

The Need for Revival: Prayer

*Pastor Anthony J Shetley
Sunday, March 26, 2023*

There is so much to be said of prayer as to its significance in the bible, its role in the life of the child of God, and its necessity to our relationship with God. May we never forget the great price that was paid which affords us the awesome privilege of prayer, and that price was paid by our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ. He stands in the gap between sinful men and a holy God.

John announced Jesus by saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

Before Christ, under the law, Only the High Priest could approach or enter before God's presence, and only after a sacrifice of atonement had been made for Him, and then all the people. Jesus not only became the supreme sacrifice for our sin, He also became our High Priest.

Hebrews 4:14–16 ¹⁴Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

At the center of prayer is the will of God. We do not pray to get our way for God will never act outside of His sovereign will. We must understand this truth so that we will not succumb to disillusionment.

The model prayer that Jesus taught His disciples included, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven."

The Conditional and Unconditional Will of God.

Many things pertaining to the will of God are unconditional, meaning, that God is acting with or without any action from you or me. God is sovereign. No power in the heavens or in earth can thwart the will of God.

The conditional will of God consist of what God desires to do in or through us pending our participation and cooperation, and our obedience and/or our disobedience. It is to this end that prayer plays such a vital role. **"You have not because you ask not."**

Everything God desires for man is good.

First and foremost, we know that God desires for every man, woman, and child to be saved; to know Him, to walk with Him in a personal relationship; and to live with Him eternally.

God reveals His desires for us through Ezekiel by saying that He takes no pleasure in the death of any soul, and through Peter by saying that He doesn't wish for anyone to perish, but that everyone would come to repentance, and especially through Jesus saying, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, and whosoever would believe in Him, should not perish but have eternal life."

In Christ, we receive the right or the authority to become a child of God. "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, (and) to those who are called according to His purpose. **(Romans 8:28)**

God is Holy and all that He desires is good.

God's will and desires are revealed to us in His word through the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Surely everyone of His commands to do or not to do, reveals His righteousness. Therefore, we can know what pleases Him, and we can pray for His power and strength to live in obedience to His word.

However, they are times when His will is unknown to us. It is in those times when we seek to discover His will through prayer. **Proverbs 3:5–6** ⁵Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.

God is trustworthy!

Matthew 7:11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

Prayer and the Church.

Mark 11:17 (Jesus enters the temple angry) “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a robbers’ den.” (Quoted from Isa. 56:7; ref. to Jeremiah 7:11) John 2:17 His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for Your house will consume me.”

God takes seriously the assembling of His church and what takes place in His name. Many things are done under the banner of the church and in the name of Jesus Christ, but it is all in vain outside of the will of the Father.

Matthew 7:21–23 ²¹Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. ²²“Many will say to Me on that day, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?” ²³And then I will declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.”

True, Biblical, Powerful Prayer.

We must seek God’s will and desires.

James 4:3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.

Our prayers must be fervent, purposed, and genuine.

Matthew 6:5 When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

Jesus, speaking of His church, stated that He was giving to them the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. The true church is not the hearers but the doers of the word. There prayers flow from a life of righteousness.

James 5:16 “The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

In Christ we have been given the gift of prayer, the duty of prayer, and the power of prayer.

Ask; seek; knock! Pray without ceasing! Pray about everything!

1 John 5:14–15 ¹⁴This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.