21 Days of Prayer Daily Devotional



WE HEAR IT SAID that a person's life will suffer if he doesn't pray, but I question that. What will suffer is the life of the Son of God in him, which is nourished not by food, but by prayer. When a person is born again from above, the life of the Son of God is born in him, and he can either starve or nourish that life. Prayer is the way that the life of God's Spirit in us is nourished. Our simple ideas of prayer are not consistent with the New Testament letters. Most think of prayer as a means of getting things for ourselves, but the actual purpose of prayer scripturally is to develop in our relationship with our Heavenly Father, getting to know Him. "Ask, and you will receive" (John 16:24 NIV). We often complain to God, and sometimes we are nonchalant or even apologetic to Him, but we actually ask Him for very few things. Yet a child demonstrates an impressive boldness to ask! Our Lord said, "unless you...become like little children" (Matt. 18:3 NIV). Ask and our Heavenly Father will act. Give Him the opportunity and the room to work. The problem is that we often choose not to until we're at our wits' end. When we're at our wits' end, it no longer seems to be a fearful thing to pray,in fact, it is the only way we can get in touch with the truth and the reality of Christ in us. Be yourself before the Holy Spirit and present Him with your problems—the obvious things that have led you to your wits' end. However, as long as we think of ourselves as self-sufficient, we'll never ask Him for anything. To say that "prayer changes things" is not as close to the truth as saying, "Prayer changes us and then we change things." God has established things so that prayer, on the basis of redemption, changes the way a person looks at things. Prayer is not a matter of changing things externally, it supports the miracle of "Christ being formed" in our inner nature.

"The Purpose of Prayer"

One of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray." (Luke 11:1 NIV)

Prayer is not a normal part of the life of the natural man.

Luke 11:1-13, Matthew 18:1-4

Prayer

Lord, teach us to pray so that You can be formed in us. Help us to be Your children and interact with You as our Father. Help us to be available to You so that through us, You can be the redeemer to everyone in our path. Give us Your zeal for serving the lost and those of the household of faith alike.

What is God saying to you?						

YET WE THINK of prayer as some discernment exercise of our higher powers that simply prepares us for God's work. Jesus taught prayer as the working of the miracle of redemption in us (our identity in Christ), which produces the miracle of redemption in others, through the power of our new Life in the Spirit. The way fruit (Christ in us) remains firm is through prayer but remember that it is prayer based on the suffering of Christ in redemption, not on my own suffering. We must go to Him as His child, because only a child gets his prayers answered, a "wise" man in his logical thinking does not (see Matt. 11:25). Prayer is the battle, and it makes no difference where we are in regard to our life circumstances. However, God may engineer our circumstances, our duty is to pray. We must never allow ourselves to entertain the thought, "I am of no use where I am," because we certainly cannot be used where we have not yet been placed. Wherever God has placed us and whatever our circumstances, we should pray, continually offering up prayers to Him. Remember, when we're in His name, we're with Him! And He promises, "Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do" (John 14: 13 **NKJV**). Yet we refuse to pray unless it thrills or excites us, which is the most intense form of spiritual selfishness. We must give our hearing to His voice and learn to listen. This allows faith to do its work in us by empowering us to follow Him today, and He says to pray. "Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (Matt. 9:38 NKJV). There is nothing thrilling about "the follower" of Christ's mission from the perspective of those uninvolved in the mission, but it is "the follower" of Christ who makes the ideas of the genius possible. And it is the following (Spirit-led) believer who makes the Vision of his Father possible. When we engage in prayer, from God's perspective there are always results. What awe and wonder it will be to see, once we can clearly see from His perspective, all the souls that have been gathered in by us, simply because we have been in the habit of trusting Jesus with His command.

"The Key of the Greater Work"

I say to you, he who believes in Me, . . . greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father."
(John 14:12 NKJV).

Prayer does not equip us for greater works—prayer is the greater work.

John 14:1-14, Matt. 11:25-27

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for the passion to finish Your work of redemption (Your identity) in us and revealing to us that prayer is the platform You've chosen. Help us to embrace prayer as You have demonstrated it. Help us to embrace prayer as Your work to form Your nature and character in us. This is the manner in which you reveal Your glory in the world.

What is God saying to you?

OUR THINKING around prayer, whether right or wrong, is always based on our own mental conception of it. The manner in which Jesus demonstrated prayer encourages us to think of prayer as the breath in our lungs and the blood from our hearts. Our blood flows and our breathing continues "continually", we are not even conscious of it, but it never stops. And we are not always conscious of Jesus keeping us in unity with His Spirit, but as we develop in our spiritual growth and follow His lead, He is in the details of our every breath. Prayer is not an exercise, it is the life of the believing follower. Develop your awareness of the things around you that stops prayer from giving you Life in each moment. "Pray continually"—focus your attention on the childlike habit of offering up prayer in your heart to your Heavenly Father all the time. Jesus never mentioned unanswered prayer during His ministry in flesh. He demonstrated and declared unlimited certainty that prayer is always answered. Are we allowing the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit to give us "the knowing" Jesus demonstrated in His flesh, or do we think of the times when it seemed that God did not answer our prayer? Jesus said, "For everyone who asks, receives..." (Matt. 7:8 NLT). Yet we often yield to our temptation to say, "But..., but..." God always answers prayer in the best way—not just sometimes, but every time. However, the evidence of the answer in the area we want it may not always immediately follow. The real question that we need to answer is, "Do we expect God to answer prayer?" We often yield to the dangerous temptation to water down what Jesus said to make it mean something that aligns with our common sense. But if it were only common sense, what He said would not even be worthwhile. The things Jesus taught about prayer are always supernatural truths He reveals to us through His revelatory Spirit presence. Thus, the reason for continual prayer, true childlike connection with our Father in His Spirit.

