

Prayers of the Saints: Power of Corporate Prayer

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SCRIPTURE

Ex 30:7-8: And Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it [*the altar of incense*]. Every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it, and when Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it, a regular incense offering before the LORD throughout your generations.

Mal 1:11: For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.

Rev 5:8: And when He [*the Lamb*] had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

A VISION FOR CORPORATE PRAYER

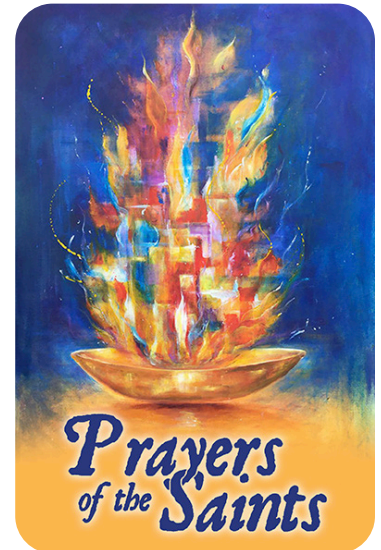
Why pray together? You likely agree that prayer is important, but let's be realistic; not many of us have the luxury of praying for an hour and a half in the morning. Life comes at us too fast.

Actually, I slow down to pray with other believers *because* life is coming at me so fast. Instinctively, I respond to life's speed with my own speed. That creates a ten-car pileup not only in my outward life but also in my soul. I can't imagine leading my family or community without corporate prayer. I do these morning prayer times not from discipline but from *learned desperation*. I am constant in corporate prayer because the Jesus communities I'm in are constant in need. I have no interest in doing anything that hasn't been prayed for and prayed over. What I pray over lasts, and what I don't pray over doesn't last. But there's more: A Jesus

community is characterized by wonder, and the conduit to that is prayer. I've seen what happens when the Spirit of Jesus inhabits a community—everything starts to sparkle.

Praying together is not a luxury, nor is it something just for "spiritual" Christians; it's the very *breath of the church*. Most of us don't have the faintest idea of what that means...

...without a supportive, praying community, it's easy to lose hope, to wear out in the work of prayer. Unless entire churches learn to pray together, individual prayer can lose steam. And that isn't just in official prayer meetings but in our families and small groups too, and even in that random phone conversation. That's the passion of this book—to foster praying communities (Miller, Paul. *A Praying Church*. pp 6-7).



- 1: Power of Corporate Prayer** (4/21)
- 2: Diagnosis: Why don't we want to pray?** (4/28)
- 3: History of Prayer in the Bible** (5/5)
No CE (5/12)
- 4: The Goal of Prayer** (5/19)
- 5: Saints in Motion** (5/26)
- 6: Praying without ceasing: individually** (6/2)
- 7: Praying without ceasing: corporately** (6/9)

Want more to enhance your prayer life?

A Praying Church: Becoming people of hope in a discouraging world by Paul E. Miller

Prayer, Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God by Timothy Keller

Prayer: Does it make a difference? by Philip Yancy

“TEACH US TO PRAY”

I. The request of the disciples

- Note what the disciples *didn't* ask Jesus to teach them
- A good request

II. The answer: Luke 11:1-13 – let's read and note some details

- From singular mindset to plural
- Structure
 - The address: Our Father
 - The 5 askings (commands, requests, etc.)
 - Hallowed be your Name (sanctify your Name)
 - Your Kingdom come (bring in your Kingdom)
 - Give us each day our daily bread
 - Forgive us our sins – as we forgive those who sin against us
 - Lead us not into temptation

