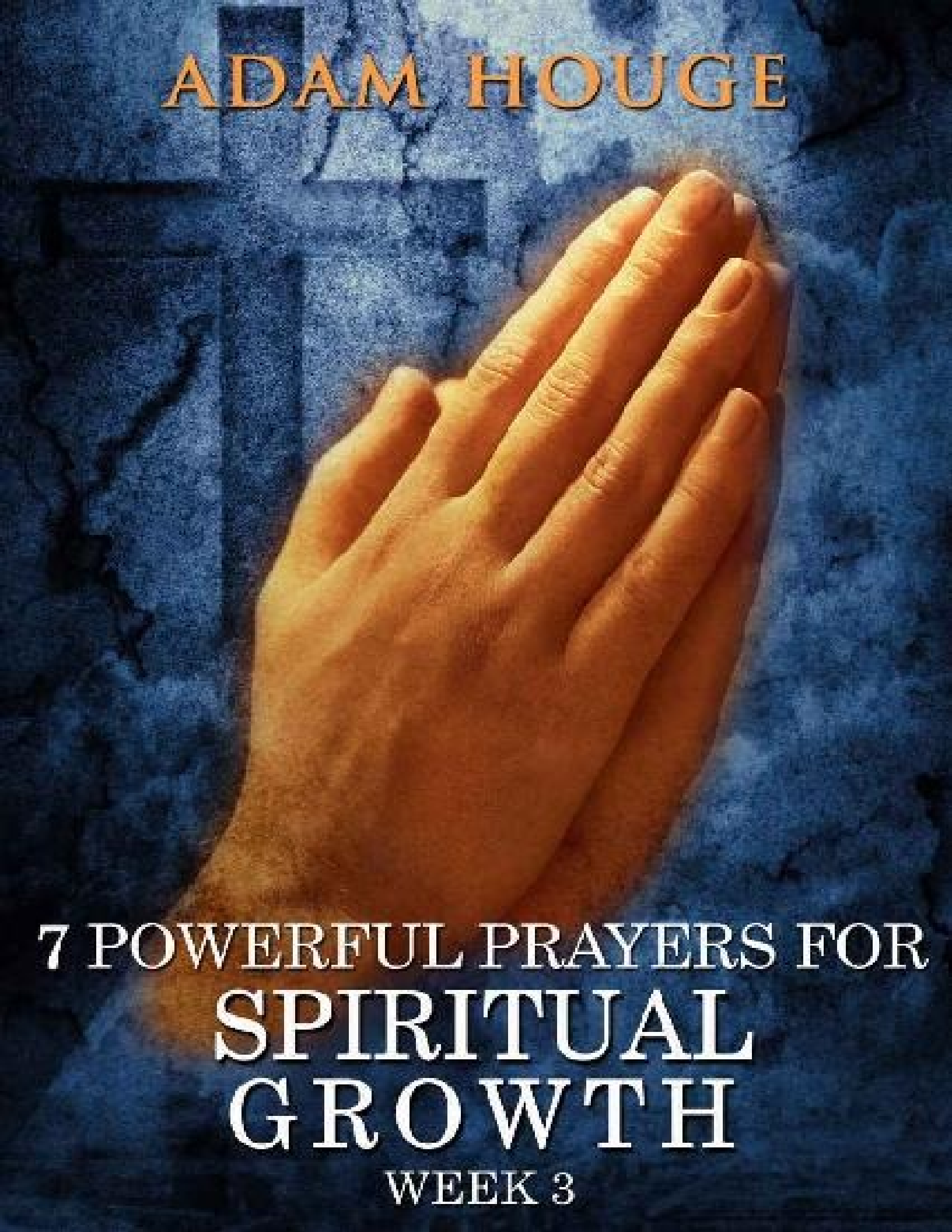
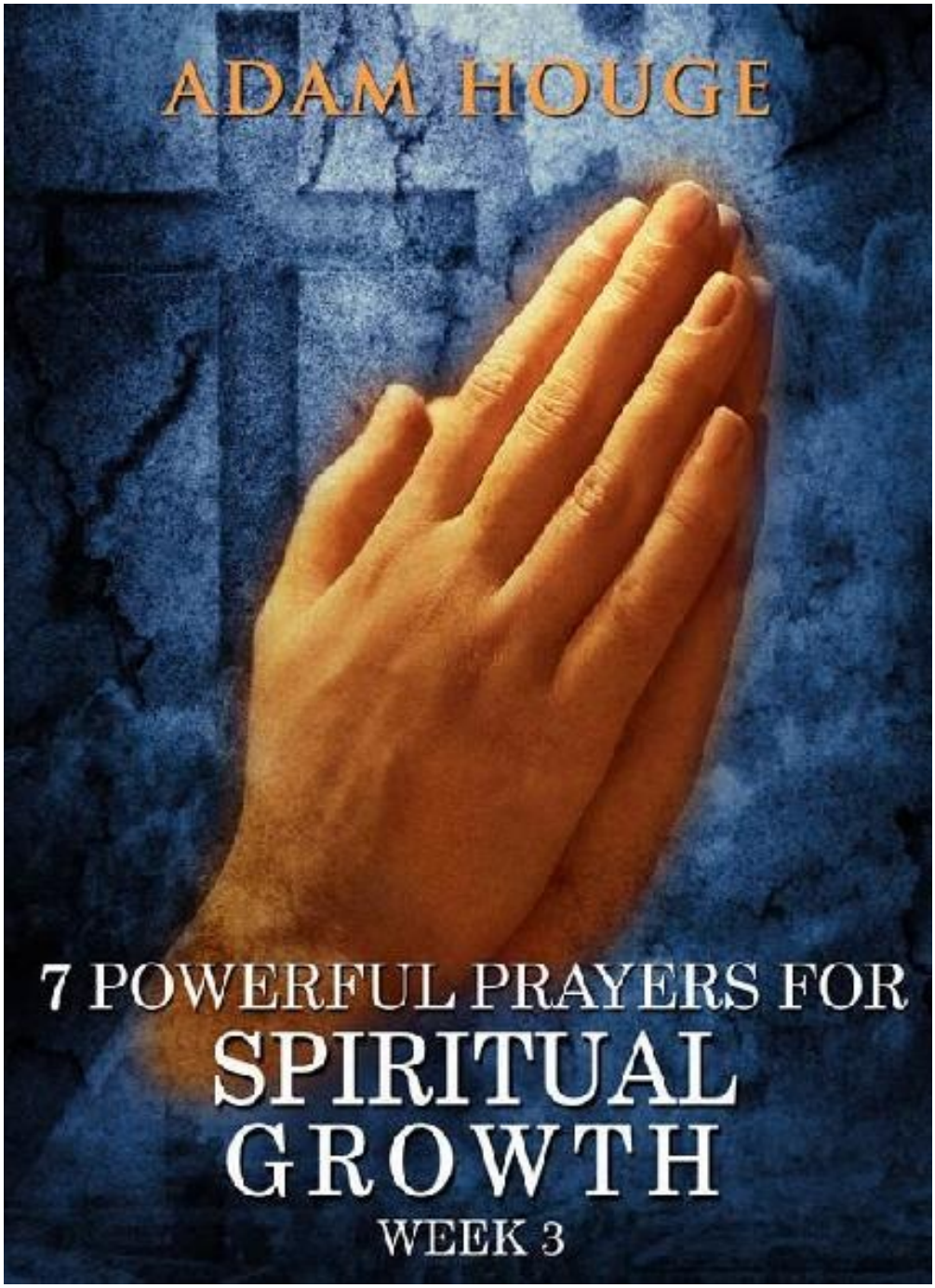
ADAM HOUGE



7 POWERFUL PRAYERS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

WEEK 3


ADAM HOUGE
7 POWERFUL PRAYERS FOR
SPIRITUAL
GROWTH
WEEK 3

7 Powerful Prayers for Spiritual Growth –Week 3™

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7 Powerful Prayers for Spiritual Growth –Week 3™

by Adam Houge

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Introduction

In this final book of the 7 Powerful Prayers For Spiritual Growth series, we will be discussing how to increase in the power of God. We will discuss God's will, and desire for nearness to us.

