

# MARRIAGE BY THE BOOK

## PRAYER

### 1. REVIEW

#### A. PRAYER

1. Paul PURPOSELY CHOSE to EMPHASIZE PRAYER IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING HIS INSTRUCTIONS ON TAKING UP THE ARMOR OF GOD.
2. The TRUTH IS that VERY FEW of us actually UNDERSTAND PRAYER... OR WHO WE ARE PRAYING TO.
3. For many people, even some Christians, PRAYER is like the NATIONAL ANTHEM BEFORE a SPORTING EVENT.
  - a. IT GET'S THE GAME STARTED... BUT has ABSOLUTELY NO RELEVANCE TO WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN ON THE FIELD.

#### B. PRAYER for too many of us is merely a HABIT.

1. For EXAMPLE: When MANY of us PRAY BEFORE WE EAT, we don't really UTILIZE OUR MINDS as we're PRAYING...
  - a. We just say the SAME GENERAL THINGS each time.
2. Or when MANY of us PRAY BEFORE GOING TO BED at night,
  - a. We simply RECITE a CALL FOR BLESSING and PROTECTION with a little bit of GRATITUDE thrown in for good measure.
    - 1) "Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take."
      - i. NOOOO!!
      - ii. Matthew 6:5-7 (NASB) WRITTEN IN RED..."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. "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees *what is done* in secret will reward you. "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.

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iii. AND THEN WE TURN THE MODEL OF HOW TO PRAY ("THE LORD'S PRAYER") INTO ROTE PRAYER!!

1. THE VERY THING JESUS SAID NOT TO DO!

3. PRAYER has become a ROUTINE for many of us.

a. Another way to look at it is that PRAYER has become like a SPARE TIRE...

1) We want it there IN CASE WE REALLY NEED IT.

2) BUT, we too often we want it OUT OF THE WAY where we don't have to deal with it or see it.

2. PRAYING GOD'S WORDS BACK TO HIM...

A. WHEN we TRULY UNDERSTAND PRAYER, AND WHO WE ARE PRAYING TO that UNDERSTANDING CHANGES...

1. **how we pray**

2. **what we pray,**

3. **when we pray,**

4. **whether or not we pray,**

5. as well as the EXPECTATIONS we have ABOUT PRAYER.

B. The TRUTH IS that VERY FEW of us actually UNDERSTAND PRAYER... OR WHO WE ARE PRAYING TO.

1. "THAT'S MY KING" - S.M. Lockeridge

C. NOR, DO WE UNDERSTAND THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD

1. Genesis 1:3 (NASB) Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

2. Genesis 1:6 (NASB) Then God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters."

3. Genesis 1:9 (NASB) Then God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so.

4. Genesis 1:11-12 (NASB) Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them"; and it was so.

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5. **Genesis 1:26-27 (NASB)** Then **God said**, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." **God created man** in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.
  6. **Genesis 1:14-15 (NASB)** Then **God said**, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth"; **and it was so**.
  7. **Genesis 1:20-21 (NASB)** Then **God said**, "Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens." God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; **and God saw that it was good**.
  8. **Genesis 1:24 (NASB)** Then **God said**, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind"; **and it was so**.
  9. **Genesis 1:29-30 (NASB)** Then **God said**, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, *I have given* every green plant for food"; **and it was so**.
  10. **Genesis 2:4 (NASB)** **This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created**, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven.
- D. James gives an **EXAMPLE** of **PRAYING GOD'S WORDS BACK TO HIM** in...
- E. **James 5:17-18 (NASB)** **Elijah was a man with a nature like ours**, and he **prayed earnestly** that it would **not** rain, and **it did not rain** on the earth for three years and six months. Then he **prayed again**, and **the sky poured rain** and the earth produced its fruit.
1. Elijah was an **ORDINARY MAN** with a nature just like yours and mine, ... **BUT he had the power to both STOP the RAIN and START it again simply THROUGH PRAYER.**
  2. **1 Kings** states...
- 1 Kings 18:1; 45 (NASB)** Now it happened *after* many days that **the word of the LORD came to Elijah** in the third year, saying, "Go, show yourself to Ahab, and **I will**

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send rain on the face of the earth." ... In a little while the sky grew black with clouds and wind, and **there was a heavy shower**. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel.