"Prayer as Jesus Demonstrated"

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV).

Matthew 7:7-8

Prayer

Jesus, protect and develop my spirit from any and all thoughts, emotions and conversations that may hinder Your access to work in and through to the world around me. Thank you for your empowering presence that helps me to choose a childlike heart toward you continually, trusting you in every step of the life you've given me to Live for You, on your behalf.

What is God saying to you?					

THE GRACE THAT SUSTAINED us yesterday will not be sufficient for today. Grace is the overflowing favor of God, and you can always count on it to be available for us to embrace as needed."...in great endurance, in troubles, hardships and distresses, " (II Cor. 6:4 NIV)—this is how and where our patience is tested. Am I failing to embrace God's grace in these moments? Am I saying to myself, "Oh well, I handle this storm and temptation this time"? It is not a question of praying and asking God to help me—it's about embracing His grace "now." An ongoing religious temptation is to make prayer about the preparation for our service, yet it is never that, as Jesus demonstrated. Prayer is the practice of embracing God's grace. Stop saying, "I can't handle this until I can get alone with God and pray." Pray now—embrace God's grace in your moment of need. Prayer is the most normal and useful thing for everyone, it is simply a reflex action of our connection to God in every waking moment. Most of us are slow to learn to embrace God's grace through prayer."...in beatings, imprisonments and riots..."(II Cor. 6:5 NIV)—in all these things, demonstrate in your life an embracing of God's grace, which will show evidence to yourself and to others that you are a miracle of His. Embrace His grace now, not later. The "Now Word" in our spiritual vocabulary is "now." Allow circumstances to take you where they will but keep embracing God's grace in whatever condition you may find yourself. Evidence that we are embracing God's grace is that we can be totally humiliated before others without demonstrating the slightest trace of anything but His grace."...having nothing..." Never hold anything in reserve. Pour yourself out, giving the best that you have, and always be poor in Spirit (Dependent on God). Never take charge over what God has entrusted you with, rather trust His guidance and wisdom in each passing moment."...we own nothing, and yet we have everything."—this is true dominion and authority in the Spirit (II Cor. 6:10 NLT).

"Embracing the Grace of God—Now"

As God's co-workers, we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation."

(2 Corinthians 6:1-2 NIV)

II Corinthians 6:1-13

Prayer

Jesus, thank you for being our refuge, strength and help in our time of need. The work You began in us, we humbly thank You for finishing it through Your abundant grace. Thank you for allowing us to approach You with the confidence that Your graciousness will be the manner You receive us.

What is God saying to you?							
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PRAYER IS EVIDENCE we've engaged our will. After we have entered our secret place and shut the door, the most difficult thing to do is to pray. Gathering our thoughts is a battle of our will. The first thing we must fight is wandering thoughts. Overcoming our idle and wandering thinking is the real challenge we face when we pray privately. Developing our minds and concentration on willful, deliberate prayer is a key discipline. Having a selected place for prayer is a priority, but once we get there the constant pest of wandering thoughts begins, as we begin to think to ourselves. "This needs to be done, and I have to do that today." Jesus says to "close the door." Choosing to shut everything out in our personal world before Jesus means deliberately shutting the door on our emotions and remembering Him. He is in secret, and He sees us from "His unseen realm"—He does not see us as other people do, or as we see ourselves. When we truly live in "the unseen." it becomes impossible for us to doubt Jesus. We become more sure of Him than of anyone or anything else. Enter into "the unseen," and you will find that the Holy Spirit will be in the middle of your everyday circumstances every time. Get into the habit of engaging with God about everything. Unless we learn to open the door of our lives completely and let God in from our first waking moment of each new day, we will be engaging on the wrong level throughout our day. But if we will swing the door of our lives fully open and "pray to our Father who is unseen," every public thing in our lives will be marked with the lasting imprint of the presence of God.

"Prayer—Engaging in "The Unseen"

"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matthew 6:6 NIV)

Jesus did not say, "Dream about your Father who is unseen," but He said, "Pray to your Father who is unseen."

Matt. 6:5-14

Prayer

Jesus, help us to focus our thoughts on You and Your heart today. We're closing the door on the situations and circumstances surrounding us in our present world and giving our hearts to You in the present. Thank you in advance for empowering us to clear any doubt defying the Truth You have spoken and are speaking to us in the moment presently.

What is God saying to you?							