Looking from God's perspective to see what He desires of us and requires of us, we will pursue His answer in Prayer. With each day representing both a study and a prayer, we will prayer the given prayer and put to practice the previous prayer.

Continue to open the ears of your heart to the Holy Spirit. Be sensitive to His voice, and faithful to obey. God is crafting a precious child out of you, and adores every moment He can have with you.

Day One Prayer One

GROWING DISCIPLES

Making disciples and growing disciples are two different things. It is like the difference between planting seeds and tending to plants. Not all seeds become a plant, but all plants have the potential to bear fruit if they are well tended to.

Evangelism is making disciples but discipling is to grow those disciples. By evangelism we plant the seed of the gospel, and by discipling we are now growing that plant that may it bear fruit for Christ.

Discipling is not an option. It must be done. If a plant does not grow it does not bear fruit. If we do not bear fruit we will not be pleasing to the Lord. Also think of the nature of a fruit. What's inside of fruit? Seeds no doubt. These seeds, are the seeds of the gospel ready to be planted in others.

Discipling requires three steps:

Step one: Evangelizing

Step two: Discipling

Step three: Sending out

Or in other words, “Make disciples, disciple the disciples, then make the disciples go make more disciples!”

These are the steps Jesus had taken, and we should follow in His example. Before anyone was sent out, first Christ came. He came and He preached to call disciples after Himself. After they were following Him, He discipled them. When He finished discipling them he sent them out. Even after the resurrection the Lord still spent 40 more days growing his disciples that they might bear perfect fruit.

Now we are not supposed to call disciples after ourselves. But rather we are supposed to call disciples after Christ. They must learn from Christ. Therefore they must learn from Christ in us. If some of you reading this book, feel that you are not prepared to disciple, that's okay. Perhaps God doesn't want you to do it yet because He wants to grow you a little first.

If we disciple people and we are not prepared to do it we will lead them to false doctrine. That's a scary thing because the grace of God does not fall upon a false

teacher. As it is written,

“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.” Gal 1:8

The original Greek word for accursed according to Thayer's Greek definitions of the Bible is “anathema”, which means “devoted to the direst of woes.”

Due to the definition of this word other versions of the Bible, translate this verse to say: “let him be eternally condemned”

In a more literal sense anyone who preaches the gospel incorrectly is setting himself up for the eternal fire. So in today's devotion, we will discuss the need for discipling others. At the same time we will be sobering ourselves to wait for God to disciple through us.

So now the final question is: how do we properly disciple? Let's look at Jesus for this answer. Jesus when He first came, He evangelized, and called disciples to Himself. After He had disciples, He spent much time devoted to teaching and growing them. Like a shepherd does his sheep, He tended to their needs. Like a father does to a child He nourished them, nurtured them, fed them, cared for them, loved them, and taught them truth to deliver them from evil. But how much time did He spend with them?

Every moment of every day, like a man does with his own family. So spend time with someone you're discipling like you would a family member. They’re your brothers and sisters after all! Yes marriage comes first, but how much time would you spend with your brother in the world? Spend that with your brother in Christ. A disciple is more than a friend and more than a student, he or she is your family in Christ. Treat them like family, love them like family.

Nourish them, and nurture them. If they are hungry feed them. Be hospitable. If they are poor, save them in their time of need. Love them like you do your own family. And take care of them like you would a son or daughter.

The heavens and the earth will pass away, and all flesh shall cease to exist from this world. But because our God endures forever, so shall this person be your brother or your sister forever. Brothers and sisters in the flesh will only be your brothers and sisters for so many years before you die.

When you die that bond of kinship is lost, because you will become spirit and do away with the flesh. I am not saying have nothing to do with your worldly

family. Do what God convicts you to do. But remember that they are flesh and your family in Christ is Spirit.

How did Jesus respond when He was discussing His family in the flesh?

“While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You."

“But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother." Mat 12:46-50

He didn’t say, “Oh bring them in They’re my family!” In fact there is no evidence that He favored them over the disciples. Instead He said, “Everyone who seeks Me is My family.”

Seeing that Mary, His mother also made herself His disciple, we read,

“When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own *home.”* Joh 19:26-27

Our brothers and sisters in Christ will always be spirit. So our relation with one another is real, permanent, and eternal.

Take the time to care for the person you're discipling, love them, cherish them, and nurture them. Let them see Christ in you, and let Christ teach them through you. That way they may be taught by God and not you. As it is written

“It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT BY GOD.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.” Joh 6:45

If then, they shall all be taught by God. We first need to learn submission to the Holy Spirit. We need to learn perfect surrender to God that God can work through us. Then as God gives us words he can teach through us. As it is written,

“And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO PREACH THE GOSPEL OF PEACE, WHO BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!" Rom 10:15

If then we must be sent, we must be inclining our ears to hear God's call. We need to be led by the Holy Spirit that we can counsel men through the Holy Spirit. Seeing that the Holy Spirit is the counselor sent by God, let Him counsel through you.

So when you make a disciple, let God tell you if you should disciple a person in the first place. Don't just take them under your wing. Let God call you to it. If you do it of yourself it's a work of the flesh.

All ministry is a gift from God. It is given to us by His hand. Who sent the brethren out? Was it not God? Even so God needs to be the one sending us out. Those three points we discussed (to evangelize, disciple, and send out) can only be fulfilled one way.

For us to go and disciple we need to first be called by God to do it, and be led. As it is written,

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." Rom 8:14

Now understanding that, if God has led you to someone, spend much time discipling them. If not then don't. Then by loving on them they will see the perfect love of God in you. It will draw them closer to the Lord. It will encourage them, lift them up, and enlighten them.

Jesus tells us in His parable that there will be some seeds that land in gravel, and perish in trials. By this He is stating people will fall away, because they aren't firmly planted in Him. The way we keep people from falling away is by cementing them in the love of God. We use cement to create a rock like foundation for a house. So likewise we need to use a little spiritual cement to give them a firm foundation. There are five things that will greatly cement someone in Christ:

1)Being led by the Spirit in everything (waiting to hear what God says then obeying hHim)

2)Abiding in the spirit (Sitting daily at His feet and in His presence)

3)Seeking truth in all things (especially doctrine) through the Holy Spirit.

4)Increasing in wisdom. (studying to show thyself approved –see 2tim 2:15)

4)Loving one another fervently (showing kindness at all times. Having a servant's heart, to be caring and compassionate like the Lord. To deliver others in

their time of need)

I call this the “BASIL” method. Applying the BASIL method will set any believer on fire, and bless every ministry. By catering the church to those who are on fire or want to be on fire, you will end up with a church that is on fire for God.

God will increase it and bless it. He will bless it: “Exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think” (see eph 3:20). When they experience God at your church they will keep coming back. They will share with others and bring more in the fold. Then the process will repeat itself.

The end result? A larger ministry, on fire for God. But it takes time and patience, seeing that God builds the house in His own time.

