

How to Pray in Power Part 1: The Power of Humility

August 20, 2023

Matthew 6:5-6

Prayer is not an independent power apart from God. Prayer is not witchcraft using God for my own purposes. In James 5:16, the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much, and so there IS power in prayer. **What is Praying in Power? What is the attitude of the Heart?**

Listed below are 5 Postures of Prayer:

- 1) **It Blesses God:** Ps. 142:2, being poured out before the Lord. When burned, incense and oils are likened to prayer, Rev. 5:8, 8:4. Leviticus 16:12, incense and fire are connected to prayer. Ex. 30:1-10 describes three qualities of service at the Altar of Incense. **Quality 1: Continual Burning:** V7-8, characteristic of tabernacle worship. **Quality 2: Careful Obedience:** V9, no strange incense. V34 gives an exact measurement and only for the tabernacle worship and holy unto the Lord (V38). Prayer is to bless the Lord. **Quality 3: Confession of Sin:** Ex. 30:10, prayers are connected to cleanness. Ps. 66:18, prayers are to bless God from His people who have been made clean.
- 2) **It Elevates Others:** Ruth 2:19, Naomi prays for blessing upon the man who blessed Ruth with an abundant gathering. Ruth 2:20, Naomi blesses the Lord for His kindness to them. Naomi was grateful for Boaz's generosity to Ruth.
- 3) **It Admits Desperation:** 1 Sam. 1:10, Samuel was born from the prayers of Hannah. She prayed in bitterness of her soul and wept in anguish. Hannah knew she was utterly powerless and appealed to God for an answer.
- 4) **It Crushes Self:** Job 1:20-22, Job makes two theological proclamations: In regard to man, he comes into the world with nothing and leaves with nothing. In regard to God, God gives and takes away. God is everything and man is nothing. Job blesses the Lord for what he has been given and comforts himself in God's right to take everything away. Man will leave with nothing. When God takes it away is up to God.
- 5) **It Pleads for Grace:** Jer. 14:7-9, Jeremiah pleads for Israel, in 14:10-12, Yahweh tells Jeremiah not to pray for Israel. Jeremiah pleads to the Lord to relent because of the prophets who are falsely using His name to deceive Israel in 14:13. Yahweh tells Jeremiah that the false prophets will be cast into the street and judged in 14:14-18. Jeremiah prays again in 14:19-22 for Judah, Zion, and appealing to Yahweh Israel's God. In 15:1, 3, Yahweh says that even if Moses and Samuel stood before Him, He would be **not** be favorable to them. In 15:10, Jeremiah prays again lamenting his life. God promises that Jeremiah will be delivered and a remnant with him, 15:11-21. God also promises to judge Babylon in Chapter 50. In all these prayers God never rebukes Jeremiah for praying for Israel.

The posture of prayer is total humility. Matthew 6:5-6 commands us to not be like the hypocrites (unbelievers) who desire to be heard in the open for their own glory. Jesus commands us to pray humbly. False believers can pray, Cain prayed but wouldn't repent, Gen. 4:9,13. The false believer of Matt. 7:21-22 was never known by Jesus and sent to the Lake of Fire or Ghena (Hell), Rev. 22:15. Jesus will be there to judge and administer torment to those in hell, Rev. 14:10.

>>The parable in Luke 18:9-14 of the Pharisee and the tax collector which one goes away justified and right with the Lord?

>>Be humbled, be humiliated, find power in humility.

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Further Discussion and Application

What are the ways that we can praise and bless the Lord? What should our focus be when blessing the Lord? What things do you bless the Lord for?

When we pray for the elevation of others what do we love and desire for our brothers and sisters in Christ? How did Christ model this for us in John 17? How did Christ model this for us in Philippians 2?

Desperation is a powerful force. When have our prayers been desperate in our lives? What was the result of the prayers? What things changed in us as a result of these prayers? What does total humility produce in our lives? 1 Peter 5:5 gives us a proverb from Prov. 3:34. He gives us the attitude of the heart in Is. 57:15 of the passage in 1 Pet. 5:5. What does God do for the those who are humble?

How do we develop this type of humility? What would change in our actions? What would change in our speech? What would this new more Christlike slave look like? Why don't we rush to that type of humility and find grace from the Lord? How can we grow together and pursue this Christlikeness?

Jeremiah continued to pray on behalf of Israel. God had determined the path for Israel in Babylon and the destruction of Jerusalem. But what did Jeremiah learn about the Lord through all of his petitions to the Lord? What was the promise the Lord reminded Jeremiah of in Jeremiah 32:36-44?

How will these 5 postures of prayer transform our lives and give more honor and glory to our Lord?