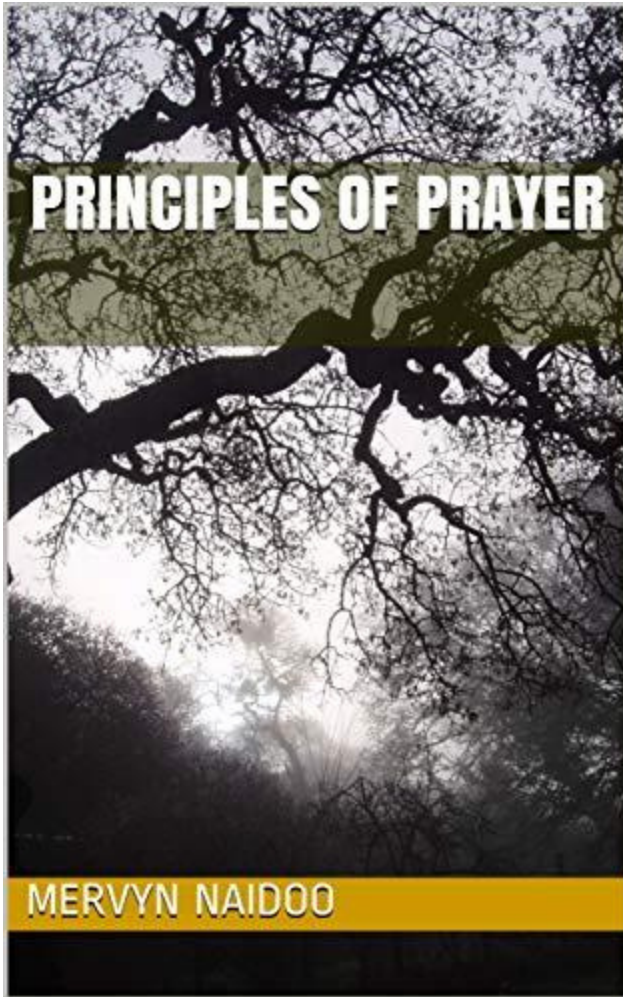


The Principles of Prayer



Worldwide Prayer Watch Series

THE PRINCIPLES OF PRAYER



MERVYN NAIDOO

The Principles of Prayer

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To Teach and Encourage the Church to Pray

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All scripture quotations from the New International Version unless otherwise stated

The Principles of Prayer

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**CONTINUITY WITH GOD WOULD MEAN
DAILY PRAYER**

– Prayerwatch M



Introduction

Does the believer really believe that God answers prayers? Or is it that God does answer prayer but it never really works for me. Generally speaking many in the body of Christ will not honestly answer this question. For one to admit that prayer does not work for them is very unchristian. Yet if we look at our prayer gatherings there seems to be something wrong. Why do so few people attend the Prayer gathering of the church? If all men believed that prayer worked then all men would be praying. Again I strongly believe that we believe that there is a God who heals! However what we hear and see in the lives of others is the truth and miracle working power of God, but it just does not work for me. Based on this very fact I have discovered that there are principles in

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God's Word that govern prayer. If we follow these simple principles, we will soon see the evidence of God's promises in our own lives. If we do not abide by these principles we will encounter unanswered prayer.

If God is the one who has called into being that which did not exist then to Him we must be most faithful to bring into existence that which we cannot see for now !

– Prayerwatch



Principles of Prayer

1. We must have Faith in God.

We ~~must learn to expect~~ from God that which we have prayed for! This expectation is a demonstration of our faith. If our faith is pleasing to God then we must have a high expectation of that which we have asked for. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is a “rewarder” of those who diligently seek Him. **“And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”**

(Hebrews 11:6)

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The believer must believe in what he is praying for. He must believe in the promises of God for his life.

Our understanding of God and his purpose in creation has to be correct. We must understand that God's creation is not random or some blind chance but by definite, precise intelligent action.

