

The disciples witnessed every miracle that Jesus worked
They heard every message that He ever preached
They witnessed every deliverance and observed every prayer

Yet, they never asked Him to teach them to heal, prophecy, or do miracles. They asked, *“Lord, teach us to pray”* (Luke 11:1)

“So He said to them, “When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.” (Luke 11:2, NKJV)

We would think that if an all-knowing, all-seeing God wanted His will to come forth on the earth then it would happen

- God Needs Our Help!
- Adam was to be God’s representative to represent God’s will on the earth
- Image – *“shadow, phantom, or illusion”* – Genesis 1:27
- *“Glory”* – *“Heavy or weighty”*, *clout* – Psalm 8:5
- Adam carried a lot of weight or **clout**
- Of course, we all know Adam failed
- God became flesh and dwelt among us enabling us to be ministers of reconciliation between God and man

“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,” (1 Timothy 2:5, NKJV)

(John 1:18, NKJV)

We are the “sent” ones – representing Jesus

“So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” (John 20:21, NKJV)

“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. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. (Luke 11:5–10, NKJV)

Persistence – *Shameless audacity* – (NIV) – “without modestly or shame”, “bold un-ashamedness”

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

(Hebrews 4:16, NKJV)

- As the petitioner in **Luke 11**, we can approach our friend God at any time knowing we are accepted
- We know that He hears us when we pray according to His will – **1 John 5:14-15**

Remember God is sometimes delaying the answer to work something in us through patience and persistence – **James 1:3**

Other times it might be a matter of timing

“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.” (Galatians 6:9, NKJV)

- Either way, we shouldn't need to pray for the same thing again and again
- We are now waiting in faith for the answer!

Sometimes we need to pray until enough power is released to see the answer to our prayer

“Now He (Jesus) could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them.”

(Mark 6:5, NKJV)

“Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?” So Jesus said to them, “Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.” **(Matthew 17:19–21, NKJV)**

- Jesus worked miracles everywhere else He went, yet their lack of faith or belief limited Him – See **Psalm 78:41**
- The disciples were casting out demons and healing diseases everywhere, yet they couldn’t help the boy
- Both of these examples imply that there are different degrees of faith and power needed for different things

I believe this is why it takes time to get our prayers answered

- Receiving an instant miracle is far and away the exception
- Usually, it is not just a matter of asking the Father to do something
- It is a matter of releasing enough power in the Spirit to get the job done!

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:20–21, NKJV)

- Exceedingly abundantly – *“more and more than”*
- So why are we often deficient?

The power source is not the problem

- *“according to the power that works in us,”*
- *“in the measure of the power which is operative in us”*
(Wuest)
- *“distribution”* – (Strong's)

How much operative power is being distributed through you?

- Remember it is the *“effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man that avails much”* – **James 5:16**
- Note: it doesn't say our prayer causes God to operate
- It certainly does this but that isn't what this verse is telling us

The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working].
(James 5:16 AMP, Classic)

- Our prayers go to work!
- We have the same power inside of us that created the world!
- The same power that took the keys from the kingdom of darkness – We must release it!

We must also be on the alert to persevere in prayer

*“praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, **being watchful** to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—” (Ephesians 6:18, NKJV)*

*“Be sober, **be vigilant**; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”*

(1 Peter 5:8, NKJV)

“being watchful”, “be vigilant” – other Translations use; “be on the alert”, “watching”, and “watchful” in both of these verses

- The context of both verses is spiritual warfare

Each mentions our adversary and challenges us to be alert, watchful, and aware of what the enemy is up to, both for ourselves and our brothers and sisters in Christ

*“lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are **not ignorant** of his devices.” (2 Corinthians 2:11, NKJV)*

- We must be aware of how the adversary thinks and operates
- His plans, plots, schemes, and devices
- We are not to allow him to gain on us, prey on us, defraud us of what is ours, and have or hold the greater portion
- Protection from the attacks of our enemy is not automatic
- God’s plan is to warn and alert us to Satan’s attacks
- We must be alert, and remain watchful, or we won't pick up on God’s attempts to warn us

If we are not alert and watchful, if we are ignorant of Satan's schemes, he will take the bigger portion

- Ignorance will destroy you!
– *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”*
(Hosea 4:6, NKJV)
- We are not to be blind watchmen – **Isaiah 56:10**

There are two NT words for “*watching*”

- Each of them means essentially the same thing
- *“to stay awake”*
- Like a sentry would need to refrain from sleep

The term, “*watchman*” comes from the OT and is used to describe what we today would call sentries, guards, or lookouts