As we read in a psalm of Solomon,

“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.”Psa 127:1

Now looking a little more in detail at the BASIL method, Being led by the Spirit requires us to learn to sit at Jesus’ feet. We wait for Him to talk then do what He says. We've all had an inner pull from God. This is His voice and this is what He's telling us to do. As we read,

"Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God” Deu 28:1-2

You cannot be saved if you do not obey God. So the point to this is to learn to:

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Php 4:6-7

Continuing on the BASIL method: Abiding in the spirit simply comes down to worshiping God, being continuously in prayer, and sitting at His feet every moment of the day. As we learn to sit at Jesus’ feet we sober ourselves to obey God and deny ourselves. Then as we seek to obey God we wait for the Holy

Spirit to speak to know what to do.

To seek truth in doctrine is extremely important. We stated the need for all these things before. But to bring to remembrance we know that we find the truth through the Holy Spirit.

As it is written:

“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth” Joh 16:13

We will seek it, and God will speak it. It's that simple.

Wisdom is the ability to accurately apply knowledge. So in this context we learn to accurately apply the truths we learn. To increase in wisdom is to grow in truth by obedience. The math is simple. Wisdom plus more wisdom equals growth in obedience and truth (GOT)

Which leads me to the question, “GOT BASIL?” (Grow in Obedience and Truth, by Being led in the spirit, by Abiding in Him, by Seeking His doctrine, Increasing in His wisdom, and Loving one another) Remember that acronym, and practice it. It’ll bless your walk and ministry.

In regard to the ‘L’ of Basil we already discussed in an earlier prayer the need to love one another. As we said, love turns us into disciples because by His kindness we are saved. Be a kind loving person and it will save others. It will strengthen your brethren to keep them from falling. People trust others who love them. If they are slipping into false doctrine you can turn them back, because they’re drawn to the love in you.

This is how the early church discipled, and it saw tremendous growth because of it. Unfortunately in today's evangelical efforts we preach Christ, watch them get saved then walk away. It’s like abandoning a baby on a door step. We need to take them in and disciple them. Nurture them in love and truth, and they will have a solid walk in Christ.

A new plant needs to be nourished in good soil. Seeds spring up quickly on gravel then die away. If you find them in gravel pick them up and plant them in good soil then water them well. In time they will bear fruit. Likewise let the spiritually older women take the younger in Christ under their wings. As it is written,

“The older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not

given to much wine, teachers of good things—that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed."

"Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself *to be* a pattern of good works; in doctrine *showing* integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.

Doing these things will edify the brethren. Grow a healthy church, and change your life." Tit 2:3-8

The Prayer,

"Lord renew Your church. Bless her with increase. Prosper her, She is your bride! Awaken Your bride to the newness of life.

Please send out more workers into the field for the harvest is plenty, and the workers are few. I surrender myself to be used by You. Choose me, I will be Your worker, Lord. Use me to edify the brethren. When I am prepared, disciple through me.

The Lord's Answer,

"I will send out workers, starting with you. Go beloved and wait for Me in the field. I will direct you to whom you shall harvest. I will cause you to love on them, and some shall hate you for it. Love on them still, and do good to them, perhaps they shall find Me.

I have My path for you written on the map. I have My course plotted for you. I know who shall accept My truth and who shall not. I will bring My children to you. I will awaken them by the words I give you.

Only wait for Me to grow you that you be prepared in all things to cleanse them. The sheep have dirty feet and their wool is growing dim. I am sending you out to wash them with the water of My word. Bathe them in My truth, give them My holiness for food and My love for substance. Take them under your wing and shelter them. I will guard your life as you have guarded theirs. I am committing them to your trust, so be diligent to obey Me in this.

Be found faithful with those whom I have committed to you. Nurture them in Spirit and Body. If they are hungry feed them. If they can’t afford a home, give them one or keep them in your house. These are your brethren, love my family like your family, because we are family. Do good to the sheep and when I return your reward will be with Me.”

Day Two Prayer Two

LETTING OUR WORDS BE SEASONED WITH SALT

“Let your speech always *be* with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.” Col 4:6

Jesus tells us,

“…For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the Day of Judgment.” Mat 12:34-36

If we are seeking a pure heart, we also need to have pure words. Words that heal, words that bring peace and truth. Words that are devoted to goodness.

When we speak negatively it can discourage, break down, and destroy. But when we choose words that heal, they can edify build up and strengthen.

Sometimes struggling with kind words toward others isn’t the only issue. There are times that in brokenness and self-defeat we speak poorly of ourselves. When we allow our souls to be “down cast” (as David put it) we create more harm than good.

For example, when we sin we start to beat ourselves up over our failures. God doesn’t call us to negative self-speech, but to glorify Him. In repentance God has grace. When we make that decision to do rightly, it’s time to lift up our heads and glorify the Lord. When we look down at ourselves, we aren’t looking up at the goodness of God.

A discouraged heart can lead to a downcast soul. A downcast soul can lead to self-condemnation and negative self-speech.

If we want our words to be seasoned with salt then we need to turn our tears over our defeat into praise over God’s triumph. He has overcome our sin, and overwhelmed us in forgiveness and love.

When we can’t get it right, it’s because we are approaching victory incorrectly. - Whether in sin or in other issues of life as well. We have to remember that it is

God who works in us for victory. When we submit to our flesh, or work things out in our own strength we fail. But by leaning on Christ we find the strength to stand. Remembering these things, we find a good reason to lift up our heads in praise. Jesus is our victory and song of praise.

If we are giving glory to the Lord in everything we say our speech will always be seasoned with salt. Sometimes it's good to ask ourselves before we talk, "Is this going to glorify the Lord, and turn this person to Jesus?" If not then we shouldn't be saying it.

Negative speech toward others can be damaging as well. Hurtful speech is easy to categorize as harmful. But sometimes we overlook the importance of abstaining from coarse joking, and idle speech.

Even Jesus said,

"But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the Day of Judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." Mat 12:36-37

Knowing then that we can be condemned for our speech this should lead us to fear. But anyone who pursues a righteous walk will also pursue holy speech, to edify not only themselves but others. If we love one another we will want to edify one another.

The hardest time to say something that turns another back to the Lord is during an argument. We get heated, and easily tempted to say something we don't mean. Perhaps in our anger for the moment we mean what we say. But when we start thinking more rationally, we realize that's not our heart at all. So we end up regretting our words.

In this example we see that the words start with the heart. We need to learn to back down and cool off a minute. If we aren't meditating on the Lord, in our anger we will let something slip. It's good to remember to cool off, spend some time with God. Think about the situation, then go back and speak when your heart is sober.

In the drunkenness of anger we speak like fools. By learning to temper our hearts and curb our anger, proper convicting words will come out instead.

But we also need to remember to recognize when others are struggling. If they need to sit back cool off and be with God, then we need to stop pressing our side

of the argument. Let them return to a proper sober mind in Christ. If you push them, they'll explode. It's like squeezing a balloon filled with rotten milk to the point of bursting. If then you want the pure milk of God from their mouth, encourage them to spend some time with God, and agree together that you both need to cool off. Agree to come back immediately after and work out the issue.

We need to temper our hearts to be holy and loving in everything. Satan loves to seize the moment when we're angry and bring in further division. Lost friendship and broken relationships are not worth the few costly words we speak. If we change our hearts and lips, those relationships would be built rather than broken.

Learning to back down and be meek is so important. If you or the other person are too angry or disagreeable then you need to have a few moments with the Lord. Blow off some steam to God, pray with an upright heart. Ask the Lord Who sees everything, "Am I wrong in anything?" Then have an open heart to hear from Him. Time and time again, there was always a little something God pointed out that I didn't realize I was doing. Then I would go and immediately apologize.

Seeking unity needs to be the priority when you argue, not expressing opinions. If we have a heart to seek unity we will find it. Even Jesus said, "Seek and you shall find."