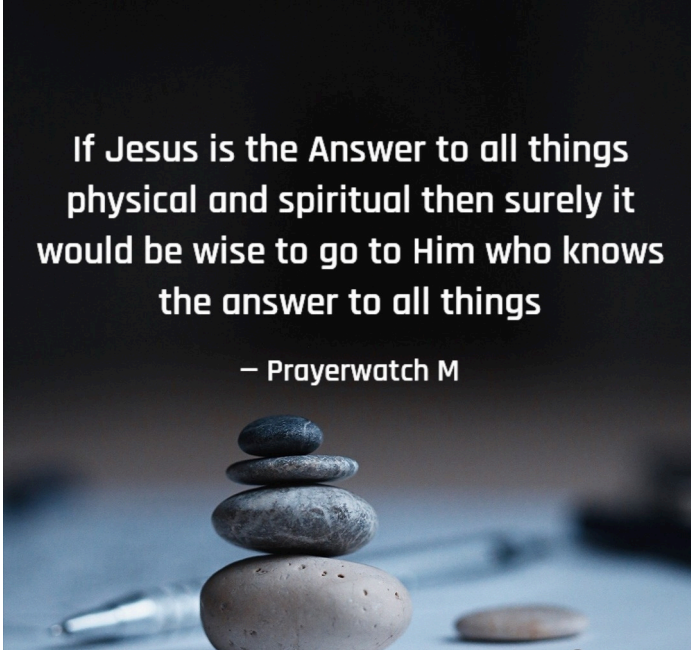
Secondly we must learn from those in the Bible. As theirs was not just random faith but that they to had a personal relationship with Him. They personally experienced God and saw His provision in their lives. By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with Godly fear. He prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Hebrew 11.6

Rahab's faith for instance was *based* on her knowledge of God's impressive deeds in the life of the Israelites. **Hebrew 11.31**

**If Jesus is the Answer to all things
physical and spiritual then surely it
would be wise to go to Him who knows
the answer to all things**

– Prayerwatch M



2. We must ask according to God's Will

Paul's prayer for the church was as follows **'.....and I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have the power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge- that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.'** Ephesians 3.17-19

When we pray, we must be God minded. In other words our goal must be *to know* the Will of God for our lives. Otherwise we ask inaccurately. The apostle James says that we do not receive because we ask amiss, to spend on our pleasures. **James 4.3 'you ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions'**

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What is the Will of God for us? It is that which God has already predestined for us. Anything that God has in store for us is the Will of God.

Now all of God's Will for us is perfect. Yet there is a predetermined Will of God for us, This is only accomplished through prayer. *Both are intertwined and both involve prayer.*

The Greek words for *Will* is ***Boulema*** and ***Thelema***. In the original Greek, ***Boulema*** means the eternal Will of God. In other words it will be done whether we like it or not. The return of Christ is one such example; the other is the ingathering of the elect, **Matt.24.30-31**. The judgement of each person according to what he has done, here on earth. **Revelation 20.13** is also another scripture.

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Thelema however is God's desire for us
*and is very much dependant on us praying -
it involves the response of the believer.*

Does the believer *wish* for that which God
has for him? Then he must pray *into*
existence those wishes. Prayer makes
known our heart to God. **Jeremiah 29.12-
13** 'Then you will call upon me and pray to
me, and I will listen to you. You will seek
me and find me when you seek me with
all your heart.'

***Whatever is God's desire, is that which
God is determined to do.***

Psalm 37.4-5 'Delight yourself in the Lord
and He will give you the desires of your
heart.'

Verse 5 says 'Commit your way to the
Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring
it to pass.'

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The original Hebrew meaning of the word delight is to be *'soft and pliable'* in the hands of the Lord.

God does know all things. He knows your needs and your desires. But do you know His desires and His plans. To put God first is to know the very heart of God. ***The desires that you now have are never as important as the desires and plans that God has. Prayer involves coming to God and surrendering your plans and your desires in exchange for His.***

Going to God has never been about the blessing of our own desires unless those desires have been put there by the Lord in the first place. The key is to receive from Him that which He so desires. Has this not so stalled the consistency of many a prayer life. The desire to please God comes from the *in working* of the Holy Spirit. Our souls are often in opposition to the work of the Holy Spirit.

