

Prayer – Speaking to God

Introduction

Many people pray to God but sometimes these prayers are more out of repetition than out of a sincere heart.

Our prayer are often a whole lot of God give me this, God give me that and not focused or even out of a double mind!

Today I want to cover five topics on prayer and I trust that you will take note and start applying these principles in your lives and start developing a powerful pray life.

Maybe next time I come to Malawi I can delve deep into these topics but for now, I will wet your appetite for next time! These topics are:

- How to pray?
- And what is the benefit of a consistent prayer life?
- How do we pray, prayers that will release God's favour in our lives?
- And what is praying in the Spirit?
- How is it beneficial to me as a Pastor?

How to pray

In the past trips to Malawi, I have spent time talking about prayer and how to pray so if you have been to one of my meetings before this will be a refresher topic but please bear with me as I get everyone up to speed.

Praying or pray is foundational to any Christians life. Prayer is so important that even Jesus Christ; Himself would spend every day taking time to get alone with God in pray.

So my question today is, if prayer is so important why do we as pastors, Christian leaders and church members spend so little time coming before God in prayer?

The reason I believe is

- We do not know how to pray
- We do not make time to pray
- We do not see results when we pray

So let me teach you a way or method to pray, all you have to remember is the book of ACTS.

A – Adoration C-confession T-Thanksgiving S- supplementary

Adoration

This is where you tell God how awesome He is, you tell Him what a wonderful God He is and you praise and worship HIM.

Confession

The second area is confession; here you confess your sins and shortcomings before God and Repent of your sins. Yes Jesus Christ died for all your sins but HE taught

us to ask forgiveness, in Matthew 6, in the Lord's pray, He teaches us – "forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us"

Thanksgiving

This is the area where you thank God for all that He has done for you. Thank him for your job, your family, your house etc.

Supplementary

This is where you make your petition known to God. Here you pray for your family, friends. You pray for your country and leadership and other issues you want God to help you with.

The last part of this supplementary, you ask God for the things you need and want.

This is a simple plan for your to pray effective prayers and although I do not follow this format, I usually use this format.

Remember pray is communication, you are communicating with God, you talk to Him, BUT DO NOT forget He want to talk with you too, so make time to be quiet before God and listen to what He wants to say.

In the beginning you might hear anything, but be persistent and patient, keep your mind from wandering and concentrate on hearing His word to you and start to act on it. Sometimes you will miss what God is saying but wow to know the satisfaction of knowing God spoke to you or God heard your prayer is amazing.

What is the benefit of a consistent prayer life?

There are many benefits of a consistent prayer life and so we will talk about a few.

Throughout the Bible we see men and women of God who had a consistent prayer life and the results of their constant prayer. Look at Daniel – he prayed so much that when the evil satraps wanted to kill him, they got the king to make a decree that no one pray to any god but the god of the Persians! They knew Daniel was going to pray to God as he always did – five times a day.

A consistent prayer life will produce a successful Christian, every time/ the Bible says in Daniel 11:32 "Those who know their God, will do exploits"

How do you get to know someone very well? You spend lots of time with them, you get to know what they like and dislike.

The same is spending time with God in His presence speaking to Him. Sooner or later you will start to understand why He does things in a certain way. What he likes or dislikes!

When you know God in this way, people will notice you and know you are God's friend. When you pray things happen – why because when you pray it is out of that relationship you built up in your prayer closet.

Who here wants to preach to thousands of people? Heal the sick and raise the dead in Jesus Name? Start developing an intimate prayer life, start spending time with God and soon He will rub off on you and everyone will notice!

So some of the benefits of a consistent prayer life are:

- Knowing God – what He likes or dislikes.
- Being able to do exploits for God.
- God's character rubs off on you.
- When you pray things happen.

How do we pray, prayers that will release God's favour in our lives?

Many people have asked me this question and I am sure many people here want to know how they can release God's favour in their lives.

The plain a simple answer is, if you want to see God work in your life, your ministry and a specific area in your life, start praying! Praying has more power than you can ever imagine.

Prayer is very important, the bible says in **James 5:16** that "*The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much*"

I can see in my own life, when I spend lots of time in prayer, in God presence, I see God operate in an amazing way!