FOR A WHILE, we are fully aware of Jesus' concern for us. But then, when He begins to use us in His work, we begin to adopt an emotional, pitiful, beggarly appearance and talk only of our trials and difficulties. And all the while Jesus is attempting to finish His work through us as His hidden people who are not in the spotlight. It's true, none of us would be hidden spiritually if we could help it. Most are tempted with a desire for the spotlight. Can we do our work when it seems that God has sealed up heaven? The greater majority of professing Christians want to be brightly illuminated saints with golden halos and with the continual glow of inspiration, and to have other followers of Jesus dealing with and serving the people in their daily lives. A selfassured Christian is of no value to Jesus. He is undesirable, unsuitable for daily life, and completely unlike Jesus. We are here, not as immature angels, but as men and women, to allow Jesus to finish His work through us in this world. And we are to do it with an infinitely greater power to withstand the struggle because we have been born from above. If we continually try to bring back those phenomenal moments of inspiration, it is a sign that it is not Jesus we want. We are becoming obsessed with the moments when Jesus did come and speak with us, and we are insisting that He do it again. But what He wants us to do is demonstrate our trust in Him and "walk by faith." How often do we pause in our faith walk as if to say, "I cannot do anything else until God appears to me"? He will never allow us to hold Him hostage to His Will being done. We will have to get up on our own, without any inspiration and without any sudden touch from His Spirit. Then to our amazement, we find ourselves declaring, "Why, He was there all the time, and I never knew it!" Never live for those phenomenal moments of inspiration they are meant to be ongoing heavenly surprises from the Holy Spirit. He will give us His touches of inspiration only when He sees that we are not in danger of being led away by them. We must never consider our moments of inspiration as the standard way of life—our availability for Him to finish His work through us is our standard.

"Faith—Not Emotion"

"For we walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Corinthians 5:7 NKJV)

II Corinthians 5:1-10

Prayer

Jesus, continue Your work in us and through us. Help us to remain faithful to You without yielding to the temptation of being in the spotlight. Help us to remain hidden in You so that You can be seen and Your work through us can be eternally accomplished.

What is God saying to you?				
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WORLDLINESS IS NOT the trap that most endangers us as followers of Christ, nor is it sin. The trap we fall into is excessively desiring spiritual success, that is, success measured by, and patterned after, the form set by this religious culture we presently live in. We should never seek after any approval other than the approval of Jesus, and always be willing to go "...outside the religious "walls" and bear his disgrace." (Heb. 13:13 TPT). In Luke 10:20, Jesus tells His disciples not to rejoice in successful service, and yet this seems to be the one thing in which most of us do rejoice. We have a commercialized view—we count how many souls have been saved and sanctified, we thank God, and then we think everything is alright. Yet our work only begins where God's grace has laid the foundation. Our work is not to save souls but to disciple them. Salvation and sanctification are the work of God's sovereign grace, and our work as His disciples is to disciple others' lives until they are totally yielded to God. One born again believer totally devoted to following Jesus is of more value to Him than one hundred lives which have been simply awakened by His Spirit in new birth. As followers of Jesus, we must reproduce our own kind of spiritually, and those lives will be His testimony to us as His workers. Jesus brings us up to a standard of life through His grace, and we are responsible for reproducing that same standard in others. Unless we as followers live a life that "is now hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3 NIV), we are prone to become irritating dictators to others, instead of an active, living disciple. Many of us are dictators, dictating our desires to individuals and to groups. But Jesus never dictates to us in that way. Whenever our Lord talked about discipleship, He always prefaced His words with an "if," never with the forceful or dogmatic statement—"You must." Discipleship carries with it an option.

"The Warning Against Desiring Spiritual Success"

"...Do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you..." (Luke 10:20 NIV)

Luke 10:17-24, Hebrews 3:13-16

Prayer

Jesus, help us to focus our attention on Your success and to remind ourselves of Your approval in our lives and that our lives are not our own but solely Yours. You've given us the privilege of encouraging others to look to You as their source of hope and fulfillment. Thank you for keeping us from being influenced by how this present religious culture defines spiritual success.

What is God saying to you?					

ARE YOU SEEKING great things for yourself? Instead of seeking to be a great person, Jesus wants you to be in a much closer relationship with Himself than simply receiving His gifts—He wants you to get to know Him. Those special things we want are insignificant to Jesus, special things come and go, but Jesus never gives us anything insignificant or unimportant. There is nothing easier than getting into the right relationship with Jesus unless it is not Jesus we seek, but only what He can give us. If we have only come as far as asking Him for things, we have never arrived at the point of understanding the least bit of what surrender really means. We now have become supposed followers of Christ based on our own terms. We often complain, saying, "I asked God for the Holy Spirit, but He didn't give me the rest and the peace I expected." And instantly Jesus puts His finger on the reason—we're not seeking Him at all, we're seeking something for ourselves. Jesus said, "Ask, and it will be given to you" (Matt. 7:7 NKJV). Ask Him for what you want and do not be concerned about asking for the wrong thing, because as we draw ever closer to Him, we will cease asking for things altogether. "Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him" (Matt. 6:8 **NKJV**). Then why should we ask? So that we may get to know Him. Are we seeking great things for ourselves? Have we said, "Oh, Lord, completely fill me with Your Holy Spirit?"If Jesus does not, it is because we are not totally surrendered to Him, there is something we still refuse to do. Are we truly prepared to ask ourselves what it is we want from Him and why we want it? Jesus always ignores our present level of completeness in favor of our ultimate future completeness. He is not concerned about making us blessed and happy right now, but He's continually working out His ultimate perfection for us—"that they may be one just as We are one" (John 17:22 NKJV).

