

# Rebuilding Spiritually

REBUILDING AND MATURING THE SPIRITUAL MAN

**DEFENDING AGAINST SPIRITUAL ATTACK –PRAYER**

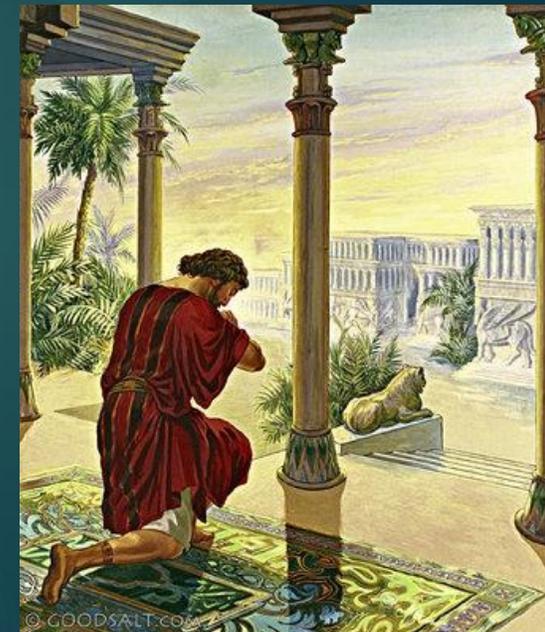
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# Question

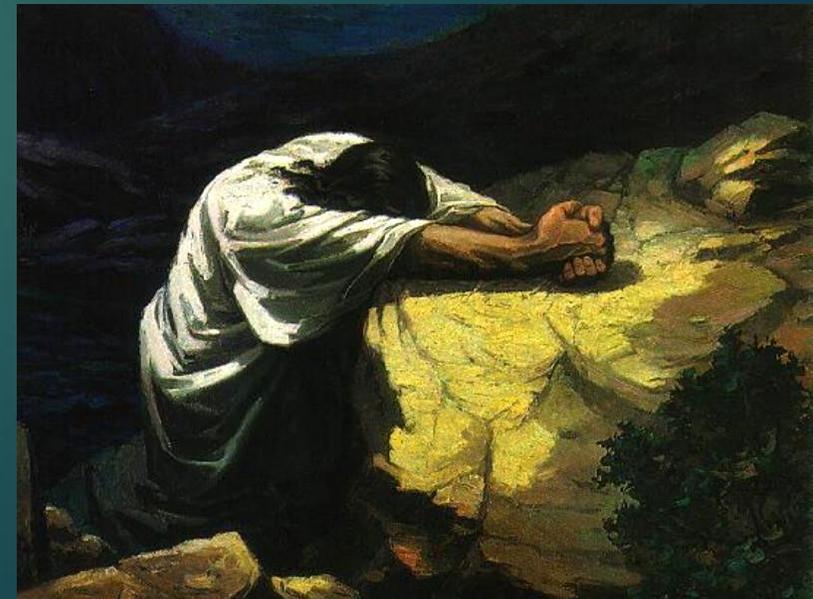
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- ▶ What is the most consistent action of Nehemiah throughout this book?
- ▶ What did the people ask Jesus to teach them?
- ▶ What is so important that we are properly armed to perform?
- ▶ The Holy Spirit works through us, empowering us to be effective in it?
- ▶ What changes things?
- ▶ Answer: PRAYER



# Question

- ▶ With all who Jesus is
- ▶ With all that Jesus did
- ▶ With all that Jesus knew
- ▶ Yet what did Jesus consistently do?
- ▶ What did he encourage others to do?
- ▶ Answer: Pray to the Father



# SO

- ▶ With all that we know
- ▶ In all that we do
- ▶ With all that we experience and with all that we expect
- ▶ With such a need for connection with the Father
- ▶ Why do we find it so hard
- ▶ To pray to the Father



# Nehemiah and Prayer

- ▶ The most consistent action that Nehemiah displayed throughout this book is – Prayer
  - ▶ He started off with prayer as he saw the need
    - ▶ *Nehemiah 1:4: And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,*
    - ▶ Prayed for the sins of his people (Intercession) –1: 5-11
    - ▶ We should be praying for the needs of others daily
  - ▶ Nehemiah Prayed for Understanding and Direction
    - ▶ *Nehemiah 2:4: - Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven*
    - ▶ He prayed to have the right words to say and favor with the King
    - ▶ The reality of Proverbs 3:5,6 should be experienced in our prayer to the Father