Sometimes it's good to say sorry right away. Even if you feel only a little wrong, say sorry right away. It will break the tension and bring everyone back to a sober mind. Then after you think about it, you may realize that you were more than a little wrong. By saying sorry you avoided a bad fight.

Don't worry about what the other person is doing, always be the first to bring unity. If your heart is right before God, your words will be right.

Ultimately, whether in arguments or in unholy speech, seeking mouths of grace needs to be a priority. By words we can build up and draw near to Christ, and by words we can break down and turn one away from the Lord.

Like an industrial wrecking ball through a house, our words can ruin a home.

Take this time to devote yourself to wholesome speech. Words that turn others to Jesus. Seek sound godly speech which cannot be condemned.

The Prayer,

“Lord I dedicate myself from today and this time forward to having words that edify. I know Your judgment and fear You. Bring holiness to my mouth. Give me words that heal, and bring peace. Be my strength in my weaknesses, I commit myself to You.”

The Lord’s Answer,

“Beloved, every word of Mine is Holy. My words always lead you back to Me. They bring salvation and life. Therefore My words never return to Me void.

Let not your words return to you void. Let them produce life in others, as I have produced life in you. I will judge you according to your words, and if you brought healing and life, how can I not bless you?

Grow in Me, and turn others to Me with the things that come from your mouth. Listen to My conviction. My Spirit will be with you and teach you the things you should say.”

Day Three Prayer Three

HAVING VICTORY OVER SIN

Bondage is an all too common thing among Christians today. So many people suffer in a daily walk because they can't let go of sin. Not that they don't want to (they'd love to let go!) but they feel enslaved by sin.

Yet we read:

"Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, *but* a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." Joh 8:34-36

And again,

"For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things *is* death.

But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom 6:20-23

So one would ask, "if I have been set free why do I still feel like a slave? I do the things I don't want to and the things in Christ I want to do, these I don't do."

Yet even as Paul says,

"For the good that I will *to do,* I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do,* that I practice. Now if I do what I will not *to do,* it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good." Rom 7:19-21

So one may ask, "If evil is present with me, how can I truly be made free?"

Yet paul answers this in his next breath as we read,

"O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I

thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.” Rom 7:24-25

So again as Jesus said, “If the Son makes you free, You shall be free indeed”

In this prayer we will discuss how to overcome sin and bondage and be rid of it forever. We will discuss exactly how Jesus will help you, and how to properly pursue victory.

There is a means to being done with bondage forever and it’s very simple.

The first key is love. If you love the Lord you’ll want to do rightly and act out of that love. The second key is hatred. In Ecclesiastes we’re told that there is a time and a place for every activity. Love has its place, but hatred has its place as well. If you can't hate your sin, you can never be free of it. Now we all hate sin but in the heat of the moment during temptation sin doesn't seem so detestable anymore.

You have to be willing to hate your sin so much that even during the heat of the moment you hate it. Yet hate in itself is not enough, because when you're tempted you being human are still weak. It's only a matter of time before we succumb to weaknesses. Hatred however gives us the will to resist, to fight, and to seek the strength we need to stand. That strength we find in Christ.

If you don't hate your sin you’ll always fall into it. To love sin is to hate God because Christ was crucified on account of sin. But again we all hate sin, however when we are tempted sin doesn't seem so sinful.

Bondage is a very dangerous thing. During bondage we go from hating sin to disliking it, and from disliking it to maybe liking it from maybe liking it, to wondering why God won’t let us do it, then from questioning God to falling away.

We all have conviction. As we know conviction is the voice of the Holy Spirit. God hates it when we don’t listen to conviction, because conviction saves us.

But if we refuse to listen, He doesn’t force His will on us. Instead for free will, He stops talking to us. Or perhaps, in our fleshiness “wax” builds in our spiritual ears, and we can’t hear God anymore. In that time we need to dig the sin out that we can hear more clearly.

If we continue in sin He will hand us over to it. That's how we can go from hating sin to maybe liking it, because we lose conviction. If you feel like you're

losing conviction you're standing on dangerous ground. The only way to repent is to come before God, hate your sin, and change your heart.

You need to diligently hate it before God. Then you need to press toward the Lord showing Him you love Him. If you're losing conviction pray for it to return. Then through faithfully pursuing the Lord, It will return. But it takes time.

When you're handed over to sin you're dangerously close to falling away. In wilful sin you're trampling the blood of the covenant underfoot. The blood by which you are saved. As we read in Hebrews,

"Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?"

"For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Heb 10:28-31

For some reason some people act as if the Scripture say "if you could fall away."

But nowhere in the word does it say, "If you could fall away." It says, "if you do this or that you will fall away." And, "If you do not do this or that, you will be safe." It also says, "No one can forcibly take you from the hand of God." But you cannot walk in sin and be saved at the same time. Sin is a deed of the flesh, and if you live according to the flesh you cannot be saved. As we read,

"For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." Rom 8:13

The deeds of the body are sin. If you live according to the flesh and walk in sin you cannot be saved. If you practice sin you will not inherit the kingdom of God. As we also read,

"Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the

kingdom of God.” Gal 5:19-21

So let the fear of God rest in your heart that you will pursue holiness and walk in victory over sin.

If anyone disagrees with this than they disagree with the Scriptures. I've heard people say, “well Paul said that.” And Paul is an Apostle of Jesus Christ, a dignitary of God, sent by the Holy Spirit with the word of God for your salvation. Before the word of God was ever written in the New Testament Paul was writing the New Testament. If then you do not have the boldness to write every word of God perfectly as in the New Testament then who are you to question Paul the Minister of God?

But we know that,

“All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2Ti 3:16-17

But the question is how do we obtain and utilize that victory?

And it is also written,

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.” 2Pe 1:20-21

Therefore we cannot make the Scriptures say what we want them to say. They are the words of God, spoken by God. If then they are the words of God we also need to remember the Scripture which says,

“ ….Faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Rom 10:17

Faith comes by believing God and God has told us through Paul that walking in sin leads to eternal condemnation. If we do not listen to God we cannot be saved. For faith comes by hearing His word and “by grace you have been saved through faith.” eph 2:8

We are saved by listening to and believing God. We are saved by believing and obeying His word, because righteousness is faith in motion. And finally we also read that “the just shall live by faith.”

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For

in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH." Rom 1:16-17

Therefore by living out the gospel you'll be saved. By living out sin, you will not be. Overcoming bondage needs to be a serious priority in your heart. The Lord, through these scriptures, is pressing upon your heart the need for it.

The reason we are discussing this as an issue of faith is that faith is the substance of our victory.

As it is written,

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” 1Jn 5:4

The question is, “what do we put our faith in to overcome.” The strength of Christ. But how do we obtain strength from Christ?” First beginning with the hatred of sin we find the will to resist. However we cannot resist temptation and be victorious every time.

Resisting temptation itself becomes a work of the flesh. The flesh is already weak. Why then would we resist temptation seeing that we are weak? We are not called to sit in the tempting situation, resisting it. Instead we are called to flee the youthful lusts. As it is written,

2Ti 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

You are called to flee from lust. So Flee from temptation and run away. It is written “resist the devil and he will flee from you” jas 4:7

But how do we resist the devil? Rebuking him isn't enough he'll just come back later and keep drawing us into temptation. Satan hates God. He hates the presence of God, and hates everything about God. The key to resisting Satan is in the verse we read 2Tim2:22.

It starts out by saying “flee youthful lusts.” But a finishes saying pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace which are things of the Spirit. Another way to say it is to run away from temptation and run straight into the arms of God.

Take time to sit in the presence of Jesus when you're tempted. Opening the word of God isn't enough because you can be drawn away from reading. But if you begin to pray and seek the presence of God, Satan cannot intercede your prayers

and stop them. The Holy Spirit intercedes for you that the power of God may rest upon you, and Satan cannot overcome the Holy Spirit.

