



HOW TO DEVELOP A STRONG PRAYER LIFE

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Prayer has different expressions such as ***intimacy with God*** (includes prayer-reading the Word and fellowshiping with the Spirit), ***interceding for revival, justice, or social transformation*** (also referred to as contending prayer), providing ***prayer covering for individuals***, and ***praying for the sick***. In this way, we encounter God, do the works of the kingdom, and change the world.
- B. A consistent prayer life is essential to the forerunner ministry--only through a lifestyle of prayer can we receive the fullness of what God has provided for us. The forerunner commitment is to seek to spend at least two hours of prayer a day in any of these four expressions. I also encourage forerunners to pray-read through the book of Revelation once a week.
- C. What is prayer? It is talking to God. It is at the same time a great privilege, a fierce struggle, and a powerful miracle of the Spirit who helps us in our weakness in prayer.
- D. Prayer is a place of abiding in Christ or connecting with the Spirit that energizes us to love God (first commandment) which causes us to overflow in love for others (second commandment).
- ⁵ He who abides in Me...bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. (Jn. 15:5)***
- E. Prayer was never meant to be duty-based or merely results-oriented. Rather, it is the place of encounter with God where our spirit is energized as we grow to love Him more. It positions us to be energized to love God and people by receiving God's love as a Father and Bridegroom.
- F. We love others better as we encounter God's heart. We do not have to give up our prayer time to make time to minister to people. We can do both. Most of us can seize time for the kingdom from the time we spend on entertainment or in gaining extra money that we may not really need.
- G. Prayer that leads to intimacy with God protects our spirit from burnout as we minister to many people over the years. Our prayer life serves as a buffer against spiritual burnout. Maintaining a heart connect with Jesus is the lifeline that enables us for decades to sustain our ministry of winning the lost, healing the sick, and doing works of justice and compassion.



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II. PRACTICAL ISSUES IN DEVELOPING A CONSISTENT PRAYER LIFE

- A. Three ways to strengthen our prayer life are to set a ***schedule*** for regular prayer times, make a ***prayer list***, and have a ***right view*** of God. A schedule establishes ***“when”*** we will pray. A prayer list gives us focus on ***“what”*** to pray. A right view of God causes us to ***“want”*** to pray.
- B. Most people will pray ten times more with the simplicity of developing a schedule and prayer lists. Many who love God never develop a consistent prayer life because they lack these. Over the years I have talked with many who refuse to do these two things, considering them to be legalistic, though they confess with pain their inability to sustain their prayer life.
- C. Once our prayer time has been scheduled, we must consider some of that time as “sacred time,” treating it as a ***real appointment with the King***. I committed to the Lord to treat certain scheduled prayer times as sacred appointments that I would not miss except in an emergency.
- D. Using a prayer list is an essential tool that helps me focus as I pray. I take liberty to deviate from my prayer list or ***omit parts*** of it as the “winds of inspiration” touch me.

III. DEVELOPING A PRAYER LIST

- A. When developing a prayer list, it is helpful to understand that there are three main prayer themes.
 - 1). ***Gifts*** of the Spirit: God’s power and favor being released
 - 2). ***Fruit*** of the Spirit: God’s character formed in us or others
 - 3). ***Wisdom*** of the Spirit: God’s mind or the spirit of revelation imparted
- B. We ask for the gifts, fruit, and wisdom of the Spirit to be released in each prayer focus: intimacy, petition, and intercession. We connect with God, receive blessing, and change the world.
 - 1. Intimacy: Focuses on giving my love and devotion to God. This type of prayer includes worship, meditation on the Word (prayer-reading it), and fellowshiping with the Spirit.
 - 2. Petition: Asks for God’s blessing on my personal life and ministry. We pray for a breakthrough on our inner man (heart), circumstances (physical, financial, relational), and ministry that God’s power would be released through our hands, words, and deeds.



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3. Intercession: Asks for God's power or justice for others (people, places, strategic issues).
 - a). Prayer for people and places: Individuals in ministries, marketplace and government, and for the destiny of ministries, cities, or nations.
 - b). Prayer for strategic issues in society: Government (elections, abortion), oppression (human trafficking, abortion), natural disasters (hurricanes, droughts), diseases, etc.

- C. I use several prayer lists. **Obtain these free prayer lists:** *Ten Prayers to Strengthen Our Inner Man: F-E-L-L-O-W-S-H-I-P; Fellowshiping with the Spirit: T-R-U-S-T.* **For free notes:** *What to do in our Personal Prayer Times and How to Mediate on the Word.* See www.mikebickle.org.