When the heart is quiet before a Holy God

**THE PERSON IS NO LONGER
PRESUMPTUOUS IN THOUGHT AND SPEECH**

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The ***'desires of your heart'*** in **verse 4** of **Psalm 37** has to do with you, the inner person - your inner thoughts and deepest feelings. It is also about your inner yearnings. Prayer is responsible for causing this softness. Prayer is also responsible for the formation of this *'pliability'* in Gods' hands. ***When we go to God in prayer we allow for our hearts to become flexible as opposed to being rigid. Prayer allows for God to remove what we want and replace them with what He desires.*** To speak of this desire of God and the compare it to anything else is foolish, unless you have truly gone to God and experienced it for yourself. ***'...And He will bring it to pass'*** in **verse 5** of **Psalm 37** is the desires that He has *now* placed in our hearts that we then *bring* back to Him in prayer.

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To **'Commit your way'** according to this scripture is to *surrender or to turn over* the responsibility of *deciding* on to Him. It is then that God brings to pass those new God given desires, that we allow Him to place in our hearts. *Any wonder why we are never the same after going to God?* I hope that you will understand this very important principle of prayer.

'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.

As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.'

Isaiah 55.8-9

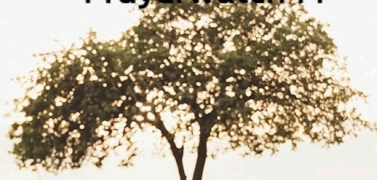
1Corinthians 2.10 'But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes the deep things of God.'

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We get to know the desires of God's heart when we *go* to God. Remember that we are unique in the eyes of the Lord. God's purpose for us is therefore special, of which He holds the key. ***For Heaven to release, we must first desire as God desires.*** This desire is the work of the Lord. It is placed there by God. ***When this yearning of God has been placed by Him, in the heart of man, it is then the duty of man to bring it back to God.*** It is still the duty of the believer to show that he is in agreement with God, for that which He has placed in his heart. We express this in our praying and worship before Him. Do you have the mind of God as you pray today?

**GOD IS SPIRIT BUT MAN IS SPIRIT
AND FLESH. WE COMMUNICATE
WITH GOD THROUGH HIS SPIRIT.
SPENDING MORE TIME WITH
GOD HELPS TO BETTER OUR
COMMUNICATION WITH HIM!**

– Prayerwatch M



3. Our Prayers must be void of any offence.

Our asking must be so God minded that it is completely void of any hypocrisy. **Psalm 66.18** says that if I were to regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear. **“ If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. But truly God has listened; he has attended to the voice of my prayer.” (Psalm 66:18-19)**

Where there is no iniquity God attends to such a voice **verse 19**. We must make sure that we take no offence against any man and or any offence against the Lord.

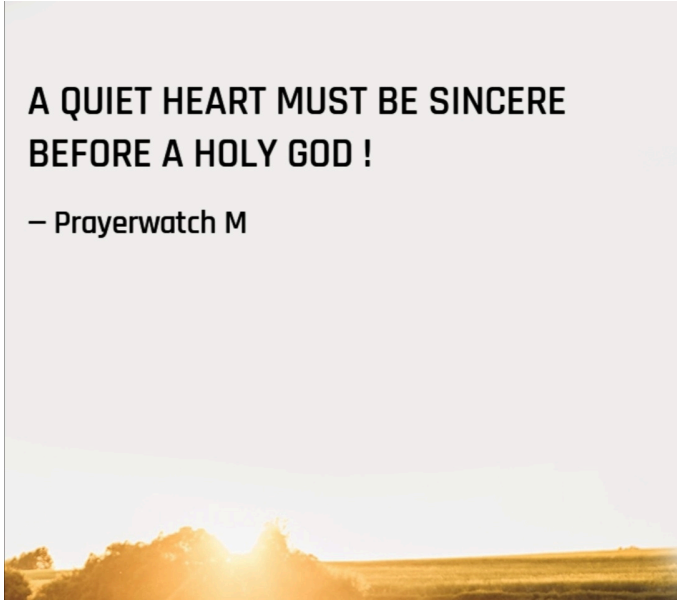
For if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. **1 John 3.20 - 22**

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He who covers his sins will not prosper, but
whoever confesses and forsakes them will
have mercy **Proverbs 28. 13**

**A QUIET HEART MUST BE SINCERE
BEFORE A HOLY GOD !**

– Prayerwatch M



4. We must have clean hands.

Part of prayer is the lifting up of holy hands before a Holy God. How holy is your hands. This is determined by the way you conduct yourself in conversation, business or any exchange between others. **1 Timothy 2.8** says the following **‘I desire therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting holy hands, without wrath and doubting.’**

We must at all times speak the truth. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double minded. **James 4.8** **‘Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you who are double-minded.’**

5. We must attempt to settle all disputes and animosity.

Matthew 5.23 – 24 ‘Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.’