But what do we pray? Jesus told us, “And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.” Mat 6:13

When you pray ask the Lord to be your strength in your weakness. Ask Him to lead you not into temptation but deliver you from Satan. When you're tempted it’s no longer just about Satan it’s about your lust and you need to run from that. You're not called to resist the flesh, but to sit in the presence of God. So sit like Mary at Jesus’ feet. Then even as the Lord said,

“But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."Luk 10:42

When you sit in the presence of God you do not sin, and it shall not be taken from you. But when you “leave the presence of God” -so to speak, you sin. Not that we literally leave His presence, because the Holy Spirit is always with us. But when we are no longer meditating on His presence then we give room for sin.

So when you are tempted you need to ignore that temptation and focus on God. Resist the temptation by focusing on God. Focus on His presence and sit in His Spirit then you will find strength to stand. As the Lord said to Paul,

“for My strength is made perfect in weakness." 2cor 12:9

This is how you can find the perfection of God in the weakness of your sin. Simply begin with prayer “Lord be my strength and my weakness, lead me not to temptation but deliver me from the evil one.” Then remember how we said “our faith is victory.” Put your faith in God that He will be your strength in your weakness. Put your faith in Him that He will deliver you from temptation. Yes it's very hard to do in the heat of the moment but press hard into the presence of God and keep praying. Let your thoughts drift from the temptation focus your thoughts on God while you pray.

When you begin to feel strengthened keep praying. Let your thoughts drift off of what's tempting you, and just focus on worshiping God. Worship Him for His goodness and He will overcome and you'll find the strength to stand.

I know that this method works. It’s what the word of God tells us to do. Also I know it works by experience, having overcome bondage in my own life. By

sharing this with others I've seen many others overcome bondage by applying the simple method of seeking God and sitting in His presence.

Just think about it: when you're worshiping from your heart are you sinning? Never! Not even at all! And why? Because you’re focusing on the Lord!

I've seen this work for many others and I know it will work for you.

The Prayer,

“Lord I hate my sin. Be my strength in my weakness to sit in Your presence daily, that by Your strength I might stand. Lead me not into temptation but deliver me from the evil one! I put my faith in You, Lord strengthen me that I may glorify You!”

The Lord’s Answer,

“Beloved, I hate sin. On account of Sin I was crucified. Because of sin you needed Me to die, and need Me as your Savior. Be rid of sin! I treasure a pure and clean heart. A beautiful mind is an impossible jewel to find. But with Me all things are possible. Let Me find that jewel in you.

By sitting in My presence every moment of the day, you will never again suffer the ravages of sin. Learn to sit at My feet and meditate on My presence. I have never left you, but your thoughts tend to depart from Me. And when they do, you sin. Make it your aim to dwell on My presence and rest in Me. Have I not said abide in Me, and I in you? Now beloved continue in Me as I have said! I will overcome for you. You will be justified, and I will be glorified!”

Day Four Prayer Four

LEARNING TO ABIDE IN THE SPIRIT

Jesus said,

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.”

"I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”

“If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned.” Joh 15:4-6

This abiding in the original Greek means to “continue.”

Quite literally the statement is saying “continue in Me and I in you”

So what does it mean to continue in Christ? It means to continue to walk in Him, continue to grow in Him, continue to be led by His Spirit, and continue in His daily abiding presence.

What it means to continue in His daily abiding presence is to sit at His feet continually like Mary. Faith comes by hearing God, and salvation comes by obedience to that faith.

If we do not learn to sit daily at His feet with a still and quiet heart, we will never actually grow in our walks. We will live according to our own hearts and thoughts, rather than the leading of the Holy Spirit. But by “being still and knowing that He is God” we can find not only a place of rest, but a place of restoration through His active word.

It’s important to learn to sit and wait to hear from God. Whether you’re at work or at home, or anywhere you are. You need to learn to let your heart be still, and listen constantly to the speech of the Holy Spirit in you. That in this, you may obey His voice and please the Lord in a daily walk. This is what it means to have a daily walk: always practicing the word of the Holy Spirit given to you moment by moment, day by day.

One of the best ways to start in a daily walk, is by reading the scriptures daily. When something in the word speaks out to you, this is the Holy Spirit. Write it

down for later referencing. Always write what God gives you in the word. When you do, it trains your ear to hear the Lord more frequently. You are learning to sit forward in your walk to hear the Lord that you may write the next thing.

When you write, jot down only what He gives to you, not your own thoughts. Be mindful of the words of the Lord, letting go of your own heart then continue reading.

As you train yourself to hear God more accurately in the word, you'll also be training yourself to hear Him in all things. By attuning your ear to His voice you'll be saving your own soul. As it is written,

Isa 55:3 Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you— The sure mercies of David.

Inclining our ear requires us to sit still and meditate on His presence. It grows a quiet heart in us, the kind God wants to see. This meditation on His presence is "abiding" in Him.

There are three most reliable ways to meditate on His presence. The Lord at all times in your life will generally want you to be doing one of these three.

1) Reading the word

2) Prayer

3) Worship

Reading the word is like sitting at Jesus' feet. We learn how to hear from the Holy Spirit to obey Him daily. Also the things He speaks to us in the word are the things He wants us to be practicing and learning. It is always best to memorize the scripture God speaks to you. It files it away in your memory banks for later use.

Don't just memorize anything, but the things God speaks into your ear. You'll find that by doing this it will be much easier to memorize the word. God will be your strength in it that you may grow more abundantly in the things He tells you to do daily.

So learn to listen to the Lord and obey, then also memorize EVERYTHING He speaks to you for later practice.

When you have a new job, and your boss wants you to do something, doesn't he give you detailed instructions on what he wants you to accomplish? If you don't

remember those instructions you'll never perform the task and so you could end up fired.

This is how God views us. He gives us instructions, and if we never obey them we get "fired." You have to take your walk seriously. There is no room for a complacent, fleshy, sinful life. Take it to heart to grow in the things God teaches you. Memorize them for later use and God will bless your walk.

Secondly we need to focus on a life devoted to prayer. As it is written,

"pray without ceasing" 1Th 5:17

We are called to pray always, in all circumstances without ceasing. There is however an interesting twist to this. As it is also written,

"Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil."

"Do not be rash with your mouth, And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God *is* in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore let your words be few."Ecc 5:1-2

So if then you are called to be quiet when you go into the presence of God how can you pray without ceasing? Simple! -By learning to let the Holy Spirit pray through you. As it is written,

"Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

"Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because He makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of* God." Rom 8:26-27

Therefore, learn to sit quietly and let the Holy Spirit stir your heart as you pray. Let Him give you words that He may intercede through you and for you. As you learn to attune your heart to the Spirit you will be attuning your heart to the Father's heart. As you attune your heart to the Father's heart He will be more likely and willing to answer.

Then without ceasing in prayer put this to practice. Let God stir your heart that your heart may become more like His.

Finally we need to worship God always. Sit in awe of Him. We need to take the time to let all things settle in our ever busy minds, and rest our thoughts on God.

Think of all that He is doing and has done for you. Take a look around you and sit in awe of His goodness.

Just in the remembrance of His awesomeness you'll feel the Holy Spirit come upon you, and be gripped with a sudden desire to worship. By remembering His goodness in your life, you'll become greatly encouraged and it will increase your faith. This is a good thing to do especially during trials. I have been through many hard things. And when your heart is burdened, remember the ways God has been faithful to you. Don't reflect on your pain, reflect on His loving kindness that He shows you. In so doing, you'll find pain turning into praise.

