

The Seven “P’s” of Answered Prayer

1. **Purpose** - We must always have a PURPOSE for praying - Mark 10:51

A. If we desire to pray we must have a definite purpose, or goal in mind. We must know what we desire to receive from the Lord.

B. We are not to pray just to be seen by others or pray with vain babblings that have no purpose or any expectation of an answer. Our praying is not meant to pass away time nor is it meant to be a pious religious exercise. It is to have a purpose that will accomplish something that is in line with God’s will for your life or in the life of someone else (Matt. 6:5-15).

C. “The warning against vain repetition has a wider application: it takes in all thoughtless words and careless forms in prayer. The moment any set form of words is adopted, and begins to be familiar, so that it can be repeated thoughtlessly like the alphabet or multiplication table, we run the risk of vain repetitions. The Tibetan is not the only worshipper who turns a ‘prayer-wheel,’ or reels prayer off by the yard.” (From **The School of Prayer** by Arthur T. Pierson)

D. 1 John 3:22 - It is “whatsoever” that we ask is the thing that we will receive from the Lord. If we do not have a purpose in mind when we pray, we should not bother to pray. If we ask for NOTHING, that is exactly what we will receive. Nevertheless, everyone has some need or desire that should bring them before God.

E. “To make prayer of any value, there should be definite objects for which to plead. We often ramble in our prayers after this, that, and the other, and we get nothing, because in each we really do not desire anything. We chatter about many subjects, but the soul does not concentrate itself upon any one object. Do you not sometimes fall on your knees without first thinking what what you mean to ask God for?” (C.H. Spurgeon from his sermon **True Prayer - True Power**)

2. **Promises** - All prayer should be done in line with God’s Word - John 15:7

A. We should always search the Scriptures to find promises to bring before God. When we pray we are assured of receiving a “yes” to our requests because all of God’s promises are “yes” and “so let it be done” in Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 1:20).

B. Many people believe that God will not answer prayer that is outside of His will. I agree with them for the most part, though there are some exceptions to this statement (i.e., Israel asking for a king which was not God’s perfect will for them). Nevertheless, God’s Word reveals His will and we are guaranteed the petitions we ask when we pray in line with His Word (1 John 5:14-15).

C. “In the first place, we may know the will of God by the promises in His Word. The Bible was given us for the specific purpose of revealing to us the will of God, and when we find anything is definitely promised in the Word of God we know that is His will, for He has said so in so many words.” (From **The Power of Prayer** by R.A. Torrey) “When you plead His promise, then your will is His will.” (C.H. Spurgeon from his sermon **True Prayer - True Power**)

D. The promises will impart FAITH which is a requirement for effective praying (Rom. 10:17; Matt. 21:22). Surely one cannot expect to receive from God if they do not believe that He will do anything for them. “The confidence of prayer is obtained by the recognition of promise.” (From **The Spiritual Life or Helps and Hindrances** by F.E. Marsh)

E. “The best praying man is the man who is most believingly familiar with the promises of God. After all, prayer is nothing but taking God’s promises to Him and saying, ‘Do as You have said.’ Prayer is the promise utilized. Prayer not based on a promise has no true foundation.” (C.H.

Spurgeon from his sermon **The Secret of Power**)

3. **P**etition - Phil. 4:6

A. Once we have set a definite goal in mind of what we want to accomplish in prayer, and we have found specific promises pertaining to our desire, we should begin to petition God, or ask Him for those things we desire from Him.

B. God will not answer a prayer that is not asked (James 4:2). It is the asking that brings us the answer (Matt. 7:7-11). God does know what we need (Matt. 6:8) but He has not promised to supply our needs based on His knowledge alone. He desires our complete cooperation with Him by petitioning Him for our needs. **“God’s giving is inseparably connected with our asking.”** (From **The Ministry of Intercession** by Andrew Murray)

C. The Bible tells us that there are some things that just will not happen until we petition God for it (Mark 9:28-29).

D. **“Nothing is more important to God than prayer in dealing with mankind. But it is likewise all-important to man to pray. Failure to pray is failure along the whole line of life. It is failure of duty, service, and spiritual progress. God must help man by prayer. He who does not pray, therefore, robs himself of God's help and places God where he cannot help man.”** (From **The Weapon of Prayer** by E.M. Bounds)

4. **P**ower - God gives POWER in prayer - James 5:16-18; Mark 11:22-24

A. *Believing prayer will save the sick man; the Lord will restore him and any sins that he has committed will be forgiven. You should get into the habit of admitting your sins to each other, and praying for each other, so that you may be healed. **Tremendous power is made available through a good man's earnest prayer.*** -James 5:15-16 (The New Testament in Modern English by J.B. Phillips).

