



TEEN TREE OF LIFE THE DOCTRINE OF PRAYER

Part 2

April 1, 2018

BEFORE we begin, if you are a believer in Jesus Christ, take a moment to name your sins to God the Father. This will allow you to be filled with the power of The Holy Spirit as you read this booklet (EPH 5:18 & 1JO 1:9). IF YOU HAVE never believed in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you have that opportunity right now. Simply tell God the

Father that you are believing on His Son Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. If you make that decision, you are now a believer and will always be a child of God! When you die, you will spend eternity with Him forever in heaven! (JOH 3:16 & ACT 16:31).

As we continue our study of the Doctrine of Prayer, we learn that grace is a principle in prayer. This principle is taught in **HEB 4:16: Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.** As you know, we always turn to God in prayer in times of need! This verse is saying to do so with confidence because God is Gracious!

As we learned last week, prayer is the privilege of the Royal Priesthood and since grace is the basis of prayer, no believer can come to God in prayer and expect to be heard on the basis of his human merit. Nothing you can do on your own, no ability, or any other human success story will change how God accepts prayer. He doesn't care what you've achieved or are able to accomplish unless it's in His Divine Power through the filling of The Holy Spirit! Every believer must approach God on the basis of the Merits of Jesus Christ. The Father has already been satisfied with Christ. He accepts and hears our prayers on the basis of the fact that we are believers in Christ. In other words, God doesn't answer prayer because we're good, because we're kind, or because we're sincere. God hears and answers prayer on the basis of whom and what Christ is.

A very important procedure to remember when praying is that you must pray for God's Will to be accomplished. So you shouldn't pray that God will help you find your lost dog but that His Will is accomplished concerning finding your lost dog. The difference here is that maybe God, who is all-knowing, knows that your dog needs to be prevented from biting a small child because the dog has a bad temper. And because of this, God's Will is that your dog runs away rather than bite the poor child!

You see, God knows the ending so He knows what's best! You don't know what's best so the obvious thing is to pray for God's Will to be accomplished.

There are three sources of prayer received by God the Father. The first source of prayers is The Greatest Prayer Warrior of all – The Lord Jesus Christ. He prays on our behalf, as Our Great High Priest: **Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession [pray] for them. (HEB 7:25)**

The second source of prayer is our Helper – God The Holy Spirit: **In the same way, the Holy Spirit helps us where we are weak. We do not know how to pray or what we should pray for, but the Holy Spirit prays to God for us with sounds that cannot be put into words. God knows the hearts of men. He knows what the Holy Spirit is thinking. The Holy Spirit prays for those who belong to Christ the way God wants Him to pray. (ROM 8:26-27 - New Life Version)**

The third source of prayer is the believer priest. That's you and me! The Bible encourages us to pray as we learned above in **HEB 4:16**. Let's look at the **New Life Version: Let us go with complete trust to the throne of God. We will receive His loving-kindness and have His loving-favor to help us whenever we need it.**

Now let's look at the principles of prayer related to our Priesthood. All believers in the Church-Age (the time in which we live) are royal priests and represent themselves before God. There is no longer a specialized priesthood like the Levitical priesthood of Israel. Every Church-Age believer, regardless of race or background, is a royal priest. Every believer is a priest, both male and female. One of our great priestly functions is prayer. Jesus Christ, in His human nature as our High Priest, remembers us in prayer. And God the Holy Spirit, as we learned above, prays for us with sounds too great for words. As a priest, the believer also has the privilege of intercessory prayer – which is praying for others.

The greatest intercessory prayer of all time is when Jesus Christ prayed, while on the Cross: **But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." (LUK 23:34)** Do you get this picture? Our Lord has been nailed to a cross and he's praying for the two thieves beside Him!

Prayer is a part of Christian service and because it is, prayer must comply with the doctrinal principles of Christian service. Since every believer is in full-time Christian service, he should pray in line with that service. This includes naming and citing your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name in order to be filled with The Spirit when praying. If you do, your intercession for others will be Divine good rather than human good or dead works. The principles of Christian service apply to every prayer just as much as they do to witnessing or to the fact that your job is a part of Christian service.

The principle of prayer is based on two doctrines of Scripture. The first is the post-salvation spiritual life. The post-salvation spiritual life is defined as harmonious rapport with God. It's your relationship with God and prayer is a huge part of it. The second

doctrine is the Integrity of God as the source of all answers to prayer. This includes the explanation of why some prayers are not answered.

We fail in prayer, because in the malfunction of our spiritual life, we do not understand the Will and Plan of God for our lives. You must understand the importance of prayer being compatible with the Plan of God for the Church. We fail in prayer, because we fail to rebound when we sin. Therefore, when perpetual carnality sets in, it is inevitable that we get into serious discipline and so many problems that we start praying to God for help and our prayers do not get to the Throne of Grace. Only the emergency procedure of Rebound as outlined in **1JOH 1:9** can correct that situation: ***If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*** This verse, as we have learned, describes rebound. Without rebound, there is no spiritual life according to **EPH 5:18: *And do not get drunk with wine, or that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit...***

Spiritual skills must precede production skills for an effective prayer life. Spiritual skills include: the Filling of The Holy Spirit, Bible doctrine resident in your soul, and the execution of the Plan of God. Spiritual growth increases the power of prayer in your life. So, if you stick to studying God's Word, you will advance through perception, metabolization, and application of doctrine and this will increase your prayer life.

The more you learn about the Will of God from Bible doctrine, the more effective your prayer life will be. You can only be effective in prayer if you make use of your spiritual skills. Your spiritual skills must be honed in order for you to then produce Divine good which will glorify God!

Production skills minus spiritual skills equal the performance of human good and dead works in prayer. What this means is that if you try to do good without knowing and applying God's Word and being filled with The Holy Spirit, what you do will not be Divine good. It will be wood, hay and straw: ***According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. (1COR 3:10-15)***

Again, the key to prayer is the attainment of the spiritual skills: The filling of The Spirit, learning Bible doctrine, and execution of the Plan of God.

{to be continued}