# Nehemiah Prayers

- ▶ Nehemiah prayed for and encouraged the people
  - ▶ Nehemiah prayed in intercession and repentance
  - ▶ Nehemiah prayed spontaneously when he needed God's strength, protection, favor and provision
- ▶ Nehemiah prayed for himself
  - ▶ Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God and for his service. (Neh 13:14)

# Nehemiah Prayer

## ▶ Nehemiah Prayed for his enemies

▶ Nehemiah 4:7-9: *But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth, 8 And conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it. 9 Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.*

▶ **What are you doing about your enemies? Those who may come against you in the workplace? Within the church? Even your family?**

▶ Nehemiah combined his prayer with action

# Sustaining Prayer

- ▶ **Most consistent with our spiritual growth is Prayer**
- ▶ **Prayer sustains us, connects us and produces for us**

James 5:13-16: Is any among you afflicted? **let him pray**. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; **and let them pray over him**, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

15 And the **prayer of faith shall save the sick**, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

16 Confess *your* faults one to another, and **pray one for another**, that ye may be healed. The **effectual fervent prayer** of a righteous man availeth much.

# Praying Through

- ▶ **Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed:**
  - ▶ Mutual confession and prayer brings healing, both physically and spiritually
  - ▶ These free us from the heavy burdens (physically and spiritually) of unresolved sin, and removes hindrances to the work of the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ **And the prayer of faith** - The prayer offered in faith, or in the exercise of confidence in God.
  - ▶ The prayer of faith is not always exercise, but when it is, it produces results
  - ▶ **How can we experience the Prayer of Faith?**

# Teach Us to Pray

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*Luke 11:1 - And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.*

- ▶ This suggests that there may be a “Process” to Praying Effectively
  - ▶ (Luke 11:2-4) **Pray after this pattern.**
- ▶ Imitation: Disciples Pray like their Teacher – They watched Jesus prayed
- ▶ The true method of praying can be learned only by our being properly taught. Indeed, we cannot pray acceptably at all unless God shall teach us how to pray.

# Wait a Minute!



Doesn't That Make Prayer Kinda Ritualistic and Mechanical?

Didn't Jesus told us not to pray like the Pharisees who did that and that the prophet Isaiah say that many do it without any thought of the meaning of what they are saying?

**Answer:** Reciting Prayers and Praying in a manner that God directs are two different things



# Prayer Patterns

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- ▶ **Pray Fervently – James 5:16**
- ▶ **With all types of Prayers and supplications**
  - ▶ Praying always with all prayer: The idea is *all kinds of prayer or prayer upon prayer*.
  - ▶ We should use every kind of prayer we can think of. Group prayer, individual prayer, silent prayer, shouting prayer, walking prayer, kneeling prayer, eloquent prayer, groaning prayer, constant prayer, fervent prayer - *just pray*. (Guzik)
- ▶ Pray in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18) – meaning “pneuma” –the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:26-28)

# Pray in This Way

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Matthew 6: 7-9: "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.

"So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. **Pray, then, in this way:**

- ▶ Jesus is saying that there is a better way to pray. It's more than just getting your "needs" out there because God already knows what you need
- ▶ The essence of prayer is much more than rituals or requesting
- ▶ Jesus is saying "Pray with this attitude or Intent" - Pray with this mindset

# Pray According to This Pattern

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- ▶ Our Father – Prayer evolves due to our union and relationship with God as our Father
  - ▶ **Father is a relational term** - it denotes obedience; reverence and respect; protection; discipline (i.e. Shepherd and the Sheep)
  - ▶ When we say “Father” we use a privileged title, demonstrating a privileged relationship
  - ▶ Many people pray to Jesus or Mary, but Jesus is telling us to pray to the Father
    - ▶ John 16:23 - And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

# Who Art in Heaven

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- ▶ **Prayer is Positional** – We must ensure that we are praying to God who created the heavens and the earth and that we are rightly positioned before Him –
  - ▶ **He is transcendent and immanent** – He's ever existing and yet He chooses to dwell among us
  - ▶ *2 Chronicles 20:17: You do not have to fight this battle. **Position yourselves**, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD. He is with you, Judah and Jerusalem.*
- ▶ **Hallowed Be thy Name** - There Must be Worship in our prayer
  - ▶ Psalms 8:2 sees Praise as a Weapon for the praying believer
  - ▶ Hallow means to declare holy and consecrated

# Thy Kingdom Come

- ▶ “Thy Kingdom Come” is the first request in the the Lord's prayer
- ▶ Barnes Notes: **Thy kingdom come.** The word kingdom here means reign.
- ▶ The petition is the expression of a wish that God may reign everywhere; that His laws may be obeyed; and especially that the gospel of Christ may be advanced everywhere, till the world shall be filled with his glory.
- ▶ It was the Jews' prayer that God's kingdom would topple all the kingdoms of the world
- ▶ Kingdom represents influence – You should desire to see God reign in your life, your family, your schools, government