"What Do You Want?"

"And do you seek great things for yourself?" (Jeremiah 45:5 NKJV)

Jeremiah 45, Matthew 6:8, John 17:22

Prayer

Jesus, thank you for taking care of us and teaching us about You and Your ways. Help us to seek You in everything we do today, to pay closer attention to your evident nature at work in every circumstance and situation we experience today. We want to be one with You.

What is God saying to you?					

WHAT MORE do we want than our lives? It is the essential thing. "My life...as a prize" means that wherever I may go, even if it is into hell on earth, I will come out with my life, and nothing can harm it. Most of us are caught up in exhibiting things for others to see, I'm not talking about property and possessions, but our blessings. All these socalled spiritual achievements that we get satisfaction out of have to go. But there is one eternal treasure that can never go—the life that "is hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3 NIV). Are we prepared to let God take us into total oneness with Himself, paying no more attention to what we call the great things of life? Are we prepared to surrender completely and let go? The true test of complete surrender is in refusing to say, "Well, what about this?" We must be on our guard of our own ideas and speculations. The moment we allow ourselves to think, "What about this?" we show that we have not surrendered and that we do not really trust God. However, the moment we do surrender, we will no longer think about what God is going to do. Surrender means to refuse ourselves the luxury of asking any questions. When we truly let go and surrender ourselves to Jesus, He immediately says to us, "I will give you your life as a reward." The reason the greater majority of humanity is tired of life is that Jesus has not given them anything—they have not been given their life "as a reward." The way to get out of this merry-go-round condition is to surrender ourselves to Jesus. And the moment that we truly surrender to Him. we will be the most surprised and overjoyed people on earth. Jesus will have us completely, without any limitations, and He will have given us our lives. If you are not there, it is either because of disobedience in your life or your refusal to be childlike enough.

"What You Will Get"

"I will give you your life as a reward wherever you go." (Jeremiah 45:5 NLT) This is the firm and immovable secret of the Lord to those who trust Him—" I will give your life to you."

Jeremiah 45, Colossians 3:1-17

Prayer

Jesus, thank you for giving us our lives through Your Spirit baptism. Help us to remain hidden and surrendered in You so that all that others see is You at work in and through our lives. Our pursuit every waking moment is to be one with You

What is God saying to you?					

THIS VERSE ADDRESSES every believing follower of Christ, "Preach the Word of God! Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not." In other words, we should "be prepared" whether we feel like it or not. If we do only what we feel inclined to do, some of us would never do anything. There are many who are totally unemployable in the spiritual realm. They are spiritually feeble and weak, and they refuse to do anything unless they are supernaturally inspired. The proof that our relationship is right with God is that we do our best whether we feel inspired or not. One of the worst traps followers of Christ can fall into is to become preoccupied with their own special moments of inspiration. When the Holy Spirit gives us a time of inspiration and insight, we are inclined to say, "Now that I've experienced this moment, I will always be like this for God." No, you will not, and God will make sure of that. Those times are evident because the Holy Spirit is reminding us, He is with us. You cannot give them to yourself when you choose. When we say that we will only be at our best for Jesus, during those special times, we become an intolerable burden on Him. We will never do anything unless the Holy Spirit always keeps us consciously aware of His inspiration to us. If we make a god out of our special moments, we will find that the Holy Spirit will fade out of our lives and will not return until we are obedient in the work, He has placed closest to us, and until we have learned not to be preoccupied with those special moments, He has given us.

"Prepared Regardless"

"Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not." (2 Timothy 4:2 NLT) It's "in unfavorable times" that we're stressed simply because we entertain doubt about our "readiness."



Prayer

Jesus, thank You for all the special experiences You've showered on us. Every experience has empowered us to know You're with us and has encouraged us to be Your witness. Thank You for being our helper during the good, bad, favorable and unfavorable conditions of life.

What is God saying to you?							

A BORN AGAIN BELIEVER is in the hands of God like a bow and arrow in the hands of an archer. God is aiming at something the believer cannot see, but our Lord continues to stretch and strain, and every once in a while, the believer says, "I can't take any more." Yet God pays no attention, He goes on stretching until His purpose is in sight, and then He lets the arrow fly. Give responsibility for yourself to God's hands. Is there something in your life for which you need "to stick it out" right now? Focus your attention on your intimate relationship with Jesus while your faith to "stick it out" develops. Proclaim as Job did, "Though He slay me, yet will I hope in Him" (Job 13:15 NIV). Faith is not some weak and tear-jerky emotion but is strong and vigorous confidence built on the fact that God is perfect love. And even though we cannot see Him right now and cannot understand what He is doing, we know Him. Disaster occurs in our lives when we lack the mental composure that comes from establishing ourselves on the eternal truth that God is perfect love. Faith is the highest endeavor of our lives—surrendering ourselves with complete confidence to the leading of the Holy Spirit. God put His all in Christ saving us, and now He is inviting us to go "all in" with complete confidence in Him. There are areas in our lives where this kind of faith has not worked in us as of yet places in us that are still untouched by the life of God. There were none of those places in the life of Christ, and there are to be none in ours. Jesus prayed, "And this is eternal life, that they may know You" (John 17:3 NKJV). The real meaning of eternal life is a life that can face anything it has to face without wavering. When we take this view, life becomes one great romance—an excellent opportunity to witness wonderful things all the time. The Holy Spirit remains diligent in teaching us to step into this central place of power.