IV. RIGHT VIEW OF GOD: TENDER FATHER AND PASSIONATE BRIDEGROOM

- A. Foundational to our life of prayer is cultivating a right view of God. Many have a wrong view of God that sees Him as an angry taskmaster forcing us to endure conversation (prayer) with Him to prove our devotion to Him. As we perceive God as our tender Father and Jesus as our passionate Bridegroom king, we will be energized in our spirit to confidently seek Him with all of our heart.

- B. Encountering the father heart of God is foundational to growing in prayer. Jesus prayed for us that we might know that the Father loves us as He loves Jesus, thus giving us great worth.
²³ That the world may know that You...have loved them as You have loved Me. (Jn. 17:23)

- C. We can have the assurance that we are enjoyed by God the Father, even in our weakness (Ps. 18:19, 35; 130:3-4). We pray very differently when our spirit is confident before God with assurance that He enjoys us. The Father is filled with tender mercy. He is gentle with our weakness after we repent. We have "received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'" In Hebrew, *abba* is a term of endearment, much like *papa* in our culture.
¹⁵ You received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." (Rom. 8:15)

- D. Understanding Jesus as our Bridegroom and ourselves as His cherished Bride equips us to have a vibrant prayer life (Eph. 5:29-32). Many view Jesus as mostly mad or mostly sad, but He has a heart filled with gladness (Heb. 1:9) and fiery affections in His jealous love for us.

- E. As sons of God, we are in the position to experience God's throne as heirs of His power (Rev. 3:21; Rom. 8:17). As the Bride, we are in the position to experience God's heart (affections).



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V. TEN PRAYERS TO RECEIVE STRENGTH IN THE INNER MAN: F-E-L-L-O-W-S-H-I-P

¹⁶ *To be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man... (Eph. 3:16)*

- A. **F- Fear of God:** Father, release the spirit of the fear of God into my heart. Release the lightning and thunder from Your Throne (Rev. 4:5) to strike my heart with Your majesty. Release holy dread on my heart that makes me tremble before You. Unite my heart to Your heart and Word.

¹¹ *Unite my heart (to Your heart and Word) to fear Your name. (Ps. 86:11)*

- B. **E- Endurance (perseverance, patience):** Father, strengthen my spirit with endurance that I may do Your will with zeal (diligence) and that I not quit in my fervent pursuit of You and Your will.

¹¹ *Being strengthened with all power...may have great endurance and patience... (Col. 1:11 NIV)*

- C. **L- Love:** Father, pour out Your love into my heart by releasing the influences of the Spirit to give me revelation of Your love for me, that it may overflow in love back to Jesus and to others. (The anointing to love God is our greatest goal, possession, and reward in this age).

⁹ *I pray, that your love may abound still more...in knowledge and all discernment. (Phil. 1:9)*

- D. **L- Light of glory:** Father, let me see the light of Your glory (or encounter the glory realm). Give me Holy Spirit encounters (dreams, visions, angelic visitations, manifestations of light, fire, wind) as You gave to Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John (Ex. 33-34:29-30; Isa. 6; Ezek. 1; Rev. 1).

⁶ *A great light from heaven shone around me...⁸ He said to me, "I am Jesus of Nazareth..."¹¹ I could not see for the glory of that light...I came to Damascus. (Acts 22:6-11)*

¹⁸ *And he (Moses) said, "Please, show me Your glory." (Ex. 33:18)*

⁶ *Lord, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us. (Ps. 4:6)*

- E. **O- One thing life focus:** Father, I choose to be a person of one thing who often sits at Your feet. I set my heart to spend quality time with You and to cultivate an inward gaze toward You. **Alert** me when I lose this focus, **align** my life circumstances so I can walk this out and **anoint** my times with You that I may feel Your love and feel desire for You and Your Word.

⁴ *One thing I have desired...all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord. (Ps. 27:4)*

⁴² *But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part... (Lk. 10:42)*



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1. The Word is to create a living active dialogue in our heart with God. We pray-read the Word or converse with Jesus as we read it. To love God with all our mind involves taking time to fill our heart with God's word. We gain revelation of God by meditating on it.
2. We gain the "fuel of intimacy" in times of prayer by connecting and relating to God as a person. This empowers us to love God and man. This is the key to not burning out. David set his heart to consistently set the Lord before him as a lifestyle.

