

Pleading Prayers that move the heart and hand of God when we need Him most

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The greatest thing about prayer is we can talk to or interact with our Father in Heaven any time for any reason. Prayers can be as simple as David's cry to God, "*Help, LORD!*" (Psalm 12:1)

The Holy Spirit convicted to my core that my prayers of late have been weak, lacking believing faith. I accepted that rebuke of a sort and began jotting notes in my journal that will become this message. Because no matter where we are in our lives as Christians, we must cling to the truths and promises God gave us thru our Savior the risen Christ.

Many people I know throughout the world are in very hard places today—persecuted Christians, those suffering from physical and mental illnesses and diseases, so many of them children. Others have lost jobs and incomes with no prospects on the horizon. Desperate people in desperate places in their lives with one thing in common:

All want to know God still cares, hears their prayers, and will answer them.

Many books have been written on prayer, and I cannot begin to approach the subject as some of the good ones do in this short time today. So I am going to give you what the Holy Spirit gave me to teach believing He will use at least a part of this message to help, instruct, and encourage you. We are going to take this straight from the Word of God.

Today I am speaking to “specific” prayers—those that seek from God a very specific answer.

Preparing Our Hearts and Minds to Pray

The model prayer Jesus taught His disciples began with praise, adoration, and acknowledgement of God and Who He is. That is a great place to begin, but we must also get to the place that David and even the Pharisees in Jesus’ day told us: **confession**. Why is it so important for us to go there?

“If I regard sin in my heart [that is, if I know it is there and do nothing about it], The Lord will not hear [me];” Psalm 66:18 (Amplified version)

“We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him.”
John 9:31

This is the reason the Catholic mass and some Protestant churches begin services with confession.

Prevailing Prayer What does the word prevail mean? *To have strength or be strong, powerful, triumph, or be highly effective.*

*D.L. Moody defined prevailing prayer as **prayer that “involves the whole of our being.”***

“The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous (person) avails much.” James 5:16b

Effectual means *able to produce the desired effect or outcome.*

How do we know what this looks or sounds like to know if we are lifting up prevailing prayers?

Following are elements of prevailing prayers and a few examples from the Bible.

Praying with Power (Resurrection Power)

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places," Ephesians 1:18-20

"In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." Romans 8:26-27

Praying with Fervency – There is a sense of urgency and passion in our pleas to our Father. Consider the example of Jacob.

*"Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of Jacob's thigh was dislocated while he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." **But he said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."** So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." He said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed." Genesis 32:24-28*

David wrote, *“Trust in him at all times, O people; **pour out your heart before him**; God is a refuge for us. Selah”* Psalm 62:8

(The Syrophenician mother) *“she kept pleading with (Jesus) to drive the demon out of her daughter. (Because of her humility and persistence, Jesus healed her daughter) Mark 7: 25-30*

(Jesus’ prayer in the Garden) *“He prayed more fervently, and he was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood.”* Luke 22:44

Praying in Faith Believing

Consider these great young men of faith who prevailed in and thru dire circumstances.

- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3)
- Daniel in the lion’s den. (Daniel 6)
- David before Goliath. (1 Samuel 17, esp. v 46)

Jesus made clear the requirement to have our prayers answered.

*“But Jesus said to him, “‘If You can?’ All things are possible for the one who believes.” Immediately the boy’s father cried out and said, “**I do believe; help my unbelief!**”* Mark 9:23-24

James (his half-brother) said the same even stronger.

*“But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. **But he must ask in faith without any doubting**, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that person ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.”* James 1: 5-7

Persevering Prayer

*"Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not become discouraged, saying, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect any person. Now there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me justice against my opponent.' For a while he was unwilling; but later he said to himself, 'Even though I do not fear God nor respect any person yet because this widow is bothering me, I will give her justice; otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.'" And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unrighteous judge *said; now, will God not bring about justice for His elect who cry out to Him day and night, and will He delay long for them? I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18: 1-8*

*"Whatever you ask **in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.** If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it." John 14:13-14*

*"This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything **according to His will, He hears us.**" 1 John 5:14*

"Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him." James 1:12

Ultimately, we must be willing to surrender our will to His. If we do not get what we ask even though we have poured out our hearts in prevailing prayer, God is sovereign and this side of Heaven we may not understand. Many of us have experienced that in crushing hurtful ways. The world says we are letting a weak God off the hook because He does not answer all of our prayers the way we ask them or desire. They do not

know what we do that even Jesus asked that His cup of crucifixion would pass from Him. But He ended with the words we must too,

“nevertheless, not My will but Yours be done.” (Luke 22:42)

Ultimately it comes down to our pleading prayers offered in faith and trusting the sovereign will of God. We will go deeper into that subject another time.

Praying always in the mighty, matchless name of our risen Savior and Lord Jesus,

Walter