This applies to the Body of Christ. And many today do not realise what a stumbling block this may be to our prayers. Many in the body do not realise the strength of opposition from the enemy and how we play into his hands because of this. We need to learn to practice instant reconciliation and know that God forgives us *as* we forgive others. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 6.15

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We must learn to adopt this spirit of forgiveness into our prayers daily. I learnt very early in my prayer life, that I have to love out of *choice* and not circumstance. This means that I have to follow what God's Word says. It is the Spirit of God having His Way in my life, that helps me follow the principles of God.

**Peace tends to follow those who are
willing to do good and have some
measure of evidence doing so in the
past**

– Prayerwatch M

6. We must walk in humility and approach God in humbleness.

One of the first requirements of repentant prayer is humility. When God withholds something, commands a blockage or gives permission for the enemy in any area we must believe humility is needed.

2 Chronicles 7.13 -14 'When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.'

Humility brings a greater revelation of God. Even God is pleased with this response. The bible tells us that in the days of King Josiah when the book of the Law was read to him, he tore his clothes in humility and enquired of the Lord.

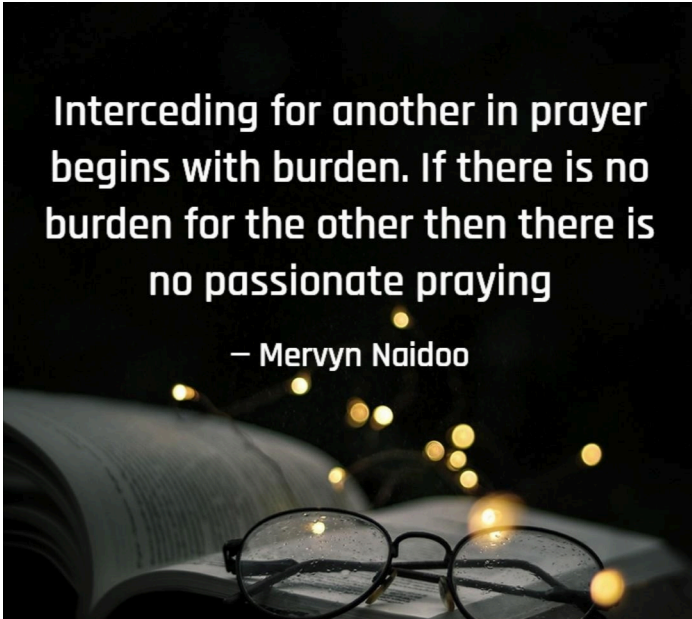
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God saw the humility in King Josiah and responded. **‘Because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become a desolation and a curse, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you, says the Lord’ 2 Kings 22 .19**

James 4.6 says....‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble’

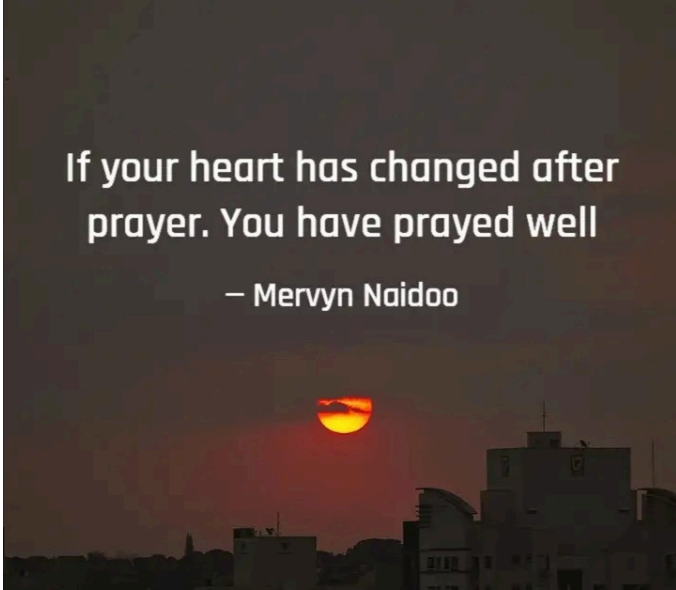
**Interceding for another in prayer
begins with burden. If there is no
burden for the other then there is
no passionate praying**

