

# FAITH REQUIRED

## 1 - TO PRAY EXPECTANTLY

*“You can pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it.”*

Matthew 21:22 NLT

Prayer without faith is like writing a letter without mailing it.

I want to challenge you to take this step today – *Pray for something with complete assurance and expectancy that you know, without doubt, that you will receive it!*

### 1 HOW CAN I LEARN TO PRAY WITH THIS KIND OF ASSURANCE?

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Daniel (9:1–23) demonstrates how to pray with both power and confidence. When he discovered that Jeremiah had prophesied that the Babylonian captivity would last seventy years and was almost over (Dan. 9:2), he fell to his knees and began interceding for his people (vv. 4–19).

In Daniel 9, we see a great example of what prayer should be.

- Its focus is on almighty God and His character.
- It includes sincere confession, unselfishness, and dependence on the Word of God.

Such prayer has great power.

In Daniel’s case, God sent the angel Gabriel with His answer even before the prophet had completed his supplication.

To seek God during your own hardship, assume the humble stance that Daniel did—go to your knees.

Charles Stanley says, “Fight all your battles on your knees and you win every time.”

Model your prayer after Daniel’s. As he said in Daniel 11:32, *“The people who know their God will display strength and take action.”*

James tells us, *“The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much [literally works]”* (James 5:16).

Or,

*“Tremendous power is made available through a godly man’s earnest prayer.”* (JB Phillips Translation)

## 2 THE GOAL OF PRAYER: EFFECTIVENESS

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**Effective**—that is exactly what we want our prayers to be, especially in a crisis.

When we are obedient to God and are seeking Him in sincerity and truth, we can feel confident that He will answer our earnest prayers.

God set the standard for effective prayers in His conversation with Solomon (1 Chronicles 7:14)

*“Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, **I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land** [lives].”*

## 3 WHAT ARE GOD’S REQUIREMENTS FOR US IN PRAYER?

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Along with *humility, repentance* and determined to *gain the personal audience of God*, James 5:16 adds these two requirements:

### 3.1 FERVENT PRAYER.

Fervent prayers are filled with passion and the acknowledgement of personal helplessness. They also have a narrow focus on some specific difficulty. Scripture calls this type of prayer *“laboring earnestly”* (Colosians 4:12).

### 3.2 RIGHTEOUSNESS.

As the great Matthew Henry noted; “not righteous in an absolute sense, but righteous in a gospel sense; not loving nor approving of any [sin].”

**Psalm 66:18** says, *“If I had not confessed the sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.”*

At salvation, we become rightly related to God as His children.

He permanently seals us with the Holy Spirit and declares us righteous forever because of our lives being in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:14).

But the Bible also uses the word “righteous” to describe a believer’s conduct.

This means that to be called a “righteous person,” we must be found in Christ (Philippians 3:9) *and* make it a habit to obey God (Ephesians 4:1; Colossians 1:10).

**John 24:16** *“Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”*

And, we cannot pray “in the name of Jesus” unless we are found in Christ.

This also means that as we pray, we listen intently and submit ourselves wholeheartedly to Him—confessing our sin and obeying all He tells us to do.

If we willingly and knowingly engage in sin, then we do not live righteously, and our prayers will lack power.

When the Lord hears the impassioned prayer of a righteous person whose life reflects God’s ways, Scripture promises that the Holy Spirit will begin His divine work (Romans 8:26, 27; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 13).

God responds with great power to the prayers of even one righteous person.