- They would protect two things
- Vineyards, or fields from thieves and animals, and cities from invading forces
- They would take two shifts and sleep alternately to cover 24 hrs a day, seven days a week
- In seasons of harvest, there is more reason to stay watch because the thief will do all he can to steal it

In this great season of harvest, the Lord requires many watchmen so that none will be lost and perish – See **John 17:12**

“I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; They shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the LORD, do not keep silent,” (Isaiah 62:6, NKJV)

Watchmen would also be stationed on the city walls to keep a watch for messengers

- Runners who would carry messages from city to city
- They would cry out when a friendly messenger was coming
- Skilled watchmen could recognize runners from their stride even before they could see their faces – **1 Samuel 18:27**

Seasoned spiritual watchmen are often alerted by the Holy Spirit before they have any concrete evidence, that certain messengers are not to be trusted

- They recognize “*wolves*” sent to devour the flock
- Or “*hirelings*” with improper motives
- They bring warnings to those in leadership that something doesn’t seem quite right
- I have learned to listen to those trusted watchmen
- One of which is my wife Tricia
- When they tell me that they are “*uneasy*” around someone they are usually right

Most false doctrine, division, and general destruction in the Body of Christ could be averted if the watchmen would watch and the leaders would listen

“But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.” (2 Peter 2:1–2, NKJV)

*“Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore **watch**, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.” (Acts 20:28–31, NKJV)*

- The word, “*watchman*” also means to “*lean forward and peer into the distance.*”
- The watchman looks ahead, on guard of the attacks of the enemy
- He is pro-active, not re-active
- This is prophetic intercession – keeping the serpent out

God does not intend for Satan to take advantage of us

He will alert us to his schemes if we pay attention and remain alert

*“Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to **tend and keep it.**” (Genesis 2:15, NKJV)*

- *“Tend”* – the same word translated as *“watchman”*
- Adam had been assigned to protect the garden
- He was not as alert as he should have been
- Satan *“took advantage”* of him and Eve

“Keep” or *“keeper”* is far and away the most common translation of the word *“watchman”*

- Also translated, *“preserve”* and *“maintain”*

“Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?”

(Genesis 4:9, NKJV)

- Cain was not a good keeper

Jesus was a *“keeper”* of Peter

“And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.” (Luke 22:31–32, NKJV)

- Though Peter denied Christ, his calling was *preserved* or *maintained* by Christ’s intercession for him
- It is reasonable to assume that had Christ not been a watchman for Peter, he would not have been saved

Adam was told in **Genesis 2:15** to “keep” the garden

- From what?
 - It had to be the serpent
- First of all, it is much in keeping with the nature of God to have warned him
- This is something we see consistently in the character of God
- Adam and Eve, Cain, Peter, as well as others
- Second, neither Adam nor Eve seemed shocked when a snake talked to them
- It must not have been a total surprise
- Third, what else would there have been (before the fall) to guard, keep, or protect from?
- Only the serpent

We must guard or protect that which God has entrusted to our care from the subtle attacks of the enemy

- Keep him out of our garden!
- Keep him out of our home, family, church, city, and nation!
- Keep him out!

“Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain.” (Psalm 127:1, NKJV)

- Our intercession and watching are not in vain
- The Lord will hear us and answer!

Yes, we are to pay attention, be aware, protect and be on the lookout. Yet, we must also be on the offensive!

- “*watchman*” or “*keeper*” also means to “*besiege or lay siege to a city*”
- Also to “*spy on*” or “*lie in wait to ambush*”

““*Make mention to the nations, Yes, proclaim against Jerusalem, That **watchers** come from a far country And raise their voice against the cities of Judah. Like keepers of a field they are against her all around, Because she has been rebellious against Me,*” says the LORD.” (Jeremiah 4:16–17, NKJV)

“*So it was, while Joab **besieged** the city, that he assigned Uriah to a place where he knew there were valiant men.*”

(2 Samuel 11:16, NKJV)

You and I must intercede for the nations our families and the cities we live in!

“*And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the LORD for it; for in its peace you will have peace.*” (Jeremiah 29:7, NKJV)

- God deals with people as groups, not just as individuals
- Abraham interceded for a city – Genesis 18:22-33
- Moses interceded for a nation – Exodus 32:9-14

Our prayers and lifestyles can cause healing for a nation

“if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:14, NKJV)

“A Psalm of David. The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. The LORD has sworn And will not relent, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.” The Lord is at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries. He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head.”

(Psalm 110, NKJV)

- God is releasing an anointing to lay siege to cities and nations
- God has equipped us to “spy out” the enemy’s plans and strongholds, “ambushing” him in the spirit
- We are a priestly army, stretching forth the scepter of our conquering Hero
- Ruling in the midst of our enemies!