

SPIRIT OF LIFE MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL
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SESSION 58 - BIBLE PRAYER LESSON 1
SEVEN STEPS TO ANSWERED PRAYER PART 1

Learning how to pray effectively is one of the most important things a believer can ever do in his Christian walk. Really, a believer cannot be a success in fulfilling God's purpose in his life if he does not know how to pray according to biblical principles.

A believer's prayer life should be based upon the Word of God. In this study course, we're going to discuss the many principles of prayer that are found in the Word of God.

As we study these principles of prayer, determine to get them into your heart so you can practice them in your own private prayer life. This is what we have been doing for a long time and have been receiving the answers to our prayers ever since!

In this series, we will first look at seven steps that any believer can take in order to receive the answer to his prayer. If a person will faithfully practice the seven steps in prayer, he can be sure to receive an answer every time.

STEP NUMBER 1
BE SPECIFIC AND STAND ON GOD'S PROMISES

Step number one to receiving answered prayer is ***decide what you want from God and find the scripture or scriptures that definitely promise you these things.***

So many times, we are indefinite in our praying. We would rather folks pray two or three minutes and know what they're praying about than to pray for two or three hours and not know what they're praying about.

Sometimes when we ask people what they are praying about, they answer that they don't know. I asked one person once what he was praying about, and he said he was praying just to be praying! We realize there is one kind of prayer whereby we pray to have fellowship with God. But we are talking about praying to God specifically in order to receive an *answer to prayer*. If we are not careful, the first kind of praying I talked about - praying to have fellowship with God - will spill over into the realm of praying specifically in order to receive an answer.

One time a certain minister asked a preacher to pray for him. The preacher asked him what he wanted him to pray for, and he said he didn't know.

Now if you went to a grocery store and pushed your cart up and down the aisles, but didn't buy anything, people would think something was wrong with you! But on the other hand, if someone went to the store to buy a few things, and he bought just those things, you wouldn't think anything was wrong. In fact, you could say he was being definite in what he was doing. In the same way, decide what you want from God and be definite about it. Then find scriptures from the Word that promise you whatever it is that you want. Be specific in what you pray for.

Too few Christians realize the importance of the Word of God in prayer. We know that faith begins where the will of God is known. And we know that God's Word is His will. So, find scriptures that definitely promise the things you are asking for.

If the Scriptures don't promise you the things you are desiring, you don't have any business praying for those things. And you shouldn't want anything that the Word of God says you shouldn't have. Many believers are trying to pray beyond their faith. But it's the Word that gives you faith.

The reason many people are not praying with confidence and faith is that they are not finding Scripture that proves that God wants them to have those things they are desiring. They don't know for sure if it's God's will or not. They may hope it is, but they can't know for sure, because faith begins where the will, or the word of God is known.

Once you find the scriptures that promise you what you desire from God, get those scriptures firmly fixed in your heart, not just in your mind. To do that, you will have to meditate [think upon] the Word of God.

JOSHUA 1:8

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt MEDITATE therein day and night that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for THEN thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and THEN thou shalt have good success."

Another translation says, "***... that thou mayest be able to deal wisely in the affairs of life.***" Success in life comes by meditating on God's Word. That's the way you'll build God's Word into your inner consciousness, into your spirit. And as you feed upon the Word by meditating, you will be ready to use these scriptures against demons who will try to make you doubt God and who will try to rob you of what you want. *It is the devil who tries to make you doubt God.*

So many times, people who have not known the Word have prayed, and if they did not get the answer when they thought they should, they said, “Well, it must not be the will of God.” But all the time the promises of God were there for them to appropriate. If whatever you’re praying about is in the Word, then it is the will of God.

One time a woman had many others pray with her for her son who was afflicted with a certain sickness. When he didn’t get better, she concluded that it just wasn’t God’s will for her son to be healed. She didn’t have any scriptures ready to use against the devil because she wasn’t standing on the Word. She did not have the Word hidden in her heart as it tells us to in Psalm 119:11.

The truth was, the devil told her that it was not the will of God for her son to be healed, and she believed the devil’s lie. Unconsciously, she made the bible out to be a lie and Jesus to be unjust because the Bible clearly tells us healing is part of our redemption. [Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matthew 8:17; 1 Peter 2:24.]

Use the Sword of the Spirit Against the Devil

When you get the Word firmly fixed in your heart and mind, you can use it against the devil. When Jesus was tempted by the devil to turn the stones into bread, Jesus just answered with the Word.

He said in Matthew 4:4,

“It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

Then in Matthew 4:7-11 the Bible says that Satan took Jesus upon a pinnacle of the temple and tempted Jesus again.

