

March 2, 2026
Devoted to Prayer
Part Three | Colossians 4:2

Colossians 4:2 NLT reads

² Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.

We are called to be devoted (ardently dedicated and loyal) to prayer.

As I have mentioned before, I can't think of any of portion of scripture to look at on how we ought to pray than the one taught by our Jesus. So, let us once again, turn to Mathew Chapter 6:

⁷"And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen *do*. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸"Therefore, do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

We see in verse 7 that God is not impressed by the mere multiplication of many words. He wants to hear the sincere expressions of the heart.

Ecclesiastes 5:2 (NKJV)

²Do 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.

In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without heart.

- John Bunyan

A man who prays much in private will make short prayers in public.

-- D.L. Moody

God wants to hear the sincere expressions of the heart. Prayer is not an avenue to show off how great we can pray; it is a place of sincerity and humility before a great and Holy God.

I have had people ask me if they need to kneel when praying or is it ok to sit or lay down, when praying.

Once again, posture is not what matters, rather it is the sincerity of your heart.

The scriptures reveal many postures of prayer:

Exodus 4:31 - The people of God bowed their heads in worship as they heard that the Lord had looked on their afflictions as slaves in Egypt.

Numbers 16:22 - Moses and Aaron repeatedly fell on their faces at the door of the tabernacle of meetings, entreating the Lord in behalf of the disobedient and rebellious Israelites.

1 Samuel 1:12–14 Hannah stood at the doorway of the tabernacle of the Lord in Shiloh, praying with such passion for a son that Eli, the high priest, thought she was drunk.

2 Samuel 7:18 David came to the tabernacle and sat before the Lord and prayed in utter amazement and awe that God had made an everlasting covenant with him and his family and with his “house”.

2 Samuel 12:16 David , on the occasion of his young dying child, fasted and lay on the ground all night praying for that little one’s recovery.

1 Kings 8:54 Solomon, the son of King David, knelt with his hands spread out toward heaven as he offered a prayer of dedication to God for the completion of the temple.

1 Kings 18:42, James 5:18 Elijah bowed down and put his face between his knees and prayed for the drought to end and the rains to come.

Jonah 2:1 Jonah prayed to the Lord from the stomach of the fish. We know what his posture was in the stomach of the fish.

Ezra 10:1 Ezra bowed down before the house of God, praying and confessing and weeping for the sins of the people.

Luke 18:13 The tax collector hung his head and beat his breast and in humility of heart and stood afar off and said, “God, be merciful to me a sinner!”

Matthew 26:39 Jesus poured out his prayers as He fell on his face in the garden praying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will....”

Scripture doesn’t give definitive instruction on the right posture during prayer. But one thing is for certain – when you look at these examples mentioned in scripture posture in prayer was a direct reflection of what was going on in their hearts. You see, many words are **not** needed, certain postures are **not** mandated. However, God wants humble, genuine and sincere prayers flowing from your heart.

We should always pray from sincerity of heart we should never try to impress others with our prayers. Last time we talk about the deceptive trending methods of prayer. I would like to review how we speak in prayer. Once again, our words must be humble, genuine and sincere before God.

I believe that when we are alone with God in our prayer chamber this is usually the norm however when we gather together for corporate prayer, we may be more worried about what others hear than having our words to God flow from a genuine heart.

I would like to review some points of prayer for corporate prayer.

In corporate prayer, our words should be few, concise and most importantly, led by the Spirit.

Many words can absolutely kill a pray meeting:

We do not need to give God the details, He knows them. I think this is done in corporate prayer so that those in our midst can better understand why we are praying for a certain individual or situation, however we need to resist doing that in prayer. We can always save the details for after the prayer meeting.

It was D.L. Moody who said, "Some men's prayers need to be cut short at both ends and set on fire in the middle."

We need to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in prayer. If God is leading the group to pray for repentance and brokenness and forgiveness of sin – it is not the time to jump into intercession about your neighbor's dog; we need to be led by the Spirit in corporate prayer.