But in all things we are called to constantly rejoice and worship. As it is written,

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1Th 5:16-18

Meditate on His goodness and rejoice in His faithfulness! But can you learn to give thanks in everything? Even in trials? Can you give thanks for your trials and worship God in them?

God gives us trials to grow us toward eternal life. There is nothing that comes our way that does not first go through His fingers. We need to remember that, and be grateful for the hard things that we don't understand. When we have 20/20 hindsight, we'll see how God meant our hardship for good and not harm. As it is written,

"Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end *intended by* the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful." Jas 5:11

It isn't until after we suffer and are relieved from our burdens that we find room for rejoicing. But learn to worship by faith, while in your suffering. Worship God for the goodness He is giving you through hardship even if you don't understand it.

Wouldn't that be having a beautiful heart? To say in loving and humble submission, "Thank you Jesus for this hardship, I know that you intend it for my good that I may be nearer to you."

The scriptures say,

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose." Rom 8:28

It’s not that God uses the hard things that just so happen to come on us, for good. But it’s that God sees a better result through bringing hardship on you.

Isn’t gold refined in fire? And so is your faith. Wasn’t Joseph imprisoned before he became ruler over Egypt? Wasn’t Jesus crucified before He was lifted to the right hand of the Father?

Even so it is written,

“The fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of wisdom, And before honor *is* humility.” Pro 15:33

Let God instruct you in the ways He knows best. We are His children, and He is our Dad after all. Let Dad, be Dad, and let your heart be worshipping Him in all things.

When we worship we feel the Spirit “come upon us.” Or as some put it, the Spirit “Pours out.” Whichever you prefer you know that by meditating on His presence you’ll feel His presence. This also is called “Abiding.” We need to constantly, “abide” like this. This is what Jesus was referring to in John 15 as “abiding” according to the original Greek.

But we need to learn to “let our words be few” that the Holy Spirit can incline our hearts with what to say when we worship. So sitting in His presence to hear from Him is what is most important. By submitting to the Holy Spirit’s presence, you will be letting Him work through you. Pray with the words He gives you, and worship in the songs you feel His presence in. This is worshipping Him in Spirit and truth.

As it is written,

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." Joh 4:23-24

How can you worship in the Spirit unless you let the Spirit worship through you?

When you worship, aim your praise at Him, as if talking to Him. Don’t just sing about God, but sing to His presence. We don’t worship at Him, but we worship Him directly. You aren’t worshipping Him unless you actually worship Him to His face.

By worshipping toward His presence and focusing your words directly at Him as

if talking to Him, you'll feel His presence come down on you. This is abiding, and worshipping in the Spirit.

Take the time to grow in worship, prayer, and reading the word. You'll find your life in Christ becoming more fulfilling. If you don't feel the presence of God with you, then you are not "abiding."

This is also how we are led daily. For example, if you feel God's presence as you seek Him at the coffee shop, then God wants you there. But if you don't feel His presence as you seek Him, then He is telling you to go elsewhere to seek Him.

Pray things over and wait for His answer. If a friend asks you to do something, be anxious for nothing and ask your Lord first what He wants. Don't say in your heart, "why wouldn't God want this or that?"

But just ask Him what He wants. Are you God to know exactly everything He wants, and His reasoning? None of us perfectly know His heart. We ought to wait for His word in all things and obey it. Don't say, "why wouldn't God want this or that," just ask Him yourself! He will tell you, He's not mute, and His word is not void. His word saves you, and it is His most fervent desire to save you. Knowing this suggests that you ought to wait for His word.

During today's prayer take the time to devote yourself to "abiding" in Him continually every moment of every day.

The Prayer,

"Lord deliver me from idle things. I want to rest in Your presence daily. Teach me to have a still heart before You, always, that I can learn to hear from You. Show me what it means to abide and continue in Your Spirit daily."

The Lord's Answer,

"I want to be with you... I love you. Let me grace you with My presence daily. You know that I am with you always, but still pay attention to Me. How is it a good relationship unless you give Me the attention when I'm with you? Do not ignore my presence.

You're not being with Me unless you let your mind be with Me. Love Me with all of your mind, and let your thoughts rest upon Me. Train your heart to be still and sit in My presence. The flesh is anxious and constantly seeks to fill its mind

with idle things. But you rest in Me, and I will give you strength daily.”

Day Five Prayer Five

PROSPERING IN THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT THE RESULT OF ABIDING

Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. 1cor 14:1

We should always be seeking growth in the Lord. One area we need to continually stretch ourselves is in the area of spiritual gifts. These gifts are the manifestations of the Holy Spirit among us.

Now let it be known that there is certainly no greater manifestation of the Holy Spirit than the love of God. As it is written,

“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." Joh 13:35

He who does not love does not have God. As we read,

“And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.” 1Jn 4:16

And again,

“We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love *his* brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.” 1Jn 3:14-15

Seeking the gifts of the Spirit is worthless if we don’t walk in love. Although gifts are part of God’s intimacy with us, how are we expressing the intimate God with each other if we aren’t walking in love toward one another? But as the Word says,

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.”

“And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.”1Co 13:1-2

So the first point to express is that without a walk in love gifts mean nothing.

But if we seek a walk of love in the expression of the Holy Spirit it edifies us individually and communally.

God gave us spiritual gifts for two main reasons. The first is to be intimate with us. It is His way of expressing Himself in our lives and among us. As the scriptures say,

“I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.” Lev 26:11-12

The second reason is for edification, as we just mentioned. There are two types of edification: self and each other.

We are called by God to do both. To be edified within ourselves and to edify others. One such gift that edifies us internally is the gift of tongues. An example of a gift that edifies each other is prophecy. As it is written,

“He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.” 1Co 14:4

But there are many gifts, and we should pray for them all. But God who knows what is best for the church, gives us according to His will. As it is written,

“But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.” 1Co 12:11

Not all of us can have the same gifts. Not all gifts are universal. If we were all hands where would the feet be for walking? The eyes for seeing? The nose for smelling?

But God gives to each of us individually as He wills to make us a complete body. Like a loving Father He teaches His children to need each other. He builds His family to function as a unit. A single strand can be easily broken, but three strands hold together better.

There are some churches which are like an unraveling rope. People are pursuing their own walks, and aren’t edifying each other. They forget to seek spiritual things, or don’t know the importance of them. But the gifts of the Spirit are what bind us together and make us unbreakable.

Therefore we should continually pray for spiritual gifts and not just once or twice and not just one or two. If you see God answer keep praying.

There was once a time I was under a horrible trial. I made a decision to seek

perfect and complete truth in doctrine. I came before the Lord and devoted myself to it. But then the devil rose up against me. I was afflicted physically and spiritually, with indescribable agony. I have suffered many horrible trials in my life, but this by far was the worst.

I guess Satan being the father of all lies hates those who rise up for truth. He would prefer to keep us in a state of contentment and spiritual laziness, that we disregard the importance of seeking truth. Christ is truth, and in my heart I knew I wasn't seeking Christ if I wasn't seeking the perfect truth of Christ.

Without getting too detailed, the afflictions left me with a scar in my memory and in my body.

In the pains of my suffering I prayed and asked the Lord for a dream, and for encouragement. Sometime later God answered me:

In my dream I was in a field running. I was as fleet as a deer and nothing could stop me. Then behind me in the sky there were three bombs flying after me. They were not missiles but bombs, soaring through the clouds, guided by some supernatural power. They were guided by the power of Satan.

Then one fell and chased after me, but it couldn't catch me. So it fell to the earth 20 feet behind me and threw my body to the ground in the explosion. But I got up as if it were nothing and kept running.

Then the two others followed hard after me. And an evil spirit spoke through one, and said to the other, "Let us work together that we may destroy him."