Matthew 4:7-11

***7 Jesus said unto him. It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.
8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;
9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.
10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.
11 Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.”***

Jesus did not use a single weapon to defeat the devil on this occasion that the saints of God do not have available to them today. When you are being tempted by the enemy, all you have to do is say, ***“It is written”*** and use the word of God against Satan. But in order to be able to say that and to resist the devil effectively, you must be armed with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. In other words, you must hide God’s word in your heart by meditating on it continually to make it to work for you. Then you will be able to withstand the attacks of the enemy.

A man was preaching in Houston once when another preacher friend asked him to agree with him for the healing of his high blood pressure. So, they joined hands and agreed. Some time later the preacher was in his church and was using the scripture in **Matthew 18:19**, which says, ***“...That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.”***

The preacher’s friend later told him how he had agreed with him and had gone home feeling terrible because his blood pressure was even higher than usual. The devil told him that he wasn’t going to get his healing. But every time the devil bothered him, he would say, “It is written.” And he would quote the Word of God.

He kept confessing that if two shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by the Father [**Matthew 18:19**]. He said after he stood his ground like that for three nights, all the symptoms left, and he won the victory.

Fight the Good Fight of Faith

It may take time to build the Word into your spirit so you can stand in faith for an answer to prayer. In **1 Timothy 6:12** it says, ***“Fight the good fight of faith...”*** If there weren’t any hindrances to faith, there wouldn’t be a fight. When it comes to the natural things, people will fight tooth and toenail for what belongs to them. But when it comes to spiritual things, many times they just roll over and play dead!

For instance, if someone comes to your house and claims your children and your home, you would fight him for your family because it belongs to you. Or, what if your husband came home and said he had found another woman and he wanted to bring her into your house and move you out? You would certainly put up a fight, wouldn’t you?

Well, if God’s Word says something belongs to you, then it belongs to you! So put up a fight by standing your ground on God’s word. If God didn’t intend for you to have what He promised you, then He wouldn’t have promised it to you!

It is up to you to fight the good fight of faith with the Word and receive your promised blessing and everything that God has promised you.

When it comes to ***natural*** things, people will stand up for what belongs to them. But when it comes to ***spiritual*** things and receiving healing or the blessings and benefits of God that belong to us, many believers do not stand their ground with the word of God. Some think they are being humble by saying, “Well, the will of God be done,” when really it is the will of Satan that is being done. You see, there is a good fight of faith that the believer must fight to appropriate and receive their promised blessing, their rightful inheritance in Christ.

In order to fight the good fight of faith, you must learn how to use the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Fighting the good fight of faith is speaking the Word out of your mouth that you believe in your heart or your spirit.

That is why it is important to hide the Word of God in your heart and be ready to use scriptures against demons when they try to attack you and try to make you doubt God’s Word. Be ready to say to Satan, “It is written” and to quote God’s word, which is God’s will, about your situation.

There are many who will side in with the devil and believe his lies over God’s Word. There are also folks who in the natural will unconsciously side in with the devil to try to discourage you in spiritual things, specifically your faith. But you must stand your ground on God’s Word if the enemy attacks you in spirit, soul, or body.

A preacher was holding some services in Texas once when there was an outbreak of influenza. So many people were ill that the schools had to shut down. Later the preacher read in the paper that more people in Dallas County had died from this epidemic than a similar one following World War 1. This influenza epidemic in Texas affected this preacher’s meetings terribly. Some people became ill and never came back to his meetings. The symptoms of this type of influenza were extremely severe (sounds like Covid, right?)

Every one of those symptoms came on the preacher’s body in the nighttime, but he never told a single person. He just kept saying, “It is written,” and stood his ground against the influenza and refused to accept it based on the will of God, which is God’s word. He was holding that meeting, and sinners were coming to the Lord and got saved. It was not God’s will to close that meeting down.

People sometimes have the silliest ideas about these things. They say, for example, that it is the will of God for people to be sick. But that contradicts God’s Word!

If it were true that sickness is the will of God, why then have so many churches built hospitals to try to get people well? It would be out of the will of God! Doctors are fighting sickness and disease, too, but they are fighting with different weapons. If it were God's will for people to be sick, then it would not be God's will for people to go to doctors because doctors are fighting sickness and disease too. Also, if it is the will of God for people to be sick, then why not pray for others to become sick so they can enjoy the same "blessing" (sic) of sickness and disease and be in God's will!

After this preacher prayed and said, "It is written" and stood on God's word against those influenza symptoms that tried to attack his body, he got better and continued on with his services. He never did get influenza. When you have the foundation of God's Word under you, you can stand your ground against Satan's attacks.

STEP NUMBER TWO

YOU MUST ASK GOD FOR WHAT YOU WANT

We talked about the first step to receiving answered prayer. Step one is to decide what you want from God and find scriptures that promise you the things you desire.

Step number two to receiving answered prayer is ask God for the things you want and believe that you receive them.