We should never use corporate prayer to show off our knowledge of scripture or our wonderful use of words. We must simply pray from the heart. I love praying scripture and I love to hear others pray scripture in corporate prayer however the motive of the heart is key and we never need to impress others.

We should never use the time in corporate prayer to correct or rebuke those in the prayer meeting. Well, I am going to tell so and so what I think of how she acting but I will do so in prayer. A heart check is key.

Jesus goes on to say and I think it very interesting that after He warns us about not using many words that He gives us the following prayer as an example for our learning. As I mentioned last time, this was not intended to be memorized and repeated it over and over again.

He says, pray in this manner. This was a manner of instruction on how to pray.

⁹"In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

Praise and thanksgiving , declaring his attributes, being set before Him.

¹⁰Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as *it is* in heaven.

Pray in His will, for your heart to align with His heart.

¹¹Give us this day our daily bread.

Pray for your needs.

¹²And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.

In prayer, lay your heart before Him so that He may search it and reveal any unforgiveness.

¹³ And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.

Pray for strength not to fall to sin.

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Pray for His kingdom and all that that entails His power and glory to be fulfilled.

Notice that the first 2 declarations and the last declaration in the Lord's prayer focus on God and not on us.

The glorifying of God's name.

The coming of God's kingdom.

The accomplishing of God's will on earth.

Sandwiched in between these are 3 very important requests focusing on us.

Pray for your needs

Pray for a heart free of unforgiveness

Pray not to fall to sin and to be delivered from the evil one

We see that the first order of business listed in the Lord's Prayer; Acknowledge His lofty location and to Hallow His name.

When you go into His presence your attention should be first given to His lofty location, where He is seated (His very location reminds us of His greatness).

2 Chronicles 20:5-6

⁵ Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court, ⁶ and said: "O Lord God of our fathers, *are* You not God in heaven, and do You *not* rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand *is there not* power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You?"

What did Jehoshaphat's acknowledgement to God do for him and those gather in prayer with him?

It brought home to their hearts and mind; God's lofty location, there was a sweet honoring of God's rulership and remembrance of God's power.

Jesus instructs us in Matthew 6:9 to begin our prayer like this:

Matthew 6:9 NKJ

⁹ In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name.

Matthew 6:9 NLT

⁹ Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
may your name be kept holy.

Our Father, the One Who dwells in Heaven, may Your name be treated and kept as holy.

Hallowed be thy name implies that we not only know God's name but also that we proclaim reverence and respect to God for all that He is, His name.

To hallow something means to set it apart as special, to dedicate it or to consecrate it.

God's name is to be regarded as holy, to be treated as Holy and to be revered above all others as holy.

Too often we rush into God's presence, pour out our requests, and then rush back to our daily responsibilities, never pausing to worship him or to even thank him.

Psalm 99:5

Exalt the Lord our God,
And worship at His footstool—
He *is* holy.

Psalm 99:9

Exalt the Lord our God,
And worship at His holy hill;
For the Lord our God is holy.

Psalm 100: 2-4

Serve the Lord with gladness;
Come before His presence with singing.
³ Know that the Lord, He *is* God;
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

David wrote in:

Psalms 8:1 (NKJV)

¹ O LORD, our Lord, How excellent [majestic] *is* Your name in all the earth, Who have set Your glory above the heavens!

Our culture has lost the reverence of God's Excellency and Majesty.

God should not be referred to as the big guy upstairs or Bro or Dude. His name is not only Excellent and Majestic but it is also glorious and Holy.

Psalms 72:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ And blessed *be* His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled *with* His glory. Amen and Amen.

His name is Holy.....

Revelation 4:8 (NKJV)

⁸ The *four* living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!"

Psalms 111:9

He has sent redemption to His people;
He has commanded His covenant forever:
Holy and awesome *is* His name.

So, because His name is great and awesome and holy; we should go into His presence with respect for Him, lifting up His glorious name with our words or song.

We must start our time in prayer this way.

If you have a hard time doing this begin each time in prayer by saying, Father you are....

When we go into His presence, we must spend time proclaiming His character to Him to remind ourselves. All of your big problems will seem so small in the light of our Great and Holy God!!!

