

BIBLICAL PRAYER

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PART I

We will be talking about true Biblical prayer--what it is and how to operate in it.

Dictionary.com defines prayer as a personal communication or petition addressed to a deity in the form of supplication, adoration, praise, thanksgiving, or contrition. It is an earnest request, petition, or entreaty. From a legal standpoint, it is a request contained in a petition to a court for the relief sought by the petitioner.

True Biblical prayer is addressed to the Most High God; the God of the Bible.

- Who is this God of the Bible and what kind of a Person is He?
The Most High God is one God made up of three distinct Persons-- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. [Genesis 1:26-27; Mark 1:9-12]
- Jesus said that if you see Him, you've seen the Father. He said that He only says what the Father says and He only does what He sees the Father do. [John 5:30 & 43; Mark 9:2-9]

Let's follow Jesus around the land of Israel and see what kind of a Person He is.

- Mark 1:21-27 He is an amazing preacher. He has a commanding presence.
- Mark 1:38-39 He cares for everyone, everywhere.
- Mark 1:40-44 He is full of compassion and sympathizes with those in need. He is willing to heal.
- Mark 2:1-12 He always meets the most pressing need first. Inner healing came to this man and then he was able to receive his physical healing.

- Mark 3:1-15 He is fearless. He always does the right thing, regardless of who likes it or not. He never turned anyone away who came to Him, He always met their need when they placed their faith in Him.

We're not even through the third chapter of Mark and we can see that Jesus did everything well. He is faithful. He will do anything we ask of Him, if we are in faith. He marvels at a high level of faith. It excites Him. Remember, when we see Jesus, we've seen Abba Father. They are just alike; as well as Holy Spirit. So, this is the Most High God. This is who the Christian offers prayers to.

So, why do so many Christians never receive answers to their prayers?

- The foundation for a successful Biblical prayer life must be founded on an intimate, personal relationship with Abba Father, Jesus, and Holy Spirit.

How do you do this?

- Choose God and you will be chosen. [Matthew 22:1-14]
- Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. [James 4:8]
- Learn His ways of doing things and be obedient to Him. Act like Him. [John 14:15;21-24]
- Learn His ways of communication. Talk like Him. [John 11:40-44]
- John 16:23-24 tells us to pray to Abba Father invoking the Name of Jesus.
- John 14:12-14 tells us that whatever we ask in Jesus' Name, He will grant it to us.
- James 5:13-18 tells us that we are to ask in faith, never doubting; we are to be in earnest in what we are praying for and persevering until the answer manifests. Always believing that the prayer released in faith makes tremendous power available, dynamic in its working in

the situation.

CONCLUSION:

True Biblical prayer is founded on an intimate, personal relationship with the Most High God, who is made up of three distinct Persons--Abba Father, Jesus, the Son, and Holy Spirit, who is with us now. From this personal relationship, we learn who this awesome God who loves us so much is and how He thinks; how He feels; how He talks; what pleases Him; how He does things and what His plans are for our lives. The more intimate we are with Him, the more powerful and effective our prayers will be. We will move into true Biblical prayer.

PART II

Following Jesus' example in prayer.

What kind of prayer life did Jesus have?

- Prayer was a priority in the life of Jesus.
- Mark 1:9-13 The first thing Jesus did when He began His ministry was get alone with God and sought God's direction through fasting and prayer.
- Mark 1:35 Jesus gets up long before daylight--a time when others are sleeping; a time when He won't be disturbed--to be alone with God and pray.
- Mark 6:46-51 Again, Jesus found a place where He could be alone with God and pray. Not only was prayer the first thing Jesus did, but He spent blocks of time; hours at a time-praying.

Notice in the above referenced scriptures the amount of time He spent in prayer.

How did Jesus pray?

- Mark 11:22-26 Jesus always prayed in the God kind of faith.

- I believe, therefore I speak. That's God kind of faith.
- No doubting.
- He gave no place for the devil to gain entrance into His life and so hinder His prayers.
- Did not get offended.
- Did not hold grudges.
- Did not refuse to forgive.
- He always walked in love, even to the religious leaders who hated Him.

Mark 14:32-41: Jesus always 'prayed through'. He continued in prayer until He got the image in His Spirit. Pray until you get the release; the sense of victory.

What did Jesus pray for hours?

Matthew 6:9-13: Jesus gave us an example of how to pray.

- Come to Abba Father, in (Jesus' Name,) with praise and thanksgiving first.
- Agree with God on His ways; His plans. Submit to Him.
- Submit petitions. Close doors that would hinder your prayers.
- Ask for help and protection.
- End with praise and worship.