Then the second one fell but couldn't catch me and so it clipped my heels. The explosion threw me to the ground as before, but when I tried to get up again, I couldn't run because my ankles were damaged. Then the third bomb seized the opportunity and slammed me with great force, detonating like a nuclear bomb.

The fire filled the field I was in, then the sky. It consumed the mountains behind me, and then the whole earth and all of creation. All of creation was ablaze, from the stars to the earth.

Then I stood in the Spirit and watched as Heaven and Earth passed away. And the Earth was no more and Heaven was gone. Nothing was left, only a brilliant white light. A light of glory. The air itself was made of this light, and it stretched forever having no end.

The light was so white there is nothing on earth to compare it to. It was perfect

and untainted. This light was the light of glory which consumes the heavens and the earth. It is the glory of the living God.

Then I was in the Spirit looking at my body. My body was floating off in the distance. It was broken wounded and naked. It was unresponsive and immobile, so that I asked myself, “am I dead?”

Then the Lord appeared in the midst of the glory. He was clothed in a brilliant white robe and He had a long white beard. His face was beaming a thousand times brighter than the sun. The light of glory which I saw, came from His body, but His face was the brightest. It was so bright that no one could distinguish the features of His face.

All things will pass away and Heaven and Earth will be consumed by His glory, but He is the most glorious of all. It is His glory that fills the air and has no end, it will be seen forever and ever.

Then I watched and the Lord stretched out His hands to my body. My body shrank immediately into a small infant. He scooped me up in His hands and cradled me in His arms.

Then God let me see myself through His eyes. I was in Him looking at myself through His eyes as He held me. I was a small beautiful child in His arms. I had hair all over me, which symbolized sin. But God said to me, “as you grow it will fall out in due time. Then you will be a beautiful smooth skinned baby for Me.”

He showed me that I was still alive, just exhausted. Exhausted to the point of death. But He was there to comfort me and heal me. He cradled me and swayed me back and forth like a father does his little child. Then He held me against His chest, and embraced me.

This last part God is also saying this to you as well.

The Lord spoke to me again and said, “No one can take you from me. You are my child. You are My son and My baby. Nothing can separate you from My love.

Heaven and Earth will pass away, but my love for you shall never pass away!”

Then I woke up.

This is How God feels about you. You’re so precious to Him! You’re His beautiful baby! He loves you so much and nothing will separate you from His

love. Why then wouldn't you want to seek a more intimate walk with such a wonderful and loving person!?

He is so incredible! No one can encourage you like He does. No one can lift you up and bring you joy like He does. No one else can save you. Let Christ be your strength and pray for spiritual gifts.

He will answer you, it is His will. He wants to be intimate with you. He will share His power with you, if you seek it. But He will only give you what He wills to give you.

Now the final question remains, "if we seek the gifts of the spirit, what are we praying for?"

Taking a deeper look at the scriptures these gifts are words of wisdom, words of knowledge, faith, gifts of healings, miracles, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues. (see 1cor 12:8-10)

There are also, prophecy, serving, teaching, exhortation, giving, leadership, mercy. See rom 12:6-8

There are still other places in the scripture to mention. But at this time we'll be looking at these.

Each of the gifts we should pray for individually. Pray for dreams. Pray for visions. Pray for prophecy. Pray for tongues. Pray over the gifts individually and let God give you what He sees fit. Seek them in prayer only. Do not seek to apply what hasn't yet been given to you. For example, if you seek to be a teacher and God hasn't given you that ministry, you are not stepping out in faith but in presumption. Gifts are given not taken, they are given. Wait for God and He will answer your prayers.

Pray for the Holy Spirit and pray for gifts. God will pour Himself out on you and bless you according to your faith. It isn't just His will for you to have these things, it's His promise. As it is written

"And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions." Joe 2:28

Pray for opportunities to show mercy, to serve each other and exhort one another. Are these not attributes of love? Love is the perfect manifestation. But also go on to pray for dreams, and visions, tongues and prophecy. As it is written,

Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. 1cor 14:1

Why does God call us to ask for the gift of prophecy?

Because we read,

“he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.” 1Co14:3

Some churches are caught up in “church programs” and some in “church doctrines.” And there are a few caught up on one single doctrine where people only give glory to speaking in tongues. But prophecy holds precedence over tongues as it is written,

“yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.” 1Co 14:19

Why does He say this? Because tongues edify the individual, and prophecy edifies the entire body. We are saved by the Word of God and prophecy brings that word. But where are all the gifts of the Spirit? How many people prophecy? Have you known a real prophet? There are some who claim to be prophets, but there are very few if any who really are according to God’s standards. And what are God’s standards?

“But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.'”

“And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?'—when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.” Deu 18:20-22

Therefore if anything they prophecy doesn’t happen, they are not a prophet of God. Nevertheless seek to prophecy. If God wants to use you He will! But be submissive to His guiding hand, as He leads you down the path He wants you to take. He will give you the gifts He desires you to have, and grow you through them. He will edify others and you will know God’s ultimate will for you on this earth.

The Prayer,

“Lord please give me dreams and visions. Speak to me Lord, and give me prophecy. Be intimate with me, I want to be intimate with You. Encourage me, edify me, and lift me up in your Spirit. I want your Holy Spirit, please pour Him out on me now!”

The Lord’s Answer,

“I will only give to those who pray in faith. I will give to you, but it may not be what you expect. I want to be closer to you. I’m near already, but I always want to be nearer.

Something about you just makes Me want to be closer. I want to be intimate with you, and express Myself to you. Only have a heart of faith, and I will call you to do amazing and wonderful things. I will show you My glory.”

Day Six Prayer Six

PRAYING FOR OPEN EYES

Gifts and power can never be perceived if our eyes aren't open to them. I know that it goes without saying, but many of us are too caught up in our day to day activities to see what God is doing for us. We shouldn't hope for miracles, because hope isn't something that's seen. We should pray in faith for them and pray for open eyes to see Him working around us.

Sometimes those powers are already at work and able to be seen. That's why in this prayer we will ask for open eyes.

Even in my own life, having been busy and in a hurry I didn't notice all the things God was doing for me and those around me.

For example I had a friend named Ryan who lived out in the country. He would often have small groups over and lite a bonfire. One of the times he lit an oversized bonfire, the wind picked up unexpectedly. It gusted so hard that it lifted up entire sheets of flaming newspaper and carried them to his housetop, depositing them on his roof. To make matters worse there was a wind storm earlier which had broken branches off a nearby tree and left them all over his roof. Then sun baked them dry making the situation more dangerous.

He ran frantically about looking for something to douse the flames but nothing could reach to the top of his two story home. Eventually he decided he might have to call 911, but he was afraid they couldn't get out there in time seeing how far out in the country he lived.

Then someone in the group started to pray for rain, begging God to save Ryan's house. Within moments it started to sprinkle and it put all the flames out. God saved his house!

The whole crowd stood there looking at the roof in amazement. But after a while someone broke the silence saying, "I heard it in the forecast that there was a chance for rain sometime today I don't think that was God." And everyone who was amazed groaned in disbelief and walked away. But it's awfully ironic that out of all of the times it could have rained that day that it happened to be immediately after this man prayed.

Also, how often is the weather man right anyway? But there is always someone with closed eyes to God's work, walking around closing everyone else's eyes.

Even for myself after having prayed for open eyes, I start to notice God's works. When I'm late for a meeting and pray that God would get me there in time, that all the lights are green all the way there. Or when I lose something and pray that God would help me find it and after an hour of searching it turns up immediately after prayer. Sometimes, when we're in a hurry we don't recognize what God has done.

