

## **Straight Up Truths about Prayer**

- If you do not understand spiritual truths, the world will shape you into whatever it wants to
  - There is no fear and no condemnation in Christ Jesus; if you are feeling these things, you are being affected by the world
- The reality is that between now and when we die, life is and will continue to be a spiritual battle
  - To be in the middle of God's will is not a safe place, but man is it good!

### **Luke 11:9-10 (New International Version)**

<sup>9</sup>"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup>For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

- This verse assures us that *everyone* who seeks will find. There is no limitation on this; this promise is for everyone.

### **Luke 18:1-8 (New International Version)**

<sup>1</sup>Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. <sup>2</sup>He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. <sup>3</sup>And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'

<sup>4</sup>"For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, <sup>5</sup>yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!' "

<sup>6</sup>And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. <sup>7</sup>And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? <sup>8</sup>I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

- The message here is to always pray and to never give up!
  - Unless you are aware of the tactics of the enemy, persistence will be difficult

### **Proverbs 24:3-4 (New International Version)**

<sup>3</sup> By wisdom a house is built,  
and through understanding it is established;

4 through knowledge its rooms are filled  
with rare and beautiful treasures.

- Before you can effectively apply prayer to a situation, you need to not only have the wisdom and knowledge of God's will, but also understand it
  - It is difficult to effectively apply prayer if you don't understand it!

## **Hindrances to Prayer:**

### 1. Selfish Motive

#### **James 4:3 (New International Version)**

3When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

- Your purpose and call on this planet is not just for your own benefit!
  - It is ok to pray for your needs, but do not pray selfishly for unnecessary desires! God wants to take care of you - it is His will to care for you – but He knows when prayers are extravagant and are prayed with a selfish motive.

### 2. Unforgiveness

#### **Matthew 11:24-26 (New International Version)**

24But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."

25At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.

26Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

- For those who hang onto unforgiveness, they separate themselves from the will of God
  - It is important to recognize that some of the people who hurt you and take advantage of you do not do it on purpose; forgive them so that you can pray in accordance with God's will
  - There are also conniving people who hurt and take advantage of us intentionally, but it is important for us to forgive them as well

### 3. Disobedience

#### **1 Peter 3:7 (New International Version)**

7Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

- When we disobey God's commands, such as the one given here, it removes us from His will
  - When we are removed from God's will, we are no longer able to pray in accordance with it

#### 4. Lack of Humility

### **Luke 18:9-11 (New International Version)**

9To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: 10"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector.

- When we don't truly understand where we stand in relation to God's greatness, it is difficult to pray humbly
- Yes, we are to approach the throne of God with boldness, but also with understanding of His great majesty

#### 5. Lack of Faith

### **James 1:5-7 (New International Version)**

5If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. 6But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord;

- Without faith in God, it is foolish to expect that we can be in the centre of His will
  - Great faith is not necessary here, even just a little faith in a great God is enough

#### 6. Spiritual Opposition

### **Daniel 9:20-23 (New International Version)**

20 While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill- 21 while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. 22 He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. 23 As soon as you began to pray, an

answer was given, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the message and understand the vision:

- Our flesh is not the only thing that stands in the way of us understanding God's will – there is very real spiritual opposition as well
  - As mentioned in this verse, the very moment we begin to pray in accordance with God's will, things in the spiritual world begin to shift
  - Prayer on earth activates the power of God in heaven
- This is why it is critical to pray with passion about people that God lays on your heart

### **Matthew 16:21-23 (New International Version)**

21From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

22Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"

23Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

- It is dangerous not to see things from God's point of view; to pray in agreement with God's will is essential

*Many of us are alive today because someone took the responsibility to pray for us in accordance with God's will*

### **Truths about Prayer Obedience:**

1. It is essential to know God's will when you pray

### **1 John 5:13-15 (New International Version)**

13I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 14This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

2. It is important to pray passionately – even to the point of tears

### **Hebrews 5:7-8 (New International Version)**

7During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of

his reverent submission. 8Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered

- At times, prayers can become so passionate that they evoke pleading and even tears
  - Watching the news each day should be heart breaking. We can listen for God's will with respect to these issues, and pray fervently for them.

3. Praying for others (intercession) is essential

### **Luke 22:1-6 (New International Version)**

1Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching, 2and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people. 3Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. 4And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. 5They were delighted and agreed to give him money. 6He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.

- Satan is very real and he can be conniving and mischievous.
  - It is important to recognize God's will for those around us, and pray in accordance with His will