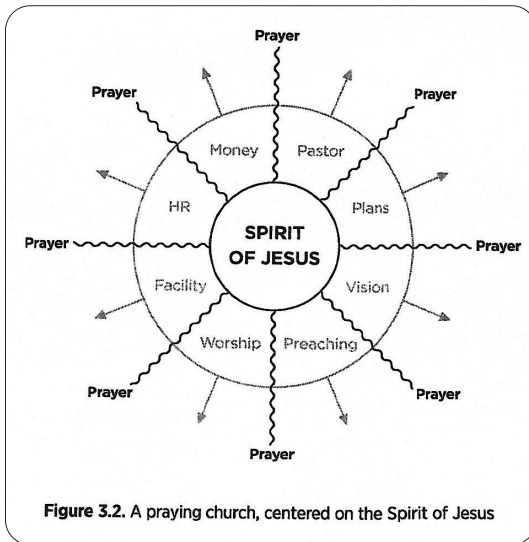
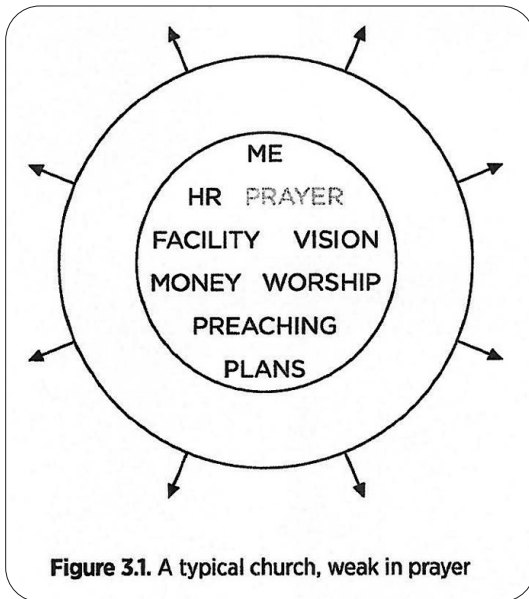
C. The parable (vv 5-8)

D. The promise (vv 9-10)

E. The punch line (vv 11-13)

III. Learning to pray

A. Re-understanding prayer



Graphics taken from *A Praying Church*

B. It's a lot like learning to speak (or learning a new language)

Eugene Peterson reminds us [in his book *Working the Angles*] that “because we learned language so early in our lives we have no memory of the process” and would therefore imagine that it was we who took the initiative to learn how to speak. However, that is not the case. “Language is spoken into us; we learn language only as we are spoken to. We are plunged at birth into a sea of language... Then slowly syllable by syllable we acquire the capacity to answer: mama, papa, bottle, blanket, yes, no. Not one of these words was a first word... All speech is answering speech. We were all spoken to before we spoke.” In the years since Peterson wrote, studies have shown that children’s ability to understand and communicate is profoundly affected by the number of words and the breadth of vocabulary to which they are exposed as infants and toddlers. We speak only to the degree we are spoken to (Keller, Timothy. *Prayer*).

C. Application: the more we *listen to* our Father, the more our prayer language takes shape

IV. Praying Scripture

- A. Exodus 20:1-17 (10 Commandments)
- B. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (The Shema)
- C. Psalm 8 (How magnificent Your Name)
- D. Psalm 23 (The Lord our Shepherd)
- E. Matthew 28:18-20 (The Great Commission)
- F. John 1:1-14 (The Incarnation)
- G. 1 Corinthians 13 (The Love chapter)
- H. Hebrews 12:1-3 (Perseverance)

Exodus 20:1-17 (10 Commandments)

Our Father, *You have spoken to us, reminding us that,*

² *You are the Lord our God, who brought us out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You have saved us from the slavery of sin and satan by Your blood shed on the cross.*

³ *Please don't let us have any other gods before You.*

⁴ *Help us not to make for ourselves a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ We don't want to bow down to them or serve them, because You, Lord God are a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate You, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love You and keep Your commandments.*

⁷ *Guard us from taking Your name O God, in vain, for You will not hold anyone guiltless who takes Your name in vain.*

⁸ *Cause us to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days we labor, and we do all our work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to You, our Lord God. On it You have commanded that we shall not do any work: we, or our son, or our daughter, our employees, or our livestock, or the sojourner who is within our gates. ¹¹ For in six days You, Lord, made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and You rested on the seventh day. Therefore You blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*

¹² *Teach us how to honor our fathers and our mothers, that our days may be long in the land that You are giving us.*

¹³ *Guard us from murder, and guard us from harboring any anger and hatred in our hearts toward anyone else.*

¹⁴ *Guard us from adultery, both literal and spiritual in thought, word, or deed.*

¹⁵ *Guard us from stealing, and cause us to be content with what we have.*

¹⁶ *Help us to love our neighbors and never bear false witness against any of them.*

¹⁷ *Knowing that all sin and wrongdoing begins in the heart, empower us to not covet anything in our neighbor's household: his wife, his possessions, whatever belongs to him.*

Thank you, Father, that our righteousness is not based on our obedience to this list because Your Son, Jesus Christ, fully obeyed this list of commandments, and by faith I live in His righteousness. Now please let His Spirit live more fully in us that these laws would be our delight. Amen.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (The Shema)

Our Father, we, as your chosen people, ⁴ Israel, praise You that You, O Lord our God, You are perfectly unified as One.