⁸ ***I have set the Lord always before me... (Ps. 16:8)***

- F. ***W- Count me worthy*** (*faithfulness unto fullness*): Strengthen me to walk in such faithfulness that You consider me worthy to walk in my highest calling in this age and the age to come. We need God's help to see and gain victory over the blind spots in our life that we are not focused on.

¹¹ ***We pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power... (2 Thes. 1:11)***

No one is "worthy" to receive forgiveness. It is a free gift because of Jesus' worthiness. Rather, we are to have a **worthy response** to God by living free of compromise, thus we are prepared or are found worthy to walk in the fullness of our calling.

²³ ***May the God of peace sanctify you completely; may your spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless (without compromise) at the coming of our Lord... (1 Thes. 5:23)***

¹³ ***That He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before God... (1 Thes. 3:13)***

¹ ***I have made a covenant with my eyes; why should I look on a woman? (Job 31:1)***

- G. ***S- Speech***: Father, set a guard over my lips. Free me from defensive, angry, and foolish speech (Eph. 4:29; 5:4). Sustained communion with God requires restrained conversation with man. The Spirit is quenched in us by unwholesome speech: filthy, foolish, coarse jesting (Eph. 4:29-5:4)

³ ***Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips. (Ps. 141:3)***

¹⁴ ***Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable... (Ps. 19:14)***

- H. ***H- Humility***: Jesus, I want to learn from You how to walk in lowliness. I commit to take Your yoke of humility (lowliness of heart) on my life in my attitudes, speech, and actions.

²⁹ ***Take My yoke...and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart... (Mt. 11:29)***



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- I. **I- Insight unto intimacy** (*wisdom*): Father give me insight into Your Word, will, and ways. Give me wisdom that I may walk with You in intimacy under the Spirit's creative leadership. I want to partner together with You in every issue in my life including my finances, schedule, emotions, fears, addictions, circumstances, physical body (diet, health), relationships (in the home, office, ministry), my future, etc. Give me new ideas in each area of my life.

¹⁷ May give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him... (Eph. 1:17)

⁹ Ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰ that you may have a walk worthy of the Lord... (Col. 1:9-10)

²⁶ The Holy Spirit...will teach you all things... (Jn. 14:26)

- J. **P- Peace and Joy**: Father, strengthen my heart with supernatural peace and joy that overpowers fear, anxiety, phobias and addictions. Sin grows fastest when fear and anxiety are present in us.

⁷ The peace of God...will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:7)

¹³ Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope (*confidence*) by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 15:13)

VI. FELLOWSHIPING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT :T-R-U-S-T

- A. **T- Thank you**: recognize the Spirit's indwelling presence in you simply by thanking Him for it. Pray, "Thank you Holy Spirit, for Your bright presence in me. I love Your presence. Apart from connecting with You, I can do nothing that effectively (supernaturally) renews my love, sustains my zeal for righteousness, and releases revelation and power in my heart.

He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. (Jn. 15:5)

- B. **R - Release Revelation**: ask (thank) the Spirit to release abundant revelation of God's heart, word and purposes to you. Pray, "Holy Spirit, release abundant revelation in me".

May give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him... (Eph. 1:17)

- C. **U- Use me**: ask the Spirit to use you more and more in the spiritual gifts to minister to others. We pray, "Thank you Spirit, for releasing the manifestation of Your gifts and power through me to help others".

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all... (1 Cor. 12:7)



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- D. **S- Strengthen me:** ask the Spirit to strengthen your mind, emotions and speech with His might. His power is already in us (Gal. 5:22-23) therefore, pray, “Thank you for the presence of Your love, peace, patience, and self-control in me” or “Thank You for warring against my flesh and guarding my speech”.

...To be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man... (Eph. 3:16)

- E. **T- Teach me:** ask the Spirit to teach you about God’s will and ways that He may manifest His leadership in every issue in your life including finances, schedule, circumstances, emotions, physical body (diet, health), relationships, alignment of the people you are responsible for (in the home, office, ministry), future, greatness in God, opportunities with divine appointments, fears, addictions and shortcomings. Ask that He establish God’s order in your home, job and ministry. We pray, “Spirit, I love Your will and ways, therefore, manifest Your leadership in me”. He will give us new ideas, order our steps and open doors of opportunity for strategic alliances in each area of our life as we ask Him.

The Holy Spirit...will teach you all things... (Jn. 14:26)

The Spirit of truth...will guide you into all truth; He will tell you things to come. (Jn. 16:13)

The anointing...abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things. (1 Jn. 2:27)