– Mervyn Naidoo



**If your heart has changed after
prayer. You have prayed well**

– Mervyn Naidoo



7. Always Pray in the Name of Jesus.

When we pray, we do so in the name of the Lord. **John 14.13 – 14** ‘**And whatever you ask in *My name*, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in *My name*, I will do it.**’ We must know that praying in the Name of Jesus, means praying in according with His revealed nature and purpose. This allows for our prayer to have the full backing of Heaven. The Name of the Lord stands for the reliable character of God and who He represents. ***When we call on the Name of the Lord, we are really calling into existence His promise of who He is.*** For example *Raphe* in Hebrew means Healer and God is ***Jehovah Raphe***. When we mention that Name we are really speaking into existence Healing. And so God’s Name is really His function and our experience in who He is.

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When Abraham's need was provided for, he then named that place after the God who provided for him – ***Jehovah Jireh***. This meaning ***God is Provision***. God provided for Abraham on one of the mountains in the land of Moriah. **'And Abraham called the name of the place, The Lord - Will - Provide...'** **Genesis 22.14**

The Lord will provide when He sees a need according to His Will. It is important for us to understand this and not to take the Lord's Name in vain. The power of life and death lies in the tongue. And we cannot afford to speak His Name in vain. Each time we mention His Name, we are calling into existence ***who God is. God's Name is who He is!*** When Moses asked God for His Name, His reply was **'I AM'** In other words if Moses replied to Pharaoh that ***Jehovah Shalom*** had sent him then that is not only who had sent him but also the experience that Moses would encounter and have as His.

The church must stop seeking
men who demonstrate an earthly
strength of character. Instead she
must seek those who walk with
Heavenly strength

– Mervyn Naidoo



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To **Hallow** is to set apart as holy. The Name of the Lord is Holy and when we declare it there is Power. In us coming in that Name we are granted privileges as only believers may have. **Again God's Name is who He is.** In mentioning the Name of our God we are then declaring who He is. Therefore when the believer prays, his declaration of the Name of the Lord entitles him to that which He believes God is. It is important therefore that the believer comes by faith believing that God is. When we declare that God is **Jehovah Raphe**, we are declaring Him as *The Healer* for us. When we declare Him as **Jehovah Jireh**, we are then declaring that He has provided for us. We are therefore not to take the name of our Lord in vain. We declare His Name in faith and our declaration brings the answer so much needed.

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Jesus when praying asked of the Father that those given to Him be kept through His Name so that they be one as Him and the Father were one.

‘.....Holy Father, keep through your Name those whom You have given Me, that they be one as we are.’ John 17.11

The Lord went on to say that those given to Him here on earth were kept by Him through the Name of the Father. **‘When I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your Name. ‘John 17.12**

Luke 9.48 reiterates the power of the Name of the Father and the Son. **‘Whoever receives this little child in My Name receives Him who sent Me.....’**

In us declaring who He is, we then declare the manifestation of who He is. Therefore in the prayer taught to us by Jesus it is important that we honour the Name of the Lord. The Name of the Lord must not be taken for granted for God takes names seriously.