3. **Note: GOD SAID it would RAIN.**

a. **ELIJA PRAYED about what GOD HAD ALREADY SAID.**

1) Elijah didn't make stuff up and attribute it to God.

b. **NOTE: BUT WHAT GOD HAD SAID, that it WOULD RAIN, did NOT**  
come to pass until **AFTER ELIJA HAD PRAYED.**

c. Even though God had already declared it in the heavenly realm, not a single raindrop hit the earth **UNTIL** it got called down by Elijah on the earth through **PRAYER.**

d. In other words, **PRAYER CALLED DOWN WHAT GOD HAD ALREADY INTENDED TO DO... B U T WHAT GOD HAD ALREADY INTENDED TO DO DID NOT HAPPEN UNTIL PRAYER CALLED IT DOWN.**

e. Elijah's **PRAYER DID NOT MAKE GOD DO SOMETHING HE DID NOT WANT TO DO, B U T** it did reach into heaven, grab and draw down **WHAT GOD HAD ALREADY TOLD ELIJA HE WOULD DO.**

F. **EXAMPLE** from Elijah,

1. **SUCCESSFUL PRAYER SHOULD BE PREDICATED ON WHAT GOD HAS ALREADY DECLARED THAT HE WILL DO.**

a. In order to do this **EFFECTIVELY**, we need to:

1) **READ HIS WORD (GRAPHE),**

2) **UNDERSTAND THE MESSAGE of HIS WORD (LOGOS),**

3) ... and **PRAY HIS WORD (RHEMA)** so that when we pray, we will know **THAT WE PRAYING IN AGREEMENT WITH HIS WILL:**

i. **HIS WRITTEN (SPOKEN) WORD**

G. When God reveals His **SECRETS** to you ... His **PROMOTES IN HIS WORD...** that is when you are able to **take God's Word and PRAY** it right back to Him.

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1. That is when you can say, “God, YOU SAID IN YOUR WORD ...”
2. **PRAYER** is holding God accountable to **what He has already said He will do.**
3. Prayer is **NOT** simply seeing something you want and claiming it.
  - a. “NAME IT, AND CLAIM IT”

### H. The **FOUNDATION OF PRAYER** is **KNOWING WHAT GOD HAS ALREADY SAID.**

1. God has given us literally thousands of **PROMISES IN HIS WORD...** start there.
2. We do ourselves a **DISSERVICE** when we **DO NOT MAKE** the time to **LEARN** and **KNOW** God’s Word.
3. **WHEN WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT GOD’S WORD HAS TO SAY ON A MATTER** our prayers become **VAGUE** and **EMPTY**, or they become full of things **GOD NEVER INTENDED TO DO.**
4. Either way, we end up **tossing our armor into the back of the closet** and saying, “**It didn’t work for me.**”
5. Then we often **CALL someone** or **MEET UP with our friends** and try to find a **HUMAN SOLUTION**, or at least **someone who can give us SYMPATHY** for what we’re battling. **WE NEED ANSWERS MUCH MORE THAN WE NEED SYMPATHY!**
  - a. **WE NEED FOR HEAVEN TO INVADE EARTH, AND...**
  - b. **THE ONLY WAY TO ACCESS HEAVEN’S AUTHORITY ON EARTH IS THROUGH PRAYER.**
  - c. It’s like the **TELEVISION** we have at our home.
    - 1) There are **television signals floating around in the air all the time.**
    - 2) **B U T** we **ARE NOT** be able to **USE** those signals **UNTIL WE TURN OUR TELEVISION SET ON.**

