

Isaiah 56:7 (NKJV)

⁷ Even them I will bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices *Will be* accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.”

They key to spiritual breakthrough always has and always will be prayer

To become a genuine House of Prayer it will take all of us living with an attitude and spirit of prayer as a state of mind

Matthew 6:6 (NKJV)

⁶ But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is* in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

- Prayer is a place
- A secret place in the Spirit
- Our relationship with God is established there
- Everything we ask from there, according to His will is given to us
- Jesus often went alone to the desert to pray
- You and I can designate a place and dedicate it to prayer

Communication with God is not so much based on what we say, but what we hear from Him

Characteristics of Effective Prayer

James 5:15–18 (NKJV)

¹⁵ And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

¹⁶ Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. ¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. ¹⁸ And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

- The Apostle James was known in the early church as a man of prayer
- He gave the church invaluable insight on the subject

According to this passage God calls us to offer holy, believing, persevering prayer that flows from relationship with the Lord and His family

- This is the kind of prayer that accomplishes much
- Our prayers accomplish much more than we can gauge with our five senses
- Our prayers affect change and have great value

It is the destiny of every believer to release the power of God through his simple prayers

Effective Prayer is Rooted in Faith

Faith is simply confidence in the authority of Jesus over sickness and the powers of darkness

- Jesus said that a Roman centurion had great faith in His authority over sickness – **Matthew 8:5-13**
- He told two blind men, “*According to your faith let it be to you*” – **Matthew 9:29**

Jesus emphasized the importance of prayer with confidence

Mark 11:22–24 (NKJV)

²² So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. ²³ For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. ²⁴ Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*.”

- Jesus boldly declared that all authority in heaven and on earth had been given to Him – **Matthew 28:18**
- Our faith is to be anchored in the knowledge of His authority over every other power that exists
- Our confidence in the blood of Jesus qualifies us to release His power and receive His blessings – **Hebrews 10:19**
- He has given us His righteousness – **2 Corinthians 5:21**

Therefore, we can state our requests boldly before the throne of His grace

The Place of Prayer is the Place Where the Keys of the Kingdom are activated

Matthew 16:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

- The Hebrew words for bind and loose were legal terms commonly used by rabbis
- They interpreted the law and declared what was prohibited as “*bound*” and what was permitted as “*loosed*”
- We have this spiritual authority here on earth
- When we pray we are declaring, or passing laws
- These laws decree what is or is not allowed on earth

We declare to be legal on earth that which is legal in heaven, and we declare to be illegal here on earth what is illegal in heaven

- Therefore, declaring scripture is so important
- Death and life are in the power of the tongue
– **Proverbs 18:21**
- Our words have the power to create what we speak
- If you declare poverty that is what, you will have
- Change your confession today!

The place of Prayer is the Place Where We Expand Our Territory

2 Corinthians 10:13 (NKJV)

¹³ We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us—a sphere which especially includes you.

- Through prayer we expand the capacity of our spirit and the size of our territory
- Your prayer life will determine your measure of influence and government in the Spirit
- When we stop praying, we begin to lose spiritual authority we previously had
- Prayerlessness relinquishes spiritual territory
- You cannot be complacent about prayer

The Place of Prayer is the Place Where We Obtain the Favor of God

Psalm 5:12 (NKJV)

¹² For You, O LORD, will bless the righteous; With favor You will surround him as *with* a shield.

- God's favor in our lives allows us access to things we otherwise would not have
- The favor of God is something that is attracted to us through a life of prayer

Luke 11:11–13 (NKJV)

¹¹ If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

- We pray in faith, knowing that God, whose heart burns with passion for us, really does desire to bless us!