B. Both miraculous power and authority is made available by our praying. We should have confidence the power of God to accomplish those things that we desire from Him. God is the Almighty God. He is the creator and ruler of the universe. He has delegated His authority to us (Luke 10:17-19) and He expects us to exercise it.

C. **“The Greek word translated ‘availeth’ is also an expressive and significant word. Its primary meaning is ‘to be strong,’ ‘to have power [or force],’ and then ‘to exercise power.’ So the thought of our text is that definite and determined prayer exerts much power in its working, that it achieves great things.”** (From **The Power of Prayer** by R.A. Torrey)

D. Concerning Mark 11:22-23, **“Faith is mighty, not because it is small, but because it is the hiding of God’s power. It is the seed of God - having in it God’s life, and where it lodges there is growth, motion, expansion, reproduction: so far as it is genuine and God-Like - the faith of God - it exercises the power of God and is irresistible.”** (From **The School of Prayer** by Arthur T. Pierson)

E. Concerning Mark 11:24, **“‘Believe that ye received’ (aorist tense), that is, received them when asking! Faith therefore becomes a power...”** (**Hebrews: Verse by Verse** by William R. Newell)

5. **P**ositive - Have a positive outlook and believe that God has answered your prayer - Mark 11:24; 1 John 5:14-15; 1 Pet. 3:12; Heb. 11:1; 2 Cor. 5:7

A. This is a very important area because so many are all too willing to base the answer to

thier prayers on either their feelings or a physical manifestation. If the feelings are not there or the manifestation has not yet occurred then these assume that it was never God's will to answer our request in the first place.

B. The Scripture tells us to walk by faith and not by sight. We are to believe the Word of God above any feelings that we may have or anything that we see. We must remain POSITIVE in affirming that what God has stated is true.

C. Faith is the substance of things HOPED for (Heb. 11:1). Hope is having a positive expectation. As David said, *"I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living."* (Ps. 27:1)

D. "Hope is made up of desire and expectation, therefore faith being the substance must imply that faith makes real, or realizes to the soul when filled with sincere desires and expectation. Faith being the evidence of things not seen, would clearly imply that faith must be a conviction resting upon sure evidences of the reality of things not seen." (From **The Secret Place Of Prayer** by John Wesley Goodwin)

E. "God's way for us is to believe first, on the simple evidence of His promise, and to continue to believe without other evidence until we have proved our faith without sight. Then He will permit us to see and know by the demonstration of the fact itself."

"... the moment our petition passes the throne, we are justified in believing that we have exactly what we have asked for, and we can say, 'I have received my answer, praise the Lord!'" (From **The Life of Prayer** by A.B. Simpson)

F. "We must obey the fundamental law of faith by sincerely believing that we receive the things desired when we pray, otherwise they shall not be granted." (From **Prayer Availeth Much** by T.M. Anderson)

G. "When we pray to God, and pray according to His will as known by the promises of His Word, or as known by the Holy Spirit revealing His will to us, we should confidently believe that the very thing we have asked is granted us. We should 'believe that' we 'have received,' and what we thus believe we have received we shall afterwards have in actual personal experience." (From **The Power of Prayer** by R.A. Torrey)

6. **P**ersistence - Daniel 10:2-14; Matt. 7:7-11; Luke 18:1-8; Acts 12:5; Eph. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:17

A. *"Jesus used this illustration with his disciples to show them that they need to pray all the time and never give up."* (Luke 18:1; God's Word To The Nations)

B. *Yet, the Son of Man having come, will He find the aforementioned kind of faith on the earth [a faith which keeps on pleading in prayer such as that exemplified by the persistence of the widow with regard to the judge]?* (Luke 18:8; The New Testament: An Expanded Translation by Kenneth S. Wuest)