When we do that we forget to thank Him. Even in the little things we should always be thanking God. But sometimes in the big things, because we expect God's help we don't thank Him when He works. Even as we read in the scriptures,

"Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up *their* voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" So when He saw *them,* He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests."

And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on *his* face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where *are* the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" luk 17:12-18

It's a shame when we forget to turn and thank the One responsible for all the good in our lives. It's terrible to think that we don't thank Him when He performs obvious miracles to help us in situations.

And how can you give God glory if your eyes are closed or if you expect it? We should never expect His goodness, because we don't deserve it. With all our sin, we don't deserve an ounce of kindness from Him. But maybe sometimes we need to learn more gratitude. Praying for open eyes isn't enough. We need to be more grateful for His works, that when we see Him working, we give Him the glory He deserves.

The Prayer,

"Lord open my eyes to see You working all around me. Open my eyes to Your

works, and power in my life. Help me to see all that You're doing to love me, that I may glorify You. I choose to have a heart of gratitude."

The Lord's Answer,

"Turn and look. See How I'm always helping you? Should I have to? No. But I choose to because I love you! Give Me the Glory due to Me. Give Me the credit for the good in your life. I chose to save you and form you into My precious baby.

I created a new person out of the old you. And Now that I have you, I'm always doing something to bless you. And why? Because I'm so in love with you! I long to bless you. Take the time to watch Me and sit in awe of who I Am.

Remember the ten lepers? Be like the one who thanked Me. I adore a heart of gratitude."

Day Seven Prayer Seven

PRAYING FOR THE POWER OF GOD

“And my speech and my preaching *were* not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.” 1Co 2:4-5

In the Christian life we understand the importance of study. We know the value of wisdom, and we devote ourselves to growing in it. We fellowship, we share truth, and we strive to edify one another.

But sometimes we forget the importance of the power of God for everyday life. In the early church the believer’s lives were filled with miracles and power. All these things edified them, because the ongoing power of God testified to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Somewhere in time something changed in the church. We get caught up in personal doctrinal interpretations rather than letting the Spirit lead us to all truth. We live out our lives focusing on things of this life. We work hard to provide for our families. We study and study, have devotion after devotion, but forget that the ongoing power of God testifies to the scriptures we so diligently read. His power verifies truth, and gives substance to our faith. Then having seen the works of God, we testify to what we have seen and heard.

Even as we just read, “That your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.” 1cor2:5

We have bible studies, fellowship, and programs to help the poor, good Sunday sermons, good worship, and almost everything in between. Everything but the ongoing ever working power of God. In the early church people witnessed the paralyzed walk for the first time. The dead were received back alive. Lepers were cleansed, the demon possessed were set free. There was prophecy, and works of the Spirit were everywhere. But where are they now?

Now some churches claim to have all these, but when their prophecies fail they excuse them as a need for spiritual growth. Yet the Lord says all prophecy happens always. As we read,

“when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen

or come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him." Deu 18:22

But what does the Lord say of such a man whose prophecies don't happen and what is his fate?

"But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.'" Deu 18:20

So a real prophet hears God command him to speak certain words. But where are the prophets today? Has God changed His mind in how He approaches us? Where are the real miracles? I've heard several people say, "I saw someone raised from the dead in Africa."

But why is it only in Africa the dead are raised and not the rest of world? Is the Spirit of God unable to work among us? Or maybe are our hearts in need of some stretching and our faith some flexing.

I've heard people say here in America that the "demon possessed" don't exist anymore. But they do exist and American psychologists, not knowing God, label such men as clinically insane and put them in mental institutes.

I've also heard people say prophecy doesn't exist anymore because it's not necessary. But what does the Lord say through Paul in the New Testament?

"Pursue love, and desire spiritual *gifts,* but especially that you may prophesy." 1Co 14:1

So if it wasn't necessary why would God exhort us to seek and pray for it? And we discussed earlier the need for this.

These workings of the Spirit are greatly lacking in the church. We need to learn a life of contentment, seeking to abide in God's presence always. We need to be led by the Holy Spirit to see His continuous working power. That power increases our faith and it's faith that saves us. So as our faith increases our eternal security increases.

As the scriptures say,

"For by grace you have been saved through faith" Eph 2:8

But Power means nothing unless we first walk in loving passion of Jesus Christ. We need the expression of God's nature in our lives. His nature is both powerful

and loving. Everything He does is centered and grounded in love. And everything we do should be the same. If we follow and obey the Holy Spirit in everything, all that we do will be done in love as well.

It's His love that makes us different. It's His love that sets us free. We are not called to be like the world to let the world in, but to show the world the difference the love of Christ has made in our lives. Seeing that there is no real love in the world, this makes them long for Christ. Through this love they find salvation. Then they go and do likewise and the process repeats itself. As it is written,

"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." Joh 13:35

So the most important power of God is the power of His love. His love has the power to heal the sick, mend the broken, knit a family, raise the dead, and preserve us for eternal life. Only He can do these things, and only through Him can we do likewise. We must continually rest and abide in Him putting to practice all the Holy Spirit commands us to do. Both in the Word, and in His daily leading. By this we will find the power of God, and through His leading we can apply it. God will convict you of whose hand to grab to make walk. He will tell you to pray for rain and He will send it. God will tell you already what you need to do, and your faith will be in His word. You will not have to put your faith in the unknown, because God will make His word known to you. As it is written,

"So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom 10:17

Faith only comes by His word. If you aren't certain that God is speaking to you, you're not stepping out in faith by doing it. Be discerning and know God's will.

The world teaches us that if we put our faith hard enough in anything it will happen for us. Sometimes we tend to let that cross over into our faith in Christ, forgetting that our faith needs to be in His word. By pressing hard in faith, believing that it will happen if we believe hard enough, we really are making faith about ourselves. Sometimes we tend to make works of faith about how hard we press our faith into something. In the end it becomes about "our abilities" and not Christ's. This is why our faith needs to rest in His word alone.

As we already discussed we need to pray for open eyes to see God working. But we also need to pray for open ears to hear God speaking. Then as we pay attention to Him, He can commit miracles through us by obedience. We only

need to have hearts of faith. Faith to believe that God is able to commit these things. If we don't walk in faith, nothing will happen for us. Faith and open ears lack among many of us, which is why there are few workings of the Spirit.

I would like to encourage you to seek God's daily abiding power. Pray continually that God will stretch His hand out through you to perform signs and wonders, that Jesus Christ may be glorified.

Wait for God's word for you. Know that it is Him speaking to you, and when you have discerned that, step out in faith. If you wait for His word, you will never have to fear embarrassment over the miracle not happening. By an obedient and submissive heart nothing shall be impossible for you.

The Prayer,

"Father stretch out your hand before me, and perform mighty signs and wonders. Glorify your son Jesus in me. I humble myself before You that You can work in me and through me. I put my faith in You. I refuse to put You in a box! Be the uncontainable God that you are, through me. Work in me and through me for the edification of my brethren and for Your glory."

The Lord's Answer,

"You've come a long way My child. Raise your head up in belief. I will commit My power to you because you have been committed to me. Only surrender to Me. Wait for My word. I will lead you in the way. Pray for miracles, and I will answer you. Ask, seek, and knock. I will always hear your prayers, My ear is open to you.

Ask and it shall be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and I will open the door to you. I will show you things that will astound you, mighty things that will make your heart sing. I will make your heart and the heart of those around you leap for joy. So rejoice in Me! For I am very near to you My beloved."

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About The Author

Adam is a preacher, teacher and Christian author. He is a devoted husband and father of 3 boys. Through His travels he’s seen the need for a new awakening and a new revival: A revival of the heart. Come join Adam on this journey of redemption and experience God like never before!

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