"Faith to Stick it Out"

"Since you have kept My command to endure patiently . . ." (Revelation 3:10 NIV)

To "stick it out" means more than endurance—more than simply holding on until the end.

Rev. 3:10-12, Job 13:14-16, John 17:3

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for empowering us with passion to love You more than the attractions of the world around us. Help us to remain focused on You today as You touch every area of our lives that have not been influenced by Your nature and character. We want to be with You and see what You do through us today. Thank You for loving us the way You love us.

What is God saying to you?							

ISAIAH SAID that the Lord spoke to him "with a strong hand," that is, because of worldly cultural influences around him (Is. 8:11 NKJV). Without the infinite supreme hand of God Himself, nothing touches our lives. Do we discern His hand at work, or do we see things as trivial occurrences? Get into the habit of saying, "Speak, Lord," and life will become a romance (I Sam. 3:9 NKJV). Every time circumstances push back on you, say, "Speak, Lord," and determine to make time to listen. Restraining ourselves is more than a means of discipline—it encourages us to focus on the Holy Spirit, "Speaking." Think back to a time when the Holy Spirit spoke to you. Do you remember what He said? Was it Luke 11:13, or was it 1 Thessalonians 5:23? As we listen, our ears become more sensitive, and like Christ, we will hear God all the time. Should I tell my "Eli" what God has shown to me? This is where the struggle of obedience hits us. We disobey God when we arrogantly attempt to manage God and intervene by thinking, "I must shield 'Eli,' " who represents the best people we know. God did not tell Samuel to tell Eli—he had to decide that for himself. God's message to you may hurt your "Eli," but trying to prevent suffering in another's life will prove to be an obstruction between your soul and God. It is at your own risk that you prevent someone's right hand being cut off or right eye being plucked out (see Matt. 5:29-30 NKJV). Never ask another person's advice about anything God makes you decide before Him. If you ask for advice, you will almost always side with Satan."I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood" (Gal. 1:16 NKJV)." Counsel is critical in all of our lives but as we develop in our relationship with the Holy Spirit, He expects us to choose in the moment, in His Spirit, as Christ, to say what we hear and do what we see.

"Our Struggle to Obey"

"Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the vision." (1 Samuel 3:15 NKJV)

God never speaks to us in dramatic ways, but in ways that are easy to misunderstand. Then we say, "I wonder if that is God's voice?" We always need more.

1 Sam. 3:6-21, Gal. 1:11-24, Matt. 5:27-30

Prayer

Jesus, thank you for choosing us to be members of Your body, members connected to one another because of Your Spirit and Truth. Help us restrain ourselves from our feeble attempts to manage and intervene on behalf of others when You're finishing the work you began in them. Thank You for empowering us to demonstrate faith by being quick to obey You.

What is God saying to you?							

WE MUST LEARN to wrestle against the things that hinder our communication with God, and secondly to wrestle in prayer for others, but to wrestle with God in prayer is unscriptural. If you ever do wrestle with God, you will be crippled for the rest of your life. If you grab hold of God and wrestle with Him, as Jacob did, simply because He is working in a way that doesn't meet with your approval, you force Him to put you out of joint (see Gen. 32:24-25). Don't become a cripple by wrestling with the ways of God but be someone who wrestles before God with the things of this world, because "we are more than conquerors through Him" (Rom. 8:37 NKJV). Wrestling before God makes an impact in His kingdom. If you ask me to pray for you, and I am not complete in Christ, my prayer accomplishes nothing. But if I am complete in Christ, my prayer brings victory all the time. Prayer is effective only when there is completeness—"put on the full armor of God." Always make a distinction between God's perfect will and His permissive will, which He uses to accomplish His divine purpose for our lives. God's perfect will is unchangeable. It is with His permissive will, or the various things that He allows into our lives, that we must wrestle before Him. It is our reaction to these things allowed by His permissive will that enables us to come to the point of seeing His perfect will for us. "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God" (Rom. 8:28 NKJV)—to those who remain true to God's perfect will—His calling in Christ Jesus. God's permissive will is the testing He uses to reveal His true sons and daughters. We should not be spineless and automatically say, "Yes, it is the Lord's will." We don't have to fight or wrestle with God, but we must wrestle before God with things. Beware of lazily giving up. Instead, put up a glorious fight and you will find yourself empowered with His strength.

"Wrestling Before God"

"Take up the whole armor of God... praying always." (Ephesians 6:13,18 NKJV)

Eph. 6:10-20, Gen. 32, Rom. 8:22-30

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for empowering us to trust You, to give us the zeal to resist the things that hinder our communication with You and to serve those whom You've placed in our path, just as You would serve. We're devoting ourselves to the identity You've given us to wrestle disobedience with faithful obedience to You.

What is God saying to you?						

