE

Thinking affects emotion; emotion affects action. Perspective determines how we think. Many of us do not know how to think because of wrong perspective. The Bible gives us the correct and divine perspective.

Jesus taught His disciples the right perspective on prayer (**Luke 11:5-8**). While this parable tells of a man asking for help from a friend, Jesus is saying that God is more than a friend. When we keep asking, God is never bothered!

Jesus tells the parable of an unjust judge and a widow (**Luke 18:1-8**). Widows during that time were completely helpless but she kept bothering the judge. Out of annoyance, he helped her out. God is not unjust like that judge, but we are helpless like the widow,.

We need to keep asking (**Luke 11:9-10**), but why does God not always answer prayers? Perseverance in prayer makes us grow spiritually and allows us to listen to the Holy Spirit. Persistent prayer is not forcing God to listen to us; it's making us listen to God.

II. PLAN

We will not know God's plan until we know how to wait and keep praying. Many of us think prayer is just asking for things. We love blessings but there is something greater than material or earthly blessings. The greatest blessing of prayer is God Himself! Until we realize how precious, great, and good God is, we will not hunger for Him. We will not know the beauty and sufficiency of God until we lose everything. Many of us have counterfeit gods. We look for something to make us happy. Whatever that thing is, unanswered prayer is God's way of examining our hearts. Perhaps that thing is your idol -- anything that takes the place of God and guaranteed to disappoint. It will never be able to fulfill its "promises". Only God can truly satisfy.

David had one pursuit in life (**Psalm 27:4**). In the midst of danger (**Psalm 27:3**), He did not ask God to kill his enemy or to fulfill His promise to him when he was young that he will become king. David could have been disappointed, discouraged, disillusioned, and in despair (**Psalm 27:13**), but God has a wonderful reason if prayers are not answered. God promises to bless us. Delays are God's instrument to mold our character. God will sacrifice our comfort for the sake of eternal good. Thus, we need to wait on the Lord (**Psalm 27:14**). David learned to wait. God's plan was to mature David to be king.

David had opportunities to kill King Saul but did not (**1 Samuel 26:9-11**). He did not allow the end to justify the means. He did not compromise. He understood the power of prayer. It takes faith to wait upon the Lord.

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III. PROMISE

Luke 11:9-10 gives the promise of answered prayer. We think this is a universal promise but there is a qualification (**Luke 11:11-13**). With the heart of a father, He is not going to give it to us if we ask for the wrong thing. God will only answer our prayer if it's the best for us. The Holy Spirit is the greatest gift God gives us. It is the presence of God in our life! Once we have God's Spirit, we have power and eternal life.

There's nothing wrong to seek for happiness but we look for the right thing in the wrong places. Happiness can only be found in Jesus Christ. We ask for the wrong thing but God's promise is He will give what is best for us. The qualification of God's promise to answer our prayer is God's will (1 John 5:14). We must understand God's will, God's promise. We keep on claiming it until God tells us to stop.

Elijah exemplifies the power of claiming God's promises (**James 1:17**). He was said to be effective in prayer (**James 5:16-18**) because he was living in accordance with God's will. Superficially, Elijah was such a man of power until we understand the Old Testament. It does not give Elijah credit for no rain. It was God's promise connected to the message for King Ahab to repent from his wickedness. After three and half years, God tells Elijah to tell King Ahab that He will send rain (**1 Kings 18:1**). God can send the rain without Elijah. He is allowing Elijah to become His partner in accomplishing His task (**1 Kings 18:41-45**). He wants us to be prayerful not because we have power but He's giving us the privilege of partnering with Him. God unleashes His power when we persevere in prayer.

IV. PRAISE

When God says "no" or "wait", we praise Him. We thank Him in advance. Persistent prayer says "I will continue to pray until God answers my prayer, or tells me to stop praying. Whatever His answer, I will praise and thank Him".

God tells His people when to stop praying. God told Paul to stop (**2 Corinthians 12:7-8**). He prayed repeatedly for God to remove the thorn in the flesh—a physical ailment. He was in physical discomfort. God will sacrifice our physical discomfort for our character development. God cares more about our eternal good than our physical comfort. God allowed Paul to go through pain to keep him from exalting himself. For God, humility is a greater blessing than physical comfort.

We will persevere in prayer when we believe God is good (**Psalms 34:10**). Life is too short to miss out on God's best. Seek God and prioritize Him; God will bless us. Paul was given something better (**2 Corinthians 12:9-10**). In exchange for physical pain, God gave him grace and power. What God has for us in light of eternity is much better than what we have in this world.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

Why do we need to persevere in prayer?

2. Setting It Right.

Does God always answer our prayers? How do you respond when God does not give you what you want?

3. Living It Out.

How will you show your trust in the Lord even as you persevere in prayer?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Keep praying for people whom you're asking God to work in their life. Make these people feel that they are not a bother. Spend time with them and help meet their needs with the best of your capacity. Share to them the only solution to mankind's problem of sin and need of salvation—Jesus Christ.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort, salvation for Israel, wisdom for their leaders in government, military and their soldiers as they defend themselves against terrorists' attacks. PRAISE GOD for the release of hostages so far! Continue to pray for the release of the remaining ones.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; conflict in African, East Asian and Middle East countries to stop. Pray for Christians from different countries who have been persecuted, attacked and killed in recent weeks.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, dleaders, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

MEMORY VERSE

LUKE 11:9

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