Other insights into how Jesus prayed.

- John 11:33-44: Jesus prayed in the Spirit.

- Notice the faith statements that Jesus made from the very first time the bad report came from Bethany about Lazarus.
- Notice how He waited on instructions from the Holy Spirit before He moved.
- Notice all the doubt and unbelief He was surrounded with--from 'church' folks!
- Notice how He handled the doubt and unbelief: He 'groaned in the Spirit'. He built His faith up by praying or 'groaning' in the Spirit.
- He knew He was going to tell Lazarus to come out of the grave! He needed faith to overpower the unbelief.

Praying in the Spirit builds you up on your most holy faith!

Mark 15:34 & Mark 5:41: Jesus spoke in other tongues! The people standing around the cross did not understand the language that Jesus spoke. But the writer of the book of Mark, interpreted what was spoken in the unknown tongue; just as he interpreted what Jesus spoke to the little girl He raised from death.

CONCLUSION:

We want to have the same kind of prayer life that Jesus had. We must make prayer a priority. We must put it first. We must spend time in prayer--not just a token of time, but quantities of time. We must pray using the God kind of faith, walking in love so as to not give the devil a way to hinder our prayers. We must 'pray through' until we get the image of what we are praying for inside our spirits. Pray until we get a 'release'; until the 'knowing' is there. Pray in the Spirit, building yourself up on your most holy faith. Pray to the Father, in Jesus' Name. Come to Him with praise and thanksgiving first. Agree with Him and submit your will to His. Pray in the Spirit when you don't know how to pray and the Spirit will pray the perfect will of Father. Submit your petitions, but be sure all doors are closed that would hinder your prayers. Ask for help and protection. End with praise and worship.

PART III

The importance of the Spiritual Gifts and their place in our prayer life.

1 Corinthians 12

We are not to be ignorant of the Spiritual Gifts available to us through the Holy Spirit. Under the influence of the Holy Ghost, we will always say the right thing.

- [v. 4-11] Each individual Christian has their own distinct giftings--or extraordinary powers--according to the power of the Holy Spirit that is operating in their SOULS.
- [v. 12-26] Paul is comparing the Holy Spirit's gifts to the human body. We must receive ALL the gifts. It's not right to pick and choose. It's not right to say one gift is important, but another is not as important. They all fit together and work together as the Holy Spirit decides so that the full and perfect work of God can be accomplished.
- [v. 27-31] Collectively we are Christ's body, but individually we are members of that Body and as such, we each have our own function.

1 Corinthians 13

- [v. 1-3] Without love, everything done is in vain.
- [v. 4-8] This is how love acts. This should be our confession as we strive every day to live this way.
- [v. 9-13] Paul is exhorting us to 'grow up'!

1 Corinthians 14

- [v. 1-4] We must pursue the 'love walk' and master it. Love is the driving force--the 'motor' that moves the Holy Spirit to manifest His gifts or abilities through you.
- [v. 5-19] Paul is addressing an issue at the Corinthian church here. They were placing too much importance on the gift of tongues,

mistakenly believing that because they spoke in tongues, that made them 'super-spiritual'. The motive was not LOVE! But, 'look how spiritual I am'. Love will make you think of the other person.

- [v. 20-33] Here we see the purpose of the gift of speaking in tongues in the public assembly and Paul advises on how to conduct an orderly meeting.
- [v. 34-40] Paul is correcting a doctrinal error that originated within the Corinthian church, due to their cultural beliefs about women. Paul preached we are free from the law, so vs. 34 did not originate from him.

CONCLUSION:

Every gift or ability that the Holy Spirit gives us is important. There are two different types of tongues-public and private. Private tongues is what Jesus used in His prayer times. Public tongues is a sign for unbelievers; it is to be used in conjunction with the interpretation so the assemblies can be edified and there won't be any confusion. Love is the motor that moves the Holy Spirit to manifest His gifts/abilities through us. We should all eagerly desire ALL the spiritual gifts. Our heavenly prayer language will build us up on our most holy faith, empowering us to walk in love and in the midst of that love walk, the Holy Spirit will manifest supernatural abilities through us.

PART IV

The importance of adding fasting into our prayer life.

Should we fast? And why?

- Luke 4:1-13: Yes. Because Jesus did. We want to follow His example. The early Church made a habit of fasting every Wednesday and Friday.

Does Jesus expect us to fast?

- Matthew 6:16-18 The operative word here is 'whenever'. It speaks of something that is always done. Jesus expects His children to fast.

What is the purpose God has in fasting?