JESUS IS REVEALING the rules of engagement for all who have His Spirit, encouraging us to walk in His Spirit. He urges us to keep our minds filled with the concept of God being sovereign over everything, encouraging us to maintain an attitude of mature trust, and a passion to ask and seek. It's up to us to fill our minds with the thought that He is there. The moment our minds are truly filled with this thought, even when we're experiencing difficulties it will be as easy as breathing for us to remember, "Our heavenly Father knows all about this!" Thinking this way becomes light and easy with little or no effort. It becomes our normal method of facing every difficulty and uncertainty. Before we made the conscience decision to agree with His divine charge in our hearts, we constantly went to others for help instead of our Heavenly Father. Jesus is establishing the rules of engagement for those people who have His Spirit, and it supports the following principle: God is my Father, He loves me, and I will never think of anything that He will forget, so why should I worry? Jesus said there are times when He cannot lift the darkness from us, but we must trust Him in the moment. At times He will appear like an unkind friend, but He is not; He will appear like an unnatural father, but He is not; He will appear like an unjust judge, but He is not. Continually entertain the thought that the mind of our Heavenly Father is behind all things strong and growing. Not even the smallest detail of life happens unless God's will is behind it. This being true, we can rest and maintain a healthy confidence in Him. Prayer is never only asking but is an "attitude of the mind" which produces "the atmosphere" in which asking is perfectly natural."Ask, and it will be given to you" (Matthew 7:7 NKJV).

"The Concept of Divine Control"

"How much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!" (Matthew 7:11 NKJV)



Prayer

Jesus, thank you for revealing to us how light and easy it is to walk with You. Help us to take advantage of Your empowering presence and to choose You in every challenging situation and circumstance while growing and developing in our knowing that You are in charge of the life details.

What is God saying to you?				

THE PRIMARY thought in the area of religion is—keep your eyes on Jesus, not on people. Your motivation should never be the desire to be known as a praying person. Find an inner room in which to pray where no one knows you are praying, shut the door, and talk to your heavenly Father in secret. Have no motivation other than to know Him. It is impossible to carry on your life as a disciple without definite times of strictly confidential conversation with Jesus. "When you pray, do not use vain repetitions..." (Matt. 6:7 **NKJV**). Our Father does not hear us because we pray earnestly—He hears us solely on the basis of His redeeming grace. He is never impressed by our sincere and intense conviction over any matter. Prayer is not simply about getting things from our heavenly Father—that is only the most basic kind of prayer. Prayer is coming into perfect fellowship and oneness with our heavenly Father. If the Son of God has been formed in us through His Spirit and Fire regeneration (see Gal. 4:19), then He will continue to press on beyond our common sense, opinions, preferences and will change our attitude about the things for which we pray. "Everyone who asks receives" (Matt. 7:8 NKJV). Often, we pray religious nonsense without even involving our will, and then we say that God did not answer—but in reality, we have never asked for anything. Jesus said, "You will ask what you desire" (John 15:7 NKJV). Asking means that our will must be involved. Whenever Jesus talked about praver. He spoke with wonderful childlike simplicity. Then we respond with our critical attitude, saying. "Yes, but even Jesus said that we must ask." But remember that we have to ask things of our Father that are in keeping with He whom Jesus Christ revealed.

"Praying to our Father in Secret"

"When you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place." (Matthew 6:6 NKJV)

Matt. 6:5-13, Gal. 4:12-20, Matt. 7:7-11, John 15:5-8

Prayer

Jesus, we want to know You. We want to talk about what You want to talk about and allow this conversation to be our heartbeat today. Make us one with You so that You can be formed in us. Take us beyond our common sense and change our attitudes about the things for which we pray. Help us to be childlike today so that we do not miss seeing You.

What is God saying to you?					

PATIENCE IS NOT the same as indifference. patience conveys the idea of someone who is extremely strong and able to withstand all kinds of assaults. Having the vision of Jesus is the source of patience because it gives us His inspiration, a true and genuine passion. Moses endured, not because he was devoted to his principles of what was right, nor because of his sense of duty to God, but because he had a vision of God. "He endured as seeing Him who is invisible" (Heb. 11:27 NKJV). Moses abandoned Egypt and didn't fear Pharaoh's rage because he persisted in faith as if he had seen God who is unseen. The baptism of the Holy Spirit provides this vision and passion for all who experience the promise. All who have the vision of God are not devoted to a cause or to any particular issue—they are devoted to God Himself. You always know when the vision is of God because of the inspiration and fire that comes with it. Things come to you with exuberance and add significant value to your life because everything is energized by the Holy Spirit. Jesus may give you a time spiritually. with no word from Himself at all, just as He experienced during His time of temptation in the wilderness. When you feel this happening,

"Patience to Wait for the Vision"

"Though it tarries, wait for it." (Hab. 2:3 NKJV)

simply endure, and the power to endure will be there because you can see, you have vision. "Though it tarries, wait for it." The proof that we have the vision is that we are reaching for more than we have already grasped. It is dangerous to be satisfied spiritually. David, King of Israel writes, "...what can I ever give back to God to repay him for the blessings he's poured out on me? I will lift up his cup of salvation..." (Ps. 116:12-13 TPT). We're tempted at times to look for satisfaction within ourselves and say, "Now I've got it! Now I am completely sanctified. Now I can endure." The moment we give into this kind of thinking, trouble and destruction follows. Our expectation and goals must exceed our present experience and relationship in Christ. Paul said, "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected, but I press on" (Phil. 3:12 NKJV) If we have only what we have experienced, we have nothing. But if we have the inspiration of Jesus' vision, we have more than we can experience. Carrying the good news, baptizing and making disciples is what Jesus is passionate about to this day. Are we lifting up His cup of salvation? Beware of the danger of spiritual relaxation.

