

Getting involved with God – Pray in Faith

James 5:15, *“And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.”*

The best way to get involved with God is to pray in faith. The highest form of speech is prayer. Why? Because conversing with your creator is the highest and most beneficial form of communication. Therefore, your praying should be bold and strong. Praying that moves God is prayer that moves you. If you are not moved by your own prayers how do you expect them to move God. Galvanising (‘faith filled’) prayer is what’s needed in our lukewarm laid back Christianity today. A famous commentator once said: *“Prayer requires more of the heart than the tongue.”* I totally agree - praying shouldn’t be a pretentious spiritual exercise, but a passionate and fervent encounter with God.

It was said of John Fletcher (the early Methodist preacher and theologian) that he stained the walls of his room by the breath of his prayers. Sometimes he would pray all night; frequently and with great passion. *“I would not rise from my seat,”* he said, *“without lifting my heart to God.”* Martin Luther said: *“If I fail to spend two hours in prayer each morning, the devil gets the victory through the day. I have so much business to attend to that I cannot get on without spending time in prayer.”* He had a motto: *“He that has prayed well has prepared well.”*

I read recently a portion of the biography of 'Praying Hyde'. Some of you may have heard this story before. Praying Hyde was a missionary and he stayed on the mission field until he could do no more, through ill health. He was sent back home to visit the doctors and went into hospital. The doctor examined him, sent him away, and when he came back to get the results a little while later, the doctor sat him down and he said, *“Mr Hyde, do you have any pains in your chest?”* He replied, *“Yes I do.”* So the doctor says, *“Mr Hyde, your heart has displaced itself. Your heart ought to be here, but it has moved over in the cavity of your chest, and that can only happen through one thing, much agonising.”*

Hyde was called the “apostle of prayer” and his prayers led to thousands upon thousands being ushered into the kingdom of God, into the church of Jesus Christ in the land of India. But he was a man of prayer who agonised for the lost and interceded so much for them that his health suffered. Are you ready to get involved with God to that degree – to make an impact for God, to hear the voice of God, and share the burden of God?

The impassioned and effectual type of praying you’ve just heard about is practised by those who truly desire to hear the heartbeat of God, and are willing to live their lives in perfect step with it. This is never easy because it takes great sacrifice. It means putting to death everything that is in opposition to God’s plan and purpose for your life. Dying to self and then stepping into the fire of God’s presence is how it all starts.

It’s in the fire that time ceases to have meaning and the distractions of the world become dimmer and dimmer. It’s a place where even the physical body takes on a new dimension. Edward Payson, better known as Praying Payson of Portland, was another great prayer warrior. He used to kneel at the side of his bed and pray and pray and pray. When they were preparing his body for burial, they found great big pads on his knees like a camel has. And as they were washing him, somebody said, *“What abnormal knees he has. They’re heavy with calluses. That’s because he used to pray at the side of his bed with great energy. So*

much so that he wore two grooves about six or seven inches long into that hard floor where he used to pray and make intercession.” Payson was known for personal holiness and also for the miraculous answers to his prayers.

I’m sure we will all agree that prayer is a vital part of the Christian life, but how does prayer and faith work together? Charles Finney said this, *“Faith is an indispensable condition of prevailing prayer.”* He went on to say, (quote) *“There is such a thing as offering well-meaning desires, which are acceptable to God as such, yet do not include the exercise of faith in regard to actually receiving those blessings. But such desires are not prevailing prayer – this is not praying in faith. God may see fit to grant the things desired, as an act of kindness and love, but it would not be properly in answer to prayer. I am speaking now of the kind of faith that insures the blessing. Don’t misunderstand me, as I’m not saying that there is nothing in prayer that is acceptable to God without this kind of faith. But I am speaking of the faith which secures the very blessing it seeks.”*

Praying in faith gets results! To prove this it is only necessary to repeat what the apostle James expressly tells us: *“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, that gives to all men liberally, and without reproach; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no wavering. For he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed to and fro.”*

We know that personal prayer engages us in intimate conversation with God and that this is very pleasing to Him. However, we also know that it’s impossible to please God without faith (Hebrews 11:6). Therefore, faith and prayer must be synonymous with each other. When praying you must believe and you must also believe that you’ve received the answer to your prayers. *“Therefore I say to you, what things so ever you desire when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them.”* – Mark 11:24.

Notice, the first thing you must do is believe. You are to believe in the existence of God – *“He that comes to God must believe that He is”* – and in God’s willingness to answer prayer – *“and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”* There are many who believe in the existence of God, but do not believe in the effectiveness of the prayer of faith. When you come to God in prayer you must first believe that God exists, and thereafter, believe that He does want to reward your faith. Why else would you come to Him?

The next step is this – you must now exercise your faith by believing that you have received the answer to your prayer. Notice, you are to believe that you have already received – something – but what? Not something, or anything, as it happens, but some particular thing you asked for in prayer. And when exactly are you expected to believe that you shall have the very things you pray for? The answer ... When we have evidence of it! Faith must always have evidence. A man cannot believe a thing, unless he sees something which he has accepted as proof. He is under no obligation to believe, and has no right to believe that anything will happen, unless he has found evidence. It is the height of fantasy to believe without the existence of evidence.

Therefore, before applying faith you must first find proof – conclusive, infallible proof. This is the only way you’ll be able believe that you have received what you’ve asked for in prayer. And where do you go to look for this proof? You search the promises of God. I guarantee that you will find a promise of God which relates

to you present situation. The prayer of faith only obtains the blessing because of the fact that your faith relies on real evidence. Evidence that says, *"...to grant you that thing you desire is the perfect will of God."*

Not evidence that something else will be granted, but that this particular thing will be granted because it's a promise written in the blood of Jesus. And be careful, you may receive more than you've prayed for.

Solomon prayed for wisdom, and God granted him riches and honour in addition.

Therefore, a wife praying for the conversion of her husband, if she extends the prayer of faith, God may not only grant her that blessing, but convert her child, and her whole family.

Abundant blessings and promises of God seem to all hang together, because their primary purpose is to lead you from glory to glory. One blessings leads to another – to another – and then, to another! One promise, will lead to another, and then to another, and then to even greater!

God the Father has said that He wants to reward those who diligently seek Him – those who believe that His promises are absolute evidence that He desires to this. And therefore, whenever His people stand praying, and dare to believe that they receive whatever they ask for – they WILL have them!

The prayer of faith pleases God!