Effective Prayer Happens in the Context of Good Relationships

James 5:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

- We follow this exhortation most often when we are in strong relationship with others
- Some believers are content to have relationship with others and have a weak prayer life
- Others are committed to prayer but have weak relationships

The Bible sets these two values together to complement not compete

Effective prayer flows best from those who are in strong Kingdom relationships

- Sharing deeply with one another

Partnering together in Kingdom activities relating to one another in humility, honor, and forgiveness in the grace of God

Colossians 3:12–14 (NKJV)

¹² Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. ¹⁴ But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

- A strong prayer life will eventually lead to strong relationships with people
- When we truly value our relationship with Jesus, we are energized to love people more deeply
- Prayer is not about being anti-social or anti-relational
- True prayer is all about loving God and people
- Our relationships affect our prayers

The Lord cares so much about relationships that the scriptures exhort husbands to honor their wives so that their prayers will not be hindered

1 Peter 3:7 (NKJV)

⁷Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

- A man's prayers will be hindered if he doesn't treat his wife with honor, both publicly as well as privately
- We see here that a husband's effectiveness in prayer is connected to the measure with which he honors his wife

You can pray with eloquence and energy publicly, but if you tear down and cut down people privately then your prayers can be hindered

- We are to treat our wives, (and others) with understanding and honor
- Husbands must take the lead in humility in marriage

The Lord can restore positive emotions in a marriage regardless of how bad things may have gotten

- Even if you feel like you don't "like" your wife
- A man should serve and honor his wife as if he desires to please God
- When we honor the marriage covenant God can get involved and truly bless a difficult situation

I believe that as God is raising up a prayer movement in these last days that He is bringing restoration to marriages and bringing honor to women and men in their homes

The Place of Prayer Flows from a Lifestyle of Righteousness

James 5:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

The “righteous man” that James is talking about is any believer who sets his heart to obey Jesus and walk in godly character with a lifestyle of practicing truth

- This is all but ignored in the lives of many who are involved in the prayer and worship movement of our day
- None of us is above temptation
- We all fall short of mature, consistent obedience

The prayers of a “righteous person” include the prayers of imperfect, weak people

1 John 3:22 (NKJV)

²² And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

- The Lord responds to those who seek to keep His commands and do the things that please Him

Just because you pray and fast more doesn't mean you can live in immorality, be dishonest in your finances, or slander people you don't agree with or cause a little pressure in your life

- Being extra zealous in certain areas doesn't balance out persistent compromise
- Praying more doesn't compensate for unrepentant sin

Isaiah 59:2 (NKJV)

² But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden *His* face from you, so that He will not hear.

- God does not intend for us to live one part of our life one way and another part completely different
- There is a relationship between our lifestyle and our ability to enjoy effective prayer
- Our spiritual capacity to experience and enjoy God increases as we walk in purity

Matthew 5:8 (NKJV)

⁸ Blessed *are* the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Ongoing, willful compromise will greatly hinder your spiritual growth and capacity to agree with God in prayer

- Sin hinders our love for Him
- We need to call sin, sin, repent and receive God's forgiveness
- He will remove our sin as if we had never sinned before

Walking in obedience is not about earning the answers to our prayers it's about enjoying God

- Both what we neglect to do positively as well as what we do negatively deeply affect our prayer lives

James 5:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.

- Earnest prayer comes from a heart that is engaged with God
- It's not just routine or going through the motions
- We are to focus our mind and attention toward the Lord
- Earnest prayer is also persistent – **Luke 18:1-8**
- We must refuse to be denied answers to prayers that are in agreement with God's will

Luke 11:8–10 (NKJV)

⁸ I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. 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.

- Ask, Seek, Knock – used in the continual present tense
- Keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking
- Pray with all perseverance – **Ephesians 6:18**
- Labor in fervent prayer – **Colossians 4:12**
- We find God when we search for Him with all of our heart – **Jeremiah 29:13**

James 5:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours.

- Elijah was prone to fear and discouragement
- Many of our prayers are not full of eloquence and volume
- Sometimes we are weak, discouraged and reduced to a mere whisper
- In fact, this is the way most of our prayer is throughout the day

Even the most energetic prayer warriors probably only offer about one percent of their prayers in a public meeting where they shout

- “*Fervent*” and “*Earnestly*” in our text do not refer to volume
- God heard and answered Hannah’s quiet prayer as she was weeping from her heart – **1 Samuel 1:13, 27**
- Earnest prayer also does not depend on how we feel
- Sometimes you may not feel God’s presence
- Our prayers are still effective even when we are tired, discouraged or not in a good mood
- We don’t have to be happy and energetic for our prayers to avail much

God wants us to pray consistently because He wants to converse with us far more than we wasn’t to talk with Him

The story of Elijah is not so much one about the great prophet of God as it is the great God of the prophet