Hebrews 11:24-30, Philippians 3:12-17

Prayer

Jesus, thank you for inspiring us to stir up the gift in us praying in the Spirit. Keep us passionate about pressing for the prize and to never be satisfied with our present experiences in You. Thank you for allowing Your vision to grow in us as we follow Your lead.

What is God saying to you?				?	

ARE YOU CONVINCED that every detail of your life is continually woven together? Are you convinced that His designed purpose is your calling through His Spirit? Every circumstance in our lives as followers is ordained of God. In the life of a follower, there is no such thing as chance. God by His protective care brings us into circumstances that we can't understand, but He understands completely. He brings us to places, among people, and into certain conditions to accomplish a precise purpose through the intervention of His Spirit in us. We must never put ourselves in front of our circumstances and say, "I'm going to manage this matter on my own, I will watch this closely or protect myself from that." All of our circumstances are in the hand of God, and therefore we never have to think they're unnatural or unique. Our part in intercessory prayer is not to agonize over how to intervene, but to use the everyday circumstances and people the Holy Spirit puts around us by His intervention to bring them before His throne, and to allow His Spirit in us the opportunity to intervene on their behalf. In this way God will touch the whole world with His Church. We must ask ourselves, are we making the Holy Spirit's work difficult by being blurry and lacking assurance, or are we attempting to do His work for Him? We must do the human side of the Spirit interceding in and through us—utilizing the circumstances in which we find ourselves and the people who surround us. It's up to us to keep our awareness and conscious life available for the passion and leading of the Holy Spirit. Then as we raise others to Jesus through prayer, His Spirit intervenes for them. Your intercessions can never be mine, and my intercessions can never be yours, "but the Spirit Himself makes intercession" in each of our lives (Rom. 8:26 NKJV). The Holy Spirit actually takes hold of us in our human frailty to empower us in our weakness by rising up within us, intervening on our behalf, and doing what we can't do. And without this heavenly Spirit intervention, the lives of others would be left in hardship, poverty and devastation.

"The Undetected Sacredness of Circumstances"

"We know that all things work together for good to those who love God." (Romans 8:28 NKJV)



Prayer

Jesus, thank You for Your comforting presence that empowers us to remain sensitive and be aware of leading while navigating the circumstances of life. We know it's Your empowering presence that encourages us to remain available for You to work through us while impacting the lives of others You have placed in our path to serve. Help us to embrace our circumstances with You and Your Will in mind first.

What is God saying to you?				

DOES GOD trust you with His silence—a silence that has great meaning? Is it possible that when God is silent, that's His answer? Just think of those two days of absolute silence in Lazarus' home at Bethany! Is there anything comparable to those days in your life? It wasn't that they didn't know where Jesus was, they went to Him and experienced His presence. It's just that His answer wasn't audible. He was silent. Can God trust us like that, or are we still asking Him for a visible answer? God will give us the very blessings we ask if we refuse to go any further without them, but His silence is the sign that He is bringing us into an even more wonderful understanding of Himself. Are we mourning before God because we have not had an audible response? When we cannot hear God, we will find that He has trusted us in the most intimate way possible—with absolute silence, not a silence of hopelessness, but one of pleasure because He saw that we could hold out for an even bigger revelation. If God has given us a silence, then let's praise Him—He is bringing us into the mainstream of His purposes. The actual evidence of the answer in time is simply a matter of God's authority. Time is nothing to God. For a while we may actually believe and say, "I asked God to give me bread, but He gave me a stone instead" (see Matt. 7:9). He didn't give us a stone, and today we find that He gave us the Life giving bread (see John 6:35). A wonderful thing about God's silence is that His stillness is contagious—it gets into us, causing us to become perfectly confident so that we can honestly say, "I know that God has heard me." His silence is the very proof that He has. As long as we have the idea that God will always bless us in answer to prayer, Even though He will do it, He will never give us the grace of His silence. If Christ is bringing us into the understanding that prayer is for the glorifying of His Father, then He will give us the first sign of His intimacy—silence.

"God's Silence—Then What?"

"So when He heard that Lazarus was sick, He stayed where He was two more days..." (John 11:6 NIV)



Prayer

Jesus, You've made it clear to us that You are easy to find, that You're not far from any who feel after You. You've always afforded us with Your presence. Help us to trust You as You establish our understanding of You. We want You to trust us with greater revelation of You and Your Kingdom. Continue to establish Your intimacy with us and our trust in You.

What is God saying to you?					

