

ACTIVATE School Of Prayer

Session 4— Keys to Answered Prayers—Kara Sensenig

I. Prayer is communication

Prayer is our primary means of communication with the Lord on a daily basis, and any prayer, no matter the duration or scope, is relevant and important to God

- A. **Matthew 7:7-8** - *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.*
- a. God is available to hear our prayers any time of the day (**Matthew 6:6**).

II. Keys to Effective Prayer

A. Pray rightly

- a. Prayer is not hoping that God hears. We need to purposefully ask God when we pray, not just think about wishfully or obsess about a situation.
- b. **Prayer, in its simplest form is finding out what God wants to do and then asking Him to do it.**
- c. To see your prayers answered, enter God's presence with thanksgiving and worship. Then rest in your secret place, and meditate on His Scripture and words to you.
1. Ask the Lord this question: "*what is it that you want to do in these circumstances?*"
 2. Then listen and wait until the Lord answers and directs you how to pray.
 3. We find the principle in **Romans 8:26-39**
 4. The Holy Spirit helps us pray in our weakness, and yet typically we haven't been very concerned with what He's praying.
 - Paul's words are powerful: "*For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us.*" **Romans 8:26**
 - **The Spirit helps us to pray by revealing the will of God.**
 - Prayer is asking God to do the very thing He's telling you He wants to do. It comes with a confidence in our hearts that because we've heard the will of God, we know we're praying what He wants, and that He will answer.

B. Pray with confidence

"Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

- a. We come boldly and confidently to Him.
- b. He is our Father! He's a good, good Daddy and He longs to hear your voice, your prayers...He wants to visit with you!

C. Pray the Word -

- a. One of the best ways to tune into what is on God's heart for us is to read the Word.
- b. Praying Scripture ensures answers to prayer -

1 John 5:14-15 - *Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that he have asked of Him.*

John 15:7 - *Jesus said, If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.*

R. A. Torrey in his book, *How to Pray* says, - *"If we are to obtain from God all that we ask from Him, Christ's words must abide or continue in us. We must study His words, fairly devour His words, let them sink into our thought(s) and into our heart, keep them in our memory, obey them constantly in our life, let them shape and mold our daily life and our every act."*

1. We need to "hide" His word so deeply in us that when life squeezes us He comes out.
2. By feeding on His Word and looking to the Spirit to implant these words and truths in our hearts, they become living things in our hearts. They transform us and align us with truth. It makes prayer as easy breathing.
3. If we let the words of Jesus abide in us, they will stir us up to prayer. They will be the mold in which our prayers are shaped...as a result our prayers will match God's heart and intentions for what we're praying for. These kind of prayers are prevailing prayers.

D. Pray with Thanksgiving - Pray Continuously

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace

of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. **Philippians 4:6-7**

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.**

Praying with Thanksgiving

- a. When approaching God to ask for a new blessing or breakthrough, we should never forget to return thanks for the blessings already given.
- b. Returning thanks for blessings received increases our faith and enables us to approach God with new boldness and new assurance.
- c. Thanksgiving is one of the inevitable results of being filled with the Holy Spirit. If we want to pray with power, we need to be moved by thanksgiving!

Praying Continuously

- d. Unceasing prayer comes when a person has found the will of God and prays until the situation reflects what He wants to do. -PUSH-
- e. It doesn't matter how long it takes for the situation to resolve itself, our prayer is about all the other stuff God is doing while He's waiting for that moment to come.

E. How do we come to realize what God has for us or whomever we're interceding for?

- a. First we enter God's presence with thanksgiving.
- b. Then we still ourselves, finding and resting in that secret place He has set aside for us.
- c. God will reveal Himself in a number of ways:
 1. We have Scripture because it tells us what the heart and mind of God is in certain situations. God has given you a book full of His words, and the Holy Spirit will lead you to a particular passage.
 2. In a dream or an impression. You may want to look back through your journal, or consider prophetic words that have already been given to you.
 3. God is kind and generous. He wants us to know what His will is.
 - According to David, He thinks about you a lot!!

"How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand." **Psalms 139:17-18**

- He thinks about you constantly. And He is willing—*no, longing*—to share those thoughts with you. How can you know this?
- **John 16** - Jesus shares a secret with His disciples, and by extension, with all of us:

*Oh there is so much more I want to tell you, but you can't bear it now. When the Spirit of truth comes [and He has, **Acts 2**], He will guide you into all truth. He will not be presenting His own ideas; He will be telling you what He has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring Me glory by revealing to you whatever He receives from Me. All that the Father has is mine; this is what I mean when I say that the Spirit will reveal to you whatever He receives from Me. **John 16:12-15***

- d. He wants us to know what His will is.
- e. He longs to release His children from worry and fear.
- f. He desires to show us what He's doing in a situation and in our lives.
- g. And He hungers for us to pray what He is praying.

III. There is a book in heaven about you

A. Your entire life was mapped out prior to your birth. The psalmist declares:

*You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. **Psalm 139:16 NLT***

B. God has specifically designed destiny and life path for you! We were put here on earth to fulfill what was written in the books in heaven about us.

- a. There are books in heaven about you, about the destinies and purposes of cities, people groups, nations, businesses, churches, and families. Anything that God ordained, there is a book in heaven about it.
- b. So...**we don't create our destiny or the destiny of a church or a region. But we discover destiny.** What God has predestined.

Revelation 5:8 - *When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, Worthy are You to take **the book** and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.*

Daniel 7:10 - *A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and **the books** were opened.*

Hebrews 10:7 - *Then I said, 'Here I am—it is written about me in **the scroll**— I have come to do your will, my God.*

- C. If we want to know what God has ordained for whomever, whatever you're praying for, then we need God to open the books in heaven so that we can have access to what He is saying.
 - a. The main reason I bring this up is because this is what intercessors do. We help to open up the book in heaven over our church over our city. We discover what is in these books and then pray them into reality.

IV. How we open the books

A. True Worship opens books

Isaiah 29:13 - *The entire vision will be to you like the words of a sealed book, which when they give it to the one who is literate, saying, "Please read this," he will say, "I cannot, for it is sealed." then the book will be given to the one who is illiterate, saying, "Please read this." And he will say, "I cannot read." Then the Lord said, because this people draw near with their words and honor Me with their lip service, But they remove their hearts far from Me, And their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned by rote....*

- a. False worship seals books - True worship opens the book in heaven
- b. Revelation is released - atmosphere of worship opens books.
- c. If you want to know what's in your book, start to worship. Draw near to Him from your heart. You'll start having revelation about what God wrote in your book...or whatever you're praying for.
- d. God wants to remove confusion and purposelessness

B. Timing of the Lord opens the book

Revelation 22:10 - *Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.*

- a. Timing of the Lord opens the book

C. Our weeping - Tears of Intercession open books

- a. **Revelation 5:1-9** - John is weeping here.
 - i. As long as there are sealed books we are in a stalemate in the spirit.
 - ii. The praying Church has such a significant role to play in what God wants to see unfold in the earth....
 - iii. Tears of intercession connected to the finished work of the cross...what Jesus has already accomplished open books
- b. **Intercession opens books. Intercession pulls into reality everything that Jesus died for!**