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The name God gives a person, declares who he is. We see this clearly in the story of Jacob. This forefather was given the name Jacob because of how he was born. He took the heel of his brother Esau at birth. He was named Deceiver or Supplanter. Read the story of Jacob's birth in **Genesis 25.24-26**. Interestingly though, many years later Jacob struggles with the angel of the Lord and is asked for his name. This in itself reveals the importance of a name. When Jacob reveals his name, it is then changed to Israel which means - ***he had struggled with God and with men and prevailed***. This name Israel means Prince with God. **Genesis 32.28**

To *HALLOW* the name of God is to reveal to Him our desire to have what He has already prepared and to regard it as Holy. ***It is only in coming in the Name of the Lord do we have the answers.***

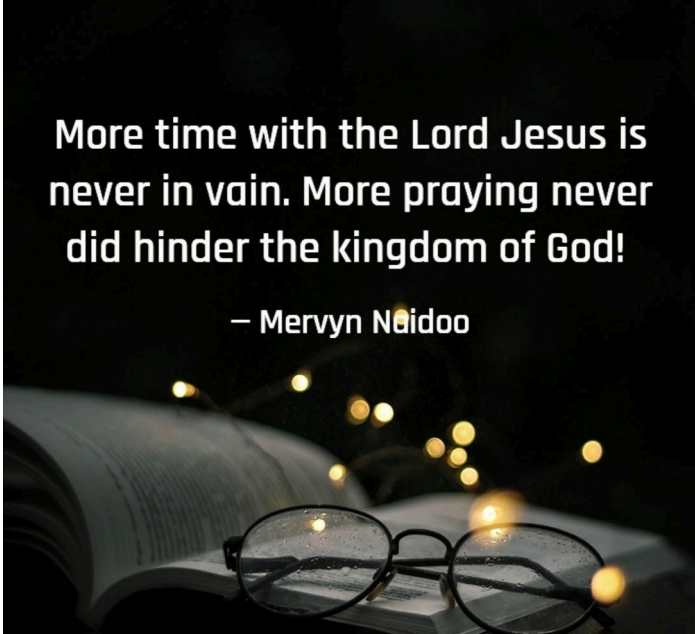
May God help us to see this!

8. We must Pray always.

We must be zealous about what we are asking God for. So often our prayer gatherings in the church are the least passionate. How can God give to us, if we are not passionate about what He has for us? ***God wants to see the evidence of passion for Heaven in our lives.*** It is passion that gets us to pray again and again. We need to ask God to help us develop this passion for all of His. The Apostle Paul prayed without ceasing and made this known so that others may be encouraged to do the same. He knew the pretence that existed to pray with passion. He therefore says that God is his witness in this regard. **2 Thessalonians 1.11** ***‘Therefore we also pray always for you, that our God will make you worthy of His Calling, and that by His power He may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith.’***

**More time with the Lord Jesus is
never in vain. More praying never
did hinder the kingdom of God!**

— Mervyn Naidoo



9. We Must Pray Again and Again!

We often pray once and never again. Jesus prayed three times before His arrest. **'And He left them again, and prayed a third time, saying again the same words.'** Matthew 26.44 Paul did the same concerning this thing **'I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.'** 2 Corinthians 12.8 The number three is not limited to and only three times, but it may be many times until God gives us release. We must learn to pray until God gives us release. ***What this signifies is that before we stop praying we must make sure that God has heard us.*** This principle must be applicable in our personal and corporate prayers. The principal here is ***thorough*** praying. Such prayers will be painstaking, careful and meticulous. Such praying cannot be careless!

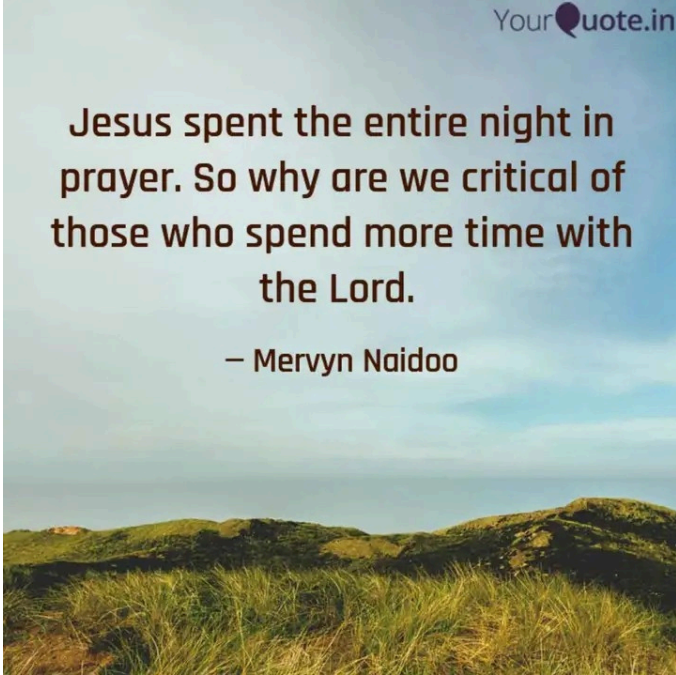
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We must be clear of God's Will.