Certainly, the Lord knows what we need even before we ask, but He still said for us to ask Him. In **Matthew 6:32** it says, **"...your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."** But He also tells us to ask for what you need in John **16:24** which says, **"...ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."**

To say that you are leaving it up to God and that you know He will automatically do whatever is best is unscriptural. Jesus Himself said we are to ask God for what we need.

JOHN 16:23, 24

**"23 And in that day ye shall ASK me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.
24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."**

MATTHEW 7:7-8

"7 ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”

MARK 11:23-24

“23 For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

24 Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”

So, ask God for the things you want and need, and then believe that you have them. In other words, when you pray, believe you receive what you asked for.

Do you love a challenge? **Mark 11:24** challenges me. It says in effect, “Believe you receive right then when you pray.” The Amplified Bible says, ***“...whatever you ask for in prayer, believe – trust and be confident – that it is granted to you, and you will [get it].”***

You’ve got to believe you have the answer BEFORE you get it!

Sense Knowledge Truth vs. Revelation Truth

In a prayer line at a meeting one woman said that she wasn’t going to believe she had something her physical senses told her she did not have. The preacher told her just to go sit down then because according to the Scriptures, she would never get anything from God believing the way she did!

BELIEVE GOD – NOT SATAN! Satan will tell you that you do not have the answer to your prayer. Satan operates in the sense realm. Satan is operating as the god of this world [**2 Corinthians 4:4**]. You will never get anywhere spiritually until you realize that there are two kinds of truth. First, there is sense-knowledge truth, and second, revelation truth, which is the truth of God’s Word.

Some people think that truth pertains to things they can see with their physical eye, but you cannot see the things of the spirit with the natural eye. Spiritual things are not natural, and they are not material. Everything we need is provided for us in the spiritual realm by God’s Word.

EPHESIANS 1:3

“3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS in heavenly places in Christ.”

This scripture means that everything we need has been provided for us IN CHRIST JESUS. You cannot see those things, but they are there because God's Word says they are there.

There is sense-knowledge truth and there is revelation truth. When sense-knowledge truth contradicts revelation truth which is the truth of God's Word, then you must start walking by revelation truth. We must walk by what *God has said* in his Word. That which is in the spiritual realm is made real in the natural realm through your faith in the word of God. Your faith grasps it and creates the reality of it in your life. (Romans 4:17).

So, when you pray, believe that you receive whatever it is you are praying for, and you shall have it. That's beyond natural thinking. In fact, the natural mind cannot grasp it. Many of the leaders of our churches today are sense-knowledge people. Sense knowledge has taken the church captive. *We are to walk by faith and not by sight.* (2 Cor. 5:7). Believe the truth and not a lie.

Once a man was preaching at a certain church which met in a small building. The weather outside was cold, so they were using stoves to heat the building. Sometimes the inside of the building grew very hot, and the preacher would get too warm when he preached. One night he was perspiring as he stepped out of that small building to get some air. When he stepped outside, the cold air hit him in the face and his throat started hurting. By the time he got to the parking lot he could hardly talk. Throughout all the next day he couldn't talk above a whisper. Then his chest started to hurt.

He started reading scriptures on healing. With his Bible opened before him he prayed silently. He said, "Lord, Your Word tells me that I am healed. If I asked my flesh or other people around me if I was healed, the answer would be no. If I asked my feelings if I was healed, they would say I wasn't healed. But your Word says, *'...let God be true, but every man a liar...'* (Romans 3:4). So, if I say I am not healed, I am a liar because your Word says that You cannot lie."

ROMANS 3:4

"4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."

He told the Lord that he was going to get up and go over to the church and preach. So, he went next door to the church and went into the service. When he got up to preach, he went up to the microphone and said, "I want to thank God that I am healed." The congregation looked at him like he was crazy because he was barely whispering.

He began to tell them what the Word of God says about healing, and he proved to them from the Word that he was healed. He told them what God says is true, and that if he said he wasn't healed, he would be lying. He told them he wanted them all to stand and praise God with him because he was healed. Some stood and began praising God.

He hadn't said, "Hallelujah!" three times when his voice came back. He started preaching, and he preached up a storm! That crowd saw what God did. They saw faith in God's Word work right in front of their eyes. All you must do is ask God for the things you need and want that His Word has promised and BELIEVE YOU RECEIVE THEM when you ask for them. Then you will have whatever it is you need from God.

Some people ask why God will not heal them after they have had many people pray for them and have had no results. Very often we ask them if they have ever acted as though the Word is so.

People MUST ACT like the scriptures are true. If they don't act like the Word is true, they are walking by what their senses are telling them and not by what the Bible says. That is what is throwing them off. They are missing the faith realm entirely, which is based on what the WORD says, and not on what they SEE or feel.