Tonight, I would like to review prayer together with fasting.

In Mathew 6; Jesus goes on to say as a continuation of which manner we should pray:

¹⁴ "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

¹⁵ "But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

¹⁶ "Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

¹⁷ "But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

¹⁸ "so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

It was no mistake that Jesus commanded us to forgive those that have hurt us before speaking about true fasting. Your fasting and prayers will be worth nothing if you are ignoring your hearts sins. Those sins that nobody sees.

Forgiveness is the greatest hinderance between you and God and between you and others.

If God so forgave you; how can you not bestow forgiveness? Remember that forgiveness is bestowed not earned. Also, when God asks us to do something He gives us the ability and power to do it.

So, firstly, Jesus is concerned about the inward heart and then secondly, He then speaks on the outward appearance.

In verse 16 – There was a deliberate attempt, on the pharisees part, to create an appearance of fasting is a form of religious hypocrisy. The hypocrites disfigured their faces when they fasted in order to look gaunt, haggard, and full of grief. But Jesus says it is ridiculous to attempt to appear holy. True believers should fast in secret, giving no outward appearance of it. Anoint your head with oil and wash your face means to appear in ones' normal manner.

So, in other words – style your hair, put on your make up, dress nicely so that nobody knows that you are fasting.

Fasting should always be done accompanied by prayer – just fasting without spending time in prayer has no effective. Fasting without prayer is simply a body detox and that is it.

We meet with Him NOT to get our needs met [although He delights in blessing us] but rather we meet with Him to get our hearts in line with His! To seek out His will, His direction and His wisdom for each new day!

The first mention of prayer was in **Judges 20:25-28**:

²⁵ This time, when the Benjamites came out from Gibeah to oppose them, they cut down another eighteen thousand Israelites, all of them armed with swords.

²⁶ Then all the Israelites, the whole army, went up to Bethel, and there they sat weeping before the Lord. They fasted that day until evening and presented burnt offerings and fellowship offerings to the Lord. ²⁷ And the Israelites inquired of the Lord. (In those days the ark of the covenant of God was there, ²⁸ with Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, ministering before it.) They asked, "Shall we go up again to fight against the Benjamites, our fellow Israelites, or not?"

They were acting together corporately in repentance, mourning and seeking God's guidance during a crisis.

Fasting and prayer can and should bring personal revival and brokenness in one's life!

Remember Esther.....she walked into that throne room prepared to die! We need to walk into the throne room of our God and prepare to die. Prepared to die of our own wants, needs and desires! We need to have a life bowed down! A willing heart! To be all that God would want us to be!

Praise God that the Word is truth and has all that we need to instruct us.

Tonight, I would like to take some time to review what the word says concerning fasting and prayer.

Throughout the Word of God, we see that God's people fasted.

We see in [Isaiah 58:3](#) fasting with the right motives and free of conflict.

³“Why have we fasted,’ they say, `and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?’ “Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers.”

We see in [Isaiah 58:4](#) fasting with hearts focused on a desire to please God and rid of our own desires.

⁴“Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.”

We see in [Isaiah 58:6](#) that fasting chosen by God:

⁶ “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?

We see in [2 Chronicles 20:3](#) fasting when afraid:

³ And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

We see in [Nehemiah 9:1](#) fasting for personal revival:

¹ On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and having dust on their heads. **The title of this portion of scripture is – “The people confess their sins” – ladies where there is a desire for personal life changing sanctification in fasting, sin is revealed and true repentance takes place. This very passage says that the Israelites separated themselves from foreigners.....[an idol is anything that you love more than God Himself - children, husband’s] and confessed their sins and iniquities. It goes on to say that they confessed and worshiped [you can’t help to be undone in the presence of our Holy God]..... and then it is proclaimed in this chapter in verse 17 of Nehemiah 9.....**

“But You *are* God, Ready to pardon, Gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, Abundant in kindness, And did not forsake them.”

We see in [Esther 4:14-16](#) fasting for the protection of loved ones – for the souls of loved ones – for a nation.

Esther 4:14-16 Hamon plot to annihilate the jews.