We have a common problem in our prayer meetings, having prayed once for something we then feel obliged not to pray again. We assume that one prayer is enough per request and even feel embarrassed to pray for the same thing over and over again. This is exactly what Satan wants from us. If someone stands up in a meeting and request prayer for healing those who are present must pray as the Lord leads them. Many times we do not pray as we are led but by tradition and force of habit. We often feel that once someone has prayed about a specific need no one else needs to pray and we can move on. This is wrong! ***Once is never too much. Unless the believer has received spiritual release from the Holy Spirit, we must continue to pray for such matter.*** We must come to God without ceasing! ***There needs to be prayer till the burden is released.***

Jesus spent the entire night in prayer. So why are we critical of those who spend more time with the Lord.

– Mervyn Naidoo



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We must be careful of not letting our prayers move from one thing to the other, never to return. Though we desire a release of the burden, we may move on as long as we have not forsaken that which must still be brought before God. In other words we will bring it again before the Lord. There may be things we would have to bring before God for many days, weeks and even years. All the time by faith! Many are not aware of the enemy's schemes and we often play into his hands. The parable of the persistent widow is a lesson for us to pray again and again. This widow refused to let the adversary get away. She knew by persistence she would somehow get relief. The parable of this widow teaches us about praying without ceasing and not losing heart. Jesus asked a very important question at the end of this parable: **'Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?'** Luke 18. 8

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Persistence also increases our faith. The parable of the widow starts as follows: **“Then He spoke a parable to them that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying ‘there was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ‘get justice for me from my adversary.’ And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, ‘though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.’”** Luke 18.1-5 Based on this parable Jesus said the following, **‘And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though he bears long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. However will the Son of man find faith on earth, when He returns.’** Luke 18.7-8

1. We must labor in our Prayers.

We need to pray until that thing gives birth or is formed, whether it is something tangible or simply character. There must be a travailing of the soul, a laboring in the life of the believer. This is how the Bible describes it.

Isaiah 66:7: "Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her children. Shall I bring to the time of birth and not cause delivery?" says the Lord. "Shall I who cause delivery shut up the womb?" says our God.

Such prayers are often not meant to be public, just as childbirth is not. There are severe pains preceding birth. They are intense and will cause much weeping.

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Travailing prayers are prayers that often precede revival for a nation, for a church or for those who have strayed from the Lord. We must be careful not to fear such travailing. It is such times that the heart of the Father is being revealed through His Spirit and words are inadequate. You must be pliable in the hands of the Spirit.

Romans 8.25-26 But if we hope for what we do not see we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. 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 which cannot be uttered. It is important to note that we never really know how to pray as we ought therefore we need to learn to wait on God. When we labour with God in our prayers as opposed to presumption we see the real effects of Godly prayer and also what God desires to come forth.

**The longer you are willing to hold
onto God says much! The faith of
a man in God is often tested with
time**

– Prayerwatch M



11. We must be specific in our Prayers!

This is an important aspect of prayer. God's purpose for our lives is not random. It is not choose as you wish, but wish and choose as I have already prepared. We need to come into the *Will* of God. We need to know that all things work together for good to those who love God and are called to His *purpose*.

Romans 8.28 The word *purpose* comes from the Greek word *prosthesis*, *pro* as in *before* and *thesis* meaning *a position*, thus, a setting forth in place something already worked out. It is a deliberate organised advanced plan or intention. Just like salvation of mankind was a deliberate plan of God. So too are God's plans for our daily lives. There will always be some uniqueness to the word given by God to us about our lives.