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- 3) **WHEN** we do, what was **INVISIBLE** becomes **VISIBLE**.
  - d. **CONCLUSION: WHAT IS AVAILABLE TO US IN THE SPIRITUAL/INVISIBLE REALM IS ACCESSED THROUGH PRAYER.**
- I. **Ephesians 6:18a (NASB)** With all prayer and petition pray at **all times in the Spirit**,
- J. When Paul says “pray at all **times** in the Spirit.” The English word “**times**” in this passage is often **misattributed** to the Greek word “**KRONOS**”,
1. “**KRONOS**” refers to **TIME IN GENERAL**... seconds, minutes, hours, and so on.
    - a. We often hear believers saying **this passage means that we’re to be PRAYING ALL OF THE TIME.**
      - 1) That’s something we **DO** see in **1 Thessalonians 5:17**, where we’re told to “**pray without ceasing (KRONOS).**”
      - 2) But that’s **DIFFERENT** from what Paul is telling us to do in this particular passage.
    2. When Paul wrote, “**pray at all times,**” he specifically chose the much more distinctly defined Greek word “**KAIROS**”.
      - a. “**KAIROS**” has to do with a **SPECIFIC TIME... AN OPPORTUNE, APPOINTED TIME.**
    3. When Paul tells us in **Ephesians 6:18** to “**pray at all times (“KAIROS”),**” he’s **SPECIFICALLY** pointing out that we’re to **PRAY** at **AN OPPORTUNE, APPOINTED TIME IN RELATION TO “the evil day.”**
      - a. Remember, the “**evil day**” is the day when **SPIRITUAL WARFARE** is in your face and **all hell is breaking loose.**
        - 1) It’s at **THOSE TIMES (KAIROS)** that “**the evil day**” **DEMANDS** that the **POWER** of the **ARMOR** is to be **CONNECTED WITH THE POWER of CONCENTRATEED, SPECIFIC PRAYER.**
- K. Has the **BATTLE** ever made you **SO WEARY** that you actually **GROAN**?

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1. **Has life hurt you so badly** that you find yourself unable to do much more than **GROAN**?
2. **HAVE YOU EVER WISHED FOR JESUS TO COME... NOW?**
3. We are to **PRAY AT TIMES LIKE THIS... NOT ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, with RANDOM, VAGUE PRAYERS OUT OF HABIT...**
  - a. **BUT** rather **ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT, BY CONNECTING WITH AND FOCUSING ON WHAT GOD'S WORD HAS TO SAY ABOUT THE MATTER.**
  - b. **WHEN** we **ARE OVERCOME BY THE BATTLE IN "THE EVIL DAY", AND DO NOT KNOW HOW TO PRAY** as we should, **THE SPIRIT HIMSELF INTERCEDES FOR US** with **GROANING** too deep for words; **ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF GOD.**
    - 1) **WE ARE NOT ALONE!**
  - c. **Romans 8:22-27 (NASB)** For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, **even we ourselves groan within ourselves**, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he *already* sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it. In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but **the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words**; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because **He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.**
4. It's **THEN** that **THE HOLY SPIRIT GROANS WITH US** because He knows how deep the problem, hurt, need, or attack really is.
  - a. He comes alongside of us in those **"KAIROS"** moments, **when we don't think you can make it one more day.**
  - b. It's then that He ushers you into the very presence of God while He calls on God to do His will in your situation.
- L. For many people, **PRAYER** can seem **BORING**,
  1. **B U T...** that's **ONLY** because **THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE INVISIBLE, SPIRITUAL REALM AS A RESULT OF THEIR PRAYERS.**

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- a. If we could truly **GRASP ALL THAT HAPPENS IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM IN RESPONSE TO OUR PRAYERS... PRAYER WOULD BE THE TOP PRIORITY IN OUR LIVES, AND WE WOULD DO WHAT PAUL URGES...**

1) “**pray** at all times in the Spirit.”

### 3. PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

A. **DOES NOT MEAN SPEAKING IN TONGUES!**

B. **ANYTIME WE TAKE GOD’S WORD and TALK TO HIM ABOUT IT... WE ARE PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT!**

1. **IF what we’re PRAYING is IN ALIGNMENT WITH GOD’S WORD, we **DO NOT NEED** to CONTINUE TO ASK GOD over and over again.**
2. **AFTER** we ASK HIM, the REMAINDER of our PRAYERS should be FOCUSED on THANKING GOD for His PROMISED RESPONSE.

C. **NEXT WEEK: SPECIFIC SCRIPTURE FOR OUR SPECIFIC NEEDS.**

### 4. **COMMENTS and QUESTIONS**