- Matthew 4:1-10; Luke 4:1-14: Overcome Satan. Begin His public ministry, and have the power of God and the Anointing.
- Acts 13:2-3: The elders, prophets and teachers in Antioch fasted and ministered to God, which resulted in the launching of Paul and Barnabas' apostolic ministry to the Gentiles. Before getting involved in full time ministry and mission work.
- Ezra 8:21-23: Ezra the priest fasted for God's protection and instructions. God's protection and instructions.
- Daniel 10:3: Daniel fasted for the fulfillment of God's promises, and received mighty revelations from God.
- I Kings 19:8: Elijah fasted 40 days to hear God's voice.
- Deuteronomy 9:9: Moses fasted to receive the Ten Commandments and the Law of God, and to see God's glory and goodness. We can fast to receive revelations and move into a more intimate relationship with God.

Three kinds of fasts:

- Esther 4:16; Exodus 34:28; Deut. 9:9; 1 Kings 19:8: An absolute fast is abstaining from both food and water. Notice carefully that Esther proclaimed a complete fast for three days and nights. You should never go on a complete fast for more than three days, because you cannot go without water for more than four or five days. Moses and Elijah were on a supernatural fast called by God.
- Matthew 4:1-3; Luke 4:1-3
The normal fast is abstaining from only food. You may drink water as often as you like. Notice the Tempter only tempted Jesus with 'bread', not water.
- Daniel 10:2-3
A partial fast can be done in two different ways. As a juice and liquid fast; where water along with juice and other liquids are allowed. Or

where you are allowed to not only drink water, juices and liquids, but also certain kinds of food. Abstaining from pleasant bread, meats and wine. The purpose of this fast is to allow you to eat foods that will strengthen your body, without giving in to your flesh.

Exodus 34:28; 1 Kings 19:8: The only fasts that were longer were supernatural fasts. Moses on Mount Sinai. Elijah when he traveled to Mount Horeb. We should not attempt these on our own.

Why fasting works:

Ephesians 3:20: And to Him who is able above all things to do exceeding abundantly what we ask or think, according to power that is working in us. [YLT]

- This scripture does not promise that God answers our prayers immeasurably more than what we ask or imagine.
- The key phrase to understanding this scripture is the phrase 'according to'.
- The words 'according to' suggest that prayer is answered in proportion to something.
- That 'something' is 'God's power that is at work in us'.
- In other words, God will answer your prayers according to the amount of power that is currently at work within your spirit.
- God uses the power working within you to answer your own prayers! If there is little power working in your spirit, then God does little for you. If there is a lot of power working in you, then God does a lot for you. It's that simple!
- The key to answered prayer is having power working within your spirit!

What does this have to do with fasting?

- Very simply this; your spirit and your flesh are in opposition to each other. One will win and gain control and the other will lose and forfeit control.
- If your spirit wins, then you become stronger in spirit. This will enable more spiritual power to work within you.
- The result is obvious: your prayers are answered.

How does your spirit get strength?

- By catering to it.
- Your spirit desires the Word of God; prayer; holiness; Christian fellowship, etc.
- The more you give your spirit these things, the stronger the spirit will become.

The same is true of your flesh.

- Your flesh desires food, water, sleep--yes, even sex. Satisfy these cravings, and the body will want more.
- The flesh gains strength when it gets what it wants.
- We call this result: 'habit'.
- A habit is formed by repeating a behavior.

Fasting causes flesh to lose ground.

- The flesh loses strength when it does not get what it wants.
- This is where fasting can aid you in defeating the power of the flesh.
- Fasting deprives the flesh of its desires, thereby crippling its strength.
- Add prayer to fasting, and you can readily see the result: the flesh

loses ground while at the same time your spirit gains ground.

- Fasting makes your flesh go backwards, while praying will rocket your spirit forward, leaving your flesh way behind.

CONCLUSION:

There are some problems too large for our faith alone to handle. This is when we need to fast. Fasting enlarges the capacity for faith. Faith does not come by fasting, but fasting can open your heart wider to receive more faith. Faith can make you more sensitive to listening to God's Word. The result is more faith. Prayer with fasting will accomplish much more than simply praying. Fasting and prayer is one of the most powerful spiritual combinations on earth. True fasting brings humility and alignment with God. It breaks the power of flesh and demons. It kills unbelief! And brings answers to prayer when nothing else works. Fasting humbles the flesh and pleases the Spirit of God. Fasting is an essential spiritual discipline. Without it we are weak. It fortifies spiritual foundations, builds intimacy with God and strengthens resolve. Fasting, prayer and faith give us the courage to move past our fears into the realm of the unknown. If you are spiritually dry, fasting and prayer will restore that fiery passion you had. If you are seeking direction, truth will be revealed. If you are in a spiritual battle, fasting gives the edge for victory. If you have a request before God, there is no position more powerful than fasting in humility and praise. Fasting is the secret key to greater power!