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Even in a specific situation that word is unique to us. It is this uniqueness that should cause us to be specific in our prayers. God is One of specifics. When God wanted something done He was specific. Look at Noah and God's specifics in building the ark, His instructions to Moses when building the tabernacle and so on. This was information already in the mind of God and all these men had to do was follow the instruction of the Holy Spirit. The same with us, God has a specific plan and we must be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. ***Prayer allows us to give the plan back to God.*** He has a specific heavenly plan for your marriage, for your children, for your role at work and in the Kingdom. This is overall manifestation! Have you enquired of the Lord about the specific plan He has for your spouse, your daughter or son. ***That which God reveals, is what we must then pray back to Him for it to materialize here on earth.***

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So often we leave our conversation with God and concentrate on people and things. This shows how serious we are in our prayers. Whilst praying, we may receive a text message on the phone and we immediately abandon our praying just to see what it's all about. ***If we say we want more of God, we must then place ourselves in a position to receive more of God.*** Nothing must come in the way of our request. The devil is very good at manipulating our thoughts before, during and after praying. We must be serious and desire God's reign in every facet of our lives. **'And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.'** **Matthew 6.7.** Again it is not that there should not be repetition but that our words not be in vain. They must be God minded and according to the *Will* of God. They must reveal to Him that we are serious about what we have asked for.

13. Use that Whicw God has Given.

We must use the resources that God has given to us *now!* To often we do not see the means that God has *already* laid at our disposal to secure the end. ***Many times our answers are stalled because we do not move on with what we have in our hands.***

There is always something or someone that God places before us that is the tool in the fulfilment of the vision. Like Moses we too complain and or make excuses to the Lord **“Then the Lord said to him, ‘ What is in your hand?’ A staff he replied ”.Exodus 4.1- 2**

God takes that which is at our disposal, such as a shepherd’s rod and uses it in an extraordinary way. That same rod in Moses hand was used to perform various miracles by God’s power. We must grow to see what God sees. Sometimes it is wisdom,

- **The Importance of Intent in Prayer**
- **A primary reason we often fail to engage meaningfully in our prayers is a lack of attention. Many of us find ourselves reciting phrases without genuine focus, mistaking this for true prayer. It is essential that we strive to be more intentional in our communications with God. Unfortunately, many do not realize when they are merely babbling—an act that can be defined as speaking without substance. Unlike repetition, which may hold some significance, babbling signifies a lack of focus on God during prayer.**
-
- **In various settings—be it at home, in classrooms, within churches, or at the workplace—prayer has often devolved into a ritual devoid of meaning. When prayer lacks significance, it strips away hope. Engaging in babbling means we communicate with God without sincere intention. How often have we participated in prayer meetings, seemingly conversing with God, only to find our attention diverted as soon as someone else enters the room? To cultivate a more meaningful prayer experience, it is crucial to approach it with a clear and focused heart. Begin by setting aside a dedicated time and place for prayer, free from distractions. This**

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knowledge, finances; most times it is none of this but just our *time* that we can use effectively for praying. Ask God to open your eyes to see what you do actually have at your disposal today. Ask Him to show you how to use it for His glory.

Today many churches are praying for revival, yet we when we go outside we are silent. How can we pray for revival yet not minister to others outside?

14. Watch and Pray.

Finally all men must be watchful unto all prayers. **‘What I say to you I say to all: Watch!’ Mark 13.37.** Prayer brings forth revelation. ***What is revealed through prayer is also alertness to what is coming.*** The end times will bring great revelation to God’s people so that they may be aware of the enemy’s schemes. ***Being watchful keeps us from spiritual exhaustion.*** Prayer, consistent prayer keeps us alert and away from falling into temptation. Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. **Matthew 26.41** Prayer is what sustained Jesus through all His life here on earth. His life here must be a model for us all today. Even now He is at the right hand of the Father interceding for us. We overcome and conquer through our praying. We prevail over the enemy’s

The Principles of Prayer

schemes and tactics based on the mandate and principles by which prayer works.

Prayer

Dear Lord thank You for the principles You have shown us through your Word that helps us approach Your throne room. Forgive us for not abiding by them and not taking them seriously. As we know abide by Your principles of prayer, may we see the fruit thereof. In Jesus Name. Amen

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Pray without ceasing!

The Principles of Prayer

Let's Pray

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