

## Prayer: The Greatest Work

Everything that has ever been accomplished for the Kingdom of God has had its roots in prayer. Every soul saved, every church begun, every missionary sent were all the result of earnest, prevailing prayer. The heights and depths of prayer – its vastness is a reflection of the origin of prayer – God Himself. The more I pray, the more I read about prayer, it seems the less I know. When I have established a plan of prayer, God comes by the power of the Holy Spirit and shows me something new.

As I share with you some of the principles I have learned in the past fifty years, I am aware that there is so much more that could be shared. However, I pray that you who read these words will find help for your prayer life. As Andrew Murray says, it is: “With Christ In The School of Prayer” – a school that we never graduate from!!

### **The Place of Prayer in the Life of the Believer**

Andrew Murray wrote, “People think that what God wills must inevitably take place. This is by no means the case. God wills a great deal of blessing to His people which never comes to them...This is the great mystery of man’s creation with a free will...that God has made the execution of His will, in many things, dependent on the will of man.”

### **The Power of Prayer**

Jeremiah 33:3 “Call unto me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things that you do not know.” The power of prayer is no more or less than the mighty power of God released through the life of a believer who stops being an obstacle to God. **The power is God’s alone.**

“Prayer is as vast as God because He is behind it. Prayer is as mighty as God because He has committed Himself to answer it.” Leonard Ravenhill

“Prayer is the key that unlocks all the storehouse of God’s infinite grace and power. All that God is, and all that God has, is at the disposal of prayer.” R.A. Torrey

“The one concern of Satan is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work or prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray.” Samuel Chadwick

“Prayer is not so much getting things from God as it is getting God’s viewpoint about things. It is submitting to God, not using God. It is seeking God’s will rather than demanding my own. Prayer is as much listening to God as it is talking to God. It is dialogue, not monologue. Prayer is spending time with God for His own sake – not just asking and running. Prayer’s preoccupation is the glory of God’s name, the coming of God’s kingdom, the doing of God’s will. True prayer is simply to know God!” Richard C. Halverson

“Prayer is the way the life of God within is nourished. The Bible idea of prayer is that we may get to know God Himself. Prayer doesn’t change things - prayer changes me and I change things; my concept of God, myself and others.” Oswald Chambers

### **Prayer is – Points and Scriptures**

1. Communication with God (Mathew 6:9) “Our Father Who is in Heaven.”
2. Based on Relationship (John 14:6) “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.’”
3. Getting God’s Viewpoint (Isaiah 55:8) “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord.
4. Submitting to God (Romans 12:1) “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”
5. Seeking God’s Will (Luke 22:42) “Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from me, yet not my will, but (always) Yours, be done.”

The essential act of prayer is not the bending of God’s will to ours, but the bending of our will to His.

Not - "Please do for me what I want."

But - "Please do in me, with me, and through me what You want."

I John 5:14 states, "And this is the confidence - the assurance, the (privilege of) boldness - which we have in Him: (we are sure) that if we ask anything (make any request) according to His will, in agreement with His own plan He listens to and hears us." We have this promise: (verse 15) "And (since) we (positively) know that He listens to us in whatever we ask, we also know (with settled and absolute knowledge) that we have (granted us as our present possessions) the requests made of Him."

"Jesus never taught His disciples how to preach, only how to pray. To know how to speak to God is more than knowing how to speak to man. Not power with men, but power with God is the first thing." — Andrew Murray

**Prayer Is — Recognizing the presence of God and our need of Him**

II Chronicles 15:2 "The Lord is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him (inquiring for and of Him, craving Him as your soul's first necessity), He will be found of you; but if you (become indifferent and ) forsake Him, He will forsake you."

**Prayer Is — Laying hold of God's promises**

Richard Trench (Archbishop of Dublin) declared, "Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance; it is laying hold of God's willingness."

**Prayer Is — The breath of our Spiritual Life**

David Hubbard says, "If we think prayer is something we do only in dignified ceremonies or desperate emergencies, we have missed its value. We treat prayer as though it were the spice of life, but the Bible prescribes it as a vital staple in our diet. We are content with a dash of praise, a pinch of petition, a drop of confession to bring a slight flavor to our secularity. We sprinkle a shake or two of the supernatural over our basic humanism and call the mixture religion. But God sees prayer as the breath of spiritual life.

**The Word In Prayer**

John 15:7 "If you live in Me (abide vitally united to Me) and My words remain in you and continue to live in your hearts, ask whatever you will and it shall be done for you."

*Before Prayer:* The Word prepares my heart.

*In Prayer:* The Word strengthens my faith.

*After Prayer:* The Word confirms the answer.

"All the mighty achievements wrought by men of God have been accomplished by faith in the written Word." E.W. Kenyon

"Real prayer is taking His Word into the Throne Room and letting His words speak through your lips to Him on the throne, calling His attention to His own promises."