PART V

Speaking in tongues in our prayer life.

What good does speaking in tongues accomplish?

- 1 Corinthians 14:4,5--He who speaks in tongues edifies himself...I would like every one of you to speak in tongues. The Body of Christ needs sound, logical and scriptural teaching as to the scope and value of speaking in tongues.
- Speaking in tongues does exactly what the Bible says it does: it edifies you.
- The word 'edify' means to 'build up' or 'charge up'; much like charging up a battery.

- All of us at times feel spiritually drained.
- One of God's ways to charge your spirit is through speaking in tongues.

Tongues is the language of Heaven.

- 1 Corinthians 14:2--For anyone who speaks in tongues does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit.
- Speaking in tongues is the most intelligent, perfect language in the universe. It is God's language.
- Languages are given their names based on the country they come from. English is from England; Norwegian comes from Norway, etc.
- Where does tongues come from? Heaven!
- Tongues is the heavenly language. It's what is spoken in heaven; the only difference is that the people in heaven understand what they are saying. Remember what Paul wrote? Anyone who speaks in tongues does not speak to men, but to God.
- Jesus says in Mark 16:17 those who believe in Him will 'speak in new tongues'. The word 'new' means appearing for the first time. No one had spoken these languages before.
- Contrary to bad theology, tongues is not an ability given to preach the gospel in the language of foreigners. This would make tongues 'old' languages. It is only appropriate that 'new tongues' should be spoken by those of the 'new birth'. It is natural and normal to speak in the language of your birth. We are born again from above, therefore we should speak the language from above--that language is called 'new tongues'.

The Double Miracle of Acts Chapter 2:

- Acts 2:1-15
- People often think that on this day the disciples were speaking human languages, because the people could understand what they were saying.
- This is not true because there was a two-fold miracle taking place. The miracle of speaking and hearing! The first miracle was the speaking in tongues; the second miracle was the enabling of some to understand the tongues. Not everyone understood the tongues, because some onlookers made fun of the disciples and accused them of being drunk; this clearly shows that they did not understand the tongues. The ones who did understand the tongues were perplexed because each one heard only their own native language, not the languages of the other people. The Bible tells us that there were over fourteen foreigners representing many nations, speaking in different languages; yet each person heard the disciples praising God in their own language. [v.8] It is clear that the disciples were not 'preaching' the gospel in tongues, instead they were 'declaring the wonders of God' [v.11]. They were not speaking to men, but to God; the people were simply listening in on their praises to God.
- It wasn't until Peter stood up to speak to the crowd in one common language that the Gospel was preached. Tongues are not supernatural human languages given to the apostles so they could preach in languages they did not naturally learn. The disciples were not speaking human languages; they were speaking in unknown tongues. God enabled those whose hearts were open to understand what the disciples were saying. Sometimes this happens today; you see, the miracle was in the hearing of the people.

The Baptism in the Spirit.

- Acts 2:1-4--this is what John and Jesus called the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. This was the fulfillment of Jesus' promise in Acts 1:5. Every Christian believes in baptizing in water, but few accept the better baptism--the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Since you were willing to be

baptized in water, shouldn't you also be willing to be baptized in the Holy Spirit?

- Theologians often confuse the baptism in the Holy Spirit with salvation; they often regard these two experiences as being the same. This confuses believers. Salvation is not the same as the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Just as water baptism is a separate experience from salvation, so is the baptism in the Holy Spirit. [Acts 8:5-25]. Acts 19:1-7 also illustrates this fact. It is possible to be a believer in Jesus without having received the Holy Spirit. If receiving the Holy Spirit was automatic at conversion, then why did Paul ask if they had received the Holy Spirit?

The Physical Evidence

- The physical proof of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is the same evidence that the disciples had: speaking in tongues.
- You may have other evidences as well, but the one evidence you should have is speaking in tongues.
- There are five examples in the Bible of people receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit: Acts 2:4; 8:17; 9:17; 10:44; 19:6. In three out of the five examples we are told that specific signs took place. In the other two examples, the manifestation is implied, but not mentioned. Based on these examples we can build a good, solid case as to what should happen when someone is baptized in the Holy Spirit--speaking in tongues.

CONCLUSION:

If you haven't been baptized in the Holy Spirit, seek God about it and pray for it in faith. God never lets a thirsty soul go dry. I encourage you to seek the scriptural evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and to settle for nothing but the best.