¹⁴ For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?"

¹⁵ Then Esther told *them* to reply to Mordecai: ¹⁶ "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in [a]Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so, I will go to the king, which *is* against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"

We see in [Joel 2:12](#) that we can fast for forgiveness of sins and repentance:

Joel 2:12

"Even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning."

We see in [Matthew 4:2](#) that fasting is the ultimate example that Jesus gave to us to ward off the wiles of the devil:

² "After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry."

We see in [Mark 9:29](#) fasting for the release of demonic strongholds:

Concerning the demon possessed boy - Jesus replied, "This kind can come out only by prayer and fasting."

We see in [Luke 2:37](#) fasting in times of sorrow, loneliness and singleness:

Luke 2:37 "and then was a widow (Anna) until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying."

We see in [Acts 13:2](#) & [Acts 14:23](#) fasting for important decisions in life, in this case ministry direction:

Acts 13:2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.

Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

By the way Acts 13 and 14 is the last mention about fasting in the bible.

While the OT required a fast for the Day of Atonement, the NT features fasting as a voluntary practice for seeking God's guidance, spiritual preparation and mourning.

Fasting is not a command as we see in Matthew 6:16:

Matthew 6:16 "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

Jesus said when you fast; He knew we would find the need to fast however He does not command us to fast under the new covenant.

As women of God; prayer coupled with fasting must become routine in our lives. Why? Because:

Fasting and prayer causes us to die to self

Fasting and prayer brings personal revival, holiness and a passion for God

Fasting and prayer provides answers to life's questions

Fasting and prayer unlooses the bonds of wickedness [drugs, alcohol, pornography, temptations]

Fasting and prayer is honored by God

The biggest reason: Jesus fasted and prayed

Are there people that you love who are not saved, fast and pray.

Charles Spurgeon: "If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our dead bodies. And if they perish, let them perish with our arms wrapped about their knees, imploring them to stay.

If hell must be filled, let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions,
and let not one go unwarned and unprayed for."

If you feel called to fast for more than one meal; you need to ask for medical approval.

There are different types of fasting:

Water only fast, a Daniel fast, chocolate, coffee? Seek the Lord for the way and the length of days. We need to simply fast and pray!!

In Isaiah 35:3-7 we see the results of Jesus' reign but it may also be the benefit of what fasting can do:

It strengthens the weak hands

It makes firm the feeble knees

The fearful hearted become strong

It saves [souls]

It opens the eyes of the blind

It causes the deaf to hear

It causes the lame to leap [are you struggling in your walk with Jesus – you can leap]

It causes the tongue sing praises [He can restore the joy of your salvation]

The waters burst forth in the wilderness

It makes streams in the desert

It causes the parch ground to become like pools [Is your devotional life a wilderness, a desert, a parched ground]

It brings life to the dead areas of your lives

Remember the promise that God gave to His people Israel in the Old Testament—a promise I believe still applies to God’s people in New Testament times:

2 Chronicles 7:14-16 (NKJV)

14 "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

15 "Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place.

16 "For now, I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.

We need revival!

Many of you have heard me read this before so please bear with me because this has impacted my Christian walk.

In the late 1800’s there was a great evangelist known as Gypsy Smith. He traveled around the world twice preaching in every continent and in many different countries the gospel of Jesus Christ, and wherever he preached revival broke out.

One day a delegation of people from a certain community came to him and said, “Rev. Smith, we desperately want to see revival in our area, what can we do?” Gypsy said, “I’ll tell you exactly what to do and how it will come about. You go home, lock yourself in your bedroom, take a piece of chalk, draw a circle on the floor, kneel in that circle and pray fervently and brokenly that God would start a revival in that circle.”

Ladies, that’s always where revival starts—with you and with me – individuals serious about their lives being surrendered and sanctified for Jesus! Revival does not begin with your spouse or your church family. Revival does not begin with your neighbors or your co-workers but with you and me - personally.

Remember that prayer is not a complicated thing. It is simply – purposing in your heart to become a woman who finds her most natural place sitting before the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

A woman of prayer simply prays.

Let’s pray.