Obedience

Now I know that we are talking about prayer but the question is how to release God's favour in your life so I am going to go a little beyond prayer here.

God's favour in your life and accessing it is unconditional, so there is no 10 step method to obtain God's favour. We receive all the blessings as a gift through Jesus Christ and His death on the cross.

This is important but there are a few things we can do to help.

- **Be obedience to God's Word** – You and I need to live our lives not as the world sees fit but according to the Word of God. If God's Word says something is wrong then I need to say it is wrong too. We need to hide the Word of God in your heart, meditate on it day and night and you will unlock things you never imagined in your life.
- **Prayer God's Word** – the Bible has over 5,000 promises – some are unconditional but some are. If you meet the condition the blessing will follow. It amazes me that when to take God's Word you have read or memorized and give it back to Him in prayer the power it has to achieve what you are asking God to do for you. If you want to pray for something, get a few scriptures relating to your topic (in context) and learn them and pray them using chapter and verse.
- **Live at peace with all people** – many people miss this point but if you hold a grudge against someone, God cannot bless you because He want you to first sort out the problem. Remember God loves those people just as much as He loves you, and He wants to bless those people as much as He wants to bless you/ Come on sort out your differences, forgive and repent.

- **Confess all sin** – Satan does not want you to succeed in anyway and will try to stop you from being effective by causing you to fall into sin. Firstly we must stay away from any form of sin, but also if and when we do sin, we need to be quick to repent and ask forgiveness and restore our relationship

And what is praying in the Spirit?

One of the saddest things for me to hear is that people cannot or do not pray in the Spirit. This is so important and will open up a new and very powerful channel to God.

Praying in the Spirit is simply praying in your heavenly language. This is especially useful in your personal devotion time because often we do not know what to pray or how to pray and so we can switch over to our heavenly language and speak to God, Spirit to Spirit.

Also earthly languages have limits to expressing our feelings in word. Often when praying I want to tell God how much I love Him and so I start praying in my heavenly language.

Speaking Spirit to Spirit

Let me prove this, In **Romans 8:26-27** *“²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groaning’s which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”*

In this verse, Paul is saying that when you and I pray our prayers are “translated” by the Holy Spirit into prayers that are acceptable to God. The Holy Spirit takes your and my prayers and asks according to God’s will on our behalf.

Now turn in your Bible to **1 Corinthians 14:2** *“For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries”*

Here, while praying in your tongue, you are speaking directly to God. While you are praying in tongues only God can understand you, not even Satan understands – so do you want to hide your plans from Satan and his demons, prayer in the Spirit.

How is it beneficial to me as a Pastor?

As I have just proven, praying in the spirit is extremely beneficial because:

- We have access to a tool that allows us to speak directly to God without anybody understanding except Him.
- When we do not know how to pray for a situation or run out of words to express what is in our spirit, we can pray in tongues with the confidence and knowledge that God hears and understands us.
- It builds up your faith – **Jude 20** says *“²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,”*

Conclusion

As a Christian leader it is paramount that you have a prayer life second to now. Your whole spiritual life depends on it, your church depends on it and your family and friends depend on it.

If you want to be great in God Kingdom, if you want to do something special and unique for God, not out of a selfish desire but if you have a Godly desire to do something special for God – then spend time with God.

I do not know of any great man or woman, of God who does not have a much prayer time in their prayer closet.

The amount of time spent in prayer is directly proportional to the success of your ministry. Much time in pray, much success, little time in prayer, little success!

Become a man and woman of prayer today!

I cannot make you are prayer warrior, neither can anyone in this assembly. If you think that by going to church you will be a might man or woman of God, you have as much chance of becoming a mighty prayer warrior as you have by sitting in a garage and becoming a car!

A prayer life is developed over time, through consistently going before God, getting to know Him, speaking to Him and being obedient to His promptings and His Word.

Only you can decide to spend time with God in your own prayer closet, but also realize that if you want a prayer life to impress people or become famous, you might as well watch TV because nothing will happen.

God will always respond to sincere hearts, so if you come to Him today and repent of your own failed efforts and ask Him to help you to develop a consistent prayer life and start by praying daily.

Let's Pray