# Thy Will Be Done

- ▶ Thy Will be done - God's Plans and Purpose in our Lives
  - ▶ Christ says "thy will"; not the will of wicked men, nor the will of Satan, nor a man's own will, but the will of God
  - ▶ In our prayers, we should submit to the will of God who knows what is best and good for us
  - ▶ James 4:3 - You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. (NASB)
- ▶ **On Earth as it is In Heaven** – Reflects a desire that what is established in heaven be established and experienced on earth as well

It is the "Father's good pleasure" to give us His Kingdom (Luke 12:32 NKJV). Jesus is not instructing us to beg for a blessing or two; He is commanding us to call for God's Kingdom to rule on earth, in our very lives and circumstances.

# Lord's Prayer

Our first three requests of the Our Father Prayer deals with our Reverence to the Father God and our desire to have His reign and rule established throughout all the earth.

Realize that you are not asking for anything yet.

In our church culture, Jesus has become the Vendor to most people and not the Victor

# Lord's Prayer

## ▶ The Next Requests Deal with Relationships and Concerns

▶ Give us this day our daily bread – Daily Provision

▶ **Consider the Manna – Given daily and could not be stored** (Exodus 16:31-35)

▶ God is calling us to trust Him Daily for all our needs

▶ Give us this day ... - The word “bread,” here, denotes doubtless everything necessary to sustain life.

▶ Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors – debts means “sins”

▶ **Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil** – Just as in the Prayer of Jabez, each believer should avoid temptation and evil

▶ One translation - “deliver us from the evil one - deliver us from his power, his snares, his arts, his temptations.”

# Concluding

- ▶ **Thine is the kingdom** - That is, thine is the reign or dominion. Recognizing that God is God and He rules this kingdom
- ▶ **Thine is the power** - Thou hast power to accomplish what we ask. We are weak, and cannot do it; but thou art Almighty, and all things are possible with thee.
- ▶ **Thine is the glory** - That is, thine is the honor or praise. Not for “our honor,” but that thy glory, thy goodness, may be displayed in providing for our wants; thy power exerted in defending us

# Prayer brings us into

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- ▶ **Connection** with God and with others
- ▶ **Communication** – A privilege of close conversation with the Father
- ▶ **Control** – As we seek God and submit unto Him, He helps us control “ourselves”
- ▶ **Community** (James 5 & Hebrews 10) – The early church prayed a lot together

# Praying Not Preying

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- ▶ Ephesians 6:12 teaches us not to take out issues on people, but to realize that our battle is spiritual
- ▶ Nehemiah never attacked his enemies; He prayed to God and stayed on course
- ▶ David prayed and God told him how to recover all ( 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 30)



# Pray - F.A.C.E. D.O.W.N

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F- Fervently or Faithfully with Focus

A- Accurately

C- Consistent or Continually

E - Effectively

D- Dutifully as one who purpose to pray and intercede

O - Obediently, especially as the Spirit stirs us to pray

W- Willfully, make it an intent to pray

N - Naturally - Pray should become a part of your nature  
(spiritual nature)

# Fervent Prayer

- ▶ Much of our prayer is not effective simply because it is not fervent.
- ▶ It is offered with a lukewarm attitude that virtually asks God to care about something that we care little about
- ▶ Is your prayer Intense or Pretense?
  - ▶ Intense - Not so much the shouting as it is in desire, consistency, and accurate
  - ▶ Intensity has a lot to do with Focus ; Intense people have their own desire and drive

# Point to Ponder

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No greater gift exists to the believer than the opportunity to pray because prayer for us is the access we have into the communion of God. It's access into His fellowship. It's access to His power, to His strength, to His wisdom, to His knowledge, to all the necessary spiritual resources.

- ▶ In spiritual warfare, we struggle because we allow illegal access
- ▶ To win spiritual we must gain and sustain access to the Father

# Conclusion

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- ▶ Luke 18:1: And he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;
  - ▶ Faint - to be utterly spiritless, to be wearied out, exhausted
- ▶ How often do you pray? -The Bible says "Pray without ceasing" - How does that look?
- ▶ **Prayer must be a part of your daily life** - It keeps you focused on who God is as our Father, Provider, Healer, Deliverer, Strong Tower
- ▶ It allows us opportunity to focus our thoughts on our Father and our Needs
- ▶ Stand in the gap - Selflessness with a focus on others