⁵ *We ask that you increase our love for You – Enable us to love You with all our hearts and with all our souls and with all our might.*

⁶ *And these words that You command us, let them be on our hearts. En-passion us ⁷ to teach them diligently to our children, and to talk of them when we sit in our houses, and when we walk by the way, and when we lie down, and when we rise. ⁸ Help us to shall bind them as a sign on our hands, and let them be as frontlets between our eyes to the point that Your Word influences and shapes all that we see. ⁹ Embolden us to write Your Words on the doorposts of our houses and on our gates.*

May we daily crave the spiritual manna that You offer each day in Your Word. May we daily consume Christ. Amen.

Psalm 8 (How magnificent Your Name)

¹ *O Lord, our Master, how majestic is Your name in all the earth! You have set Your glory above the heavens.*

² *Out of the mouth of babies and infants, You have established strength because of Your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.*

³ *When we look at Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place, ⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?*

⁵ *Yet you have made us a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned us with glory and honor. ⁶ You have given us dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under our feet, ⁷ all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, ⁸ the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.*

⁹ *O Lord, our Master, how majestic is Your name in all the earth! Amen.*

Psalm 23 (The Lord our Shepherd)

¹ *O Lord, you are our good shepherd; we shall never be in want.*

² *You make us lie down in green pastures. You lead us beside still waters.*

³ *You restore our souls. You lead us in paths of righteousness for Your name's sake.*

⁴ *Even though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, We will fear no evil, for You are with us; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort us.*

⁵ *You prepare a table before us in the presence of our enemies; You anoint our heads with oil; our cups overflow.*

⁶ *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives, and we shall dwell in Your house, O Lord, forever. Amen.*

Matthew 28:18-20 (The Great Commission)

¹⁸ Dear Lord Jesus, You came and said to your original disciples and also to us that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to You by the Father. You have commanded us to ¹⁹ “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that You have commanded us.”

Therefore, as we go through life, make it to be our passion to make disciples. Let us rejoice to see more and more people baptized into Your Name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Help us to teach them to observe all that You have commanded us in what it means to live in covenant with You. And we thank you for the assurance that You are with us always, to the end of the age. Amen.

John 1:1-14 (The Incarnation)

Dear Father, ¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with You, O God, and the Word was You! ² He was in the beginning with You. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶ Thank you for the forerunner You sent, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ We know that he was not the light, but he came to bear witness about the light.

⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. ¹² But to us who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right for us to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of You, O God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from You, Father, full of grace and truth. Amen.

1 Corinthians 13 (The Love chapter)

Dear Father, ¹ If we speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, we are simply a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if we have prophetic powers, and if we can understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if we have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, we are nothing. ³ If we give away all we have, and if we deliver up our bodies to be burned, but have not love, we gain nothing.

⁴ Transform our hearts that we might look like our Lord Jesus Christ. That we would love like Him with patience and kindness. That we would not envy or boast. Let us not be

arrogant ⁵ or rude. Help us not to insist on our own way. Let us not be irritable or resentful. Enable us ⁶ not to rejoice at wrongdoing, but rather enable us to rejoice with the truth. ⁷ Transform our hearts that we would bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, and endures all things.

We praise You, Father, that ⁸ Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. ¹¹ When we were children, we spoke like children, we thought like children, we reasoned like children. But when we became mature, we gave up childish ways. ¹² For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now we know in part; then we shall know fully, even as we have been fully known.

¹³ So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love. Please, Father, work Your love into our hearts. Amen.

Hebrews 12:1-3 (Perseverance)

Dear Father, ¹ since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses —those saints who have gone before us in the Christian life and who finished well— help us also to lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and help us run with endurance the race that You have set before us. As painful as it may be, please show us those weights and sins that cling to us and stunt our growth. Give us the power and fortitude to be rid of them.

Remind us daily to ² look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of Your throne, O God.

³ Help us to think about Him constantly, He who endured from sinners such hostility against Himself, so that we may not grow weary or loose heart. Amen.