THE KEY TO the messenger's difficult assignment is in the hand of God, and that kev is prayer, not work—that is, not work as the word is commonly used today, which often results in the shifting of our focus away from God. The key to the messenger's difficult task is also not the key of common sense, nor is it the key of medicine, civilization, education, or even evangelization. The key is in following our Lord's Commands the key is prayer. "Pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest..." In the natural realm, prayer is not reasonable but ridiculous. We must realize that prayer is foolish from the commonsense point of view. From Jesus Christ's perspective, there are no nations, but only the world. How many of us pray without regard to the persons, but with regard to only one Person— Jesus Christ? He owns the harvest that is produced through heartbreak and through conviction of sin. This is the harvest for which we must pray laborers be sent out to gather. The tragedy is that most of us stay busy at work, while people all around us are ripe and ready to be gathered, identified with Christ in baptism and discipled, we do not gather even one of them, but simply waste our Lord's time in over-energized activities and programs. Suppose a crisis were to come into our immediate family's life—are we there as workers to gather the harvest for Jesus Christ? Is our response, "Oh, but I have a special work to do!" No follower of Christ has a special work to do. All believers are called to be Jesus Christ's own, messengers who are not "more important than the one who sends the message" (John 13:16 NLT), and someone who does not dictate to Jesus Christ what he intends to do. Our Lord calls us to no special work—He calls us to Himself. "Pray the Lord Who is in charge of the harvest," and He will engineer your circumstances to send you out as His worker.

"The Key to our Lord's Commands"

"Pray to the Lord Who is in charge of the harvest, ask Him to send more workers into His fields." (Matthew 9:38 NLT)

Matthew 9:35-38, John 13:15-17

Prayer

Jesus, help us to focus our attention on our intimate relationship with You, listening to Your voice over the voices of the religious world around us and allow You to empower us to follow You into Your mission of gathering the harvest of Your Kingdom. Deliver us from any idea that says I have a special work to do apart from being Christ, solely Yours.

What is God saying to you?						

WE TOO OFTEN think of the Cross of Christ as something we have to get through, vet we get through for the purpose of getting into it. The Cross represents only one thing for us—complete, entire, absolute identification with the Lord Jesus Christ—and there is nothing in which this identification is more real to us than in prayer. "Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him" (Matt. 6:8 NKJV). Then why should we ask? The point of prayer is not to get answers from God, but to have mature and complete harmony with Him. If we pray only because we want answers, we will become irritated and angry with God. Know this, we receive an answer every time we pray, but most of the time, it does not come in our preferred method. It's our spiritual irritation that reveals our resistance to identify ourselves with Jesus in prayer. Our identity in Christ isn't about proving that He answers prayer, but on the contrary, to be living examples and trophies of God's grace. "...I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. No, the Father himself loves you..." (John 16: 26-27 NIV). We must ask ourselves, have we reached a level of intimacy with the Spirit such that the only thing accounting for our prayer life is that it has become one with the prayer life of Christ? Has our Lord exchanged your life with His essential life? If so, then "in that day" you will be so closely identified with Jesus that there will be no distinction. When prayer seems to be unanswered, beware of being tempted to place the blame on someone else. That is always evidence of Satan's entrapment. When it seems as though we have no answer, there is always a reason— God uses these times to give us individually deep personal instruction, and it is not for anyone else but you.

"The Cross in Prayer"

"...Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." (John 16:24 NIV)



Prayer

Jesus, make us one with You in Your Spirit. Develop our hearing and help us to yield to the Truth You're speaking into our hearts. Empower us to trust You and not be irritated and angry with You because we're not getting the answer we want. Help us to be identified and in unity with Your heart and prayer.

What is God saying to you?				

BEWARE OF ANY work for God that distracts you from concentrating on Him. The greater majority of Christian workers worship their work. Our only concern as a worker for Jesus should be our concentrated focus on Him. This means that all the other parameters of life, whether they are mental, moral, or spiritual limits, are completely unencumbered with the freedom God gives His child, that is, a worshiping child, not a self-willed distracted one. All born again believers who lack a passionate emphasis of concentrating on God are prone to become overly burdened by his idea of the work of God. We tend to become slaves to our human limits, having no freedom in our spirit. mind and body. Consequently, we become burned out and defeated emotionally and physically, our freedom and delight in life are non-existent. Our nerves, mind, and heart are so overwhelmed that God's blessing cannot rest on us. However, the opposite case is equally true—once our focus is on God, all the human limits of our lives are free and under the charge and jurisdiction of God alone. There is no longer any responsibility on us for the work. The only responsibility we have is to maintain a lifestyle of continual availability and connection with God. Our devotion and worship includes that we allow nothing to hinder our cooperation with Him. The freedom that comes after our obedience to the gospel is the freedom to be a child again, and the things that used to hold our lives down are gone. However, we must remind ourselves often that we have been freed for only one thing—to be absolutely devoted to our "Fellow-Worker." We have no right to decide where we should be placed, or to have preconceived ideas as to what God is preparing us to do. God engineers everything, and wherever He places us, our one supreme goal should be to pour out our lives in wholehearted devotion to Him in that particular work."Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might." (Eccl. 9: 10 NKJV)

"Do You Worship the Work?"

"We are God's fellow workers."
(I Corinthians 3:9 NKJV)

I Corinthians 3, I Timothy 6:6-7

Prayer

Jesus, help us to remain focused on You and Your work. Help us to remain content to host Your presence and appropriate every weapon You've given us to deflect every assault and lie the devil uses to manipulate our power, authority and dominion to remain focused on You, Your work and as Your co-worker.

What is God saying to you?					