



YES



NO

# TEEN TREE OF LIFE THE DOCTRINE OF PRAYER

Part 4

April 15, 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).***

Last week, we looked at **ACTS 12** to see a demonstration of prevailing prayer. In that chapter, Peter is imprisoned "**but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.**" (**ACTS 12:5**) What was going on was that Peter was being held in prison, secured by "**four squads of soldiers to guard him...**" So things looked mighty grim for Peter. But prevailing prayer saved him! Now, let's try to understand what prevailing prayer actually is. Prevailing Prayer unlocks the warehouse of God's Endless Love, Forgiveness, Grace, and Power. Prevailing Prayer then moves us so we can move others to know Him, too. Prevailing Prayer will help move the church to move the world!

Prevailing Prayer is our fervent, consistent, persistent prayer until we get through what we are dealing with. We may be praying for our personal life or for another person. Prayer is the conquering force! It must conquer our will so we can take hold of God's Will. It places the ramps to lay siege to the problems of life while surrounded by the fortress of His love. As we started to look at last week, the power of prevailing prayer was exercised in the early church on behalf of Peter, who was in prison and about to be executed. The result of this prayer was Peter's dramatic deliverance. He was chained between two Roman soldiers. But with every Roman guard asleep, Peter simply walked out of the prison.

There are four categories of how God answers your petition prayers. Each petition prayer actually has two parts: the petition (which is what you actually say, whether it is a petition for yourself or an intercessory prayer for another person) and the desire, which is what you really want. The four categories of how God answers your petition prayers show that God views both parts of your prayer as separate, and answers each part either positively or negatively. Therefore, God's answer to each petition and desire can be defined in four ways.

The first category is Positive-Negative, in which the petition is answered with a positive but the desire behind the petition is not answered. So, if you pray to win the lottery because you need money, God may answer the prayer for money but arrange for you to get offered a part-time job which will give you money. Your desire was to get the money without working. He answered with a positive – He got you the money and He answered with a negative – no lottery!

Do you remember the story of manna from heaven which was food that God gave miraculously to the Israelites in the Exodus, after the food they had brought with them out of Egypt had run out? Well, the Jews were tired of the great Divine provision of manna, the greatest health food ever. They longed for the Egyptian meat and food they used to eat. So they prayed for food like what they used to eat and God answered their petition with a yes! He sent them quail. But the desire for satisfaction or “food happiness” was not answered; instead, they suffered terribly from it and thousands died.

The second category is Negative-Positive in which the petition is not answered but the desire is. This is where God says no to the petition but He gives you the desire behind it. There's an example of this in **GEN 17:18-21** when Abraham prayed that Ishmael, the son of Hagar, might be his heir. God said no to Ishmael becoming his heir, but yes to the desire behind it, to have an heir, for he eventually had Isaac. Do you see how this is a Negative-Positive answer to Abraham's prayer for an heir? He got the heir (his desire) but **not** the prayer for Hagar's son to be his heir (the negative).

Another example is in **GEN 18:23-33** and **GEN 19:20-22** when Abraham prayed that God would spare Sodom. After bargaining with God, Abraham settled with asking God to spare Sodom if there were ten believers; he was sure there were at least ten believers in that large city of perhaps 200,000 people. He was wrong; there were only three believers. The petition to spare Sodom was answered no; the desire that Lot and his two daughters be preserved was answered yes.

The third category is Positive-Positive. It's the ideal prayer in which the petition is answered and so is the desire behind it! In **1 KINGS 18**, Elijah built an altar, dug a trench around it, and prepared a sacrifice for The Lord. Then he instructed that water be poured on the offering and on the wood three times. So much water was poured that it filled the trench. Elijah then prayed that God would light his offering on the altar with fire. His desire was expressed in **1 KINGS 18:36**, **“O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, today let it be known that You are the God of Israel and that I am your servant, and I have done all these things at Your Word.”** And God answered yes!

Another example of Positive-Positive is in **JUDGES 16:28** when Samson was blinded and tied up in the temple of Dagon. ***Then Samson called to the LORD and said, “O Lord GOD, please remember me and please strengthen me just this time, O God, that I may at once be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.*** Both his petition to strike the Philistines and his desire to avenge were answered yes. Why? Not because God approves of revenge, but because of the evil of the Philistines. Samson was the instrument that God used. Samson got his strength back, wrapped his arms around two pillars of the temple, and pulled the whole thing down on all of them!

In **LUKE 23:42** we find the petition of the dying thief: ***Then he kept saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come into your kingdom."*** This petition was answered yes. His desire was for salvation and Jesus answered this affirmatively: **Jesus replied to him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with Me in paradise."** ( **LUKE 23:43**)

The fourth category is Negative-Negative or no and no! It's the worst prayer of all in which neither the petition nor the desire is answered. We'll now look at why prayer is not answered. The fundamental reason why prayer is not answered is because the believer is under the control of the sin nature. In a state of sin, your prayers cannot be heard or answered. General reasons for failure in prayer are always related to the following reasons. One is carnality. Carnality is the state of which the old sin nature controls the soul of the believer. This control over the soul is allowed through the free-will decision of the believer. Carnality is broken and spirituality is restored by use of the rebound technique. Rebound, as we have learned, is naming and citing your sins to God in His Son's Name.

Another reason for unanswered prayer is being out of fellowship. This means you haven't rebounded prior to praying. It's an important thing to remember. **REBOUND MUST PRECEDE PRAYER!!**

Look at **PSA 66:18**, ***"If I regard wickedness [cherish evil] in my heart [stream of consciousness of the soul], the Lord will not listen to me.*** In other words, God will not listen to us if we have evil in our minds. And the only way to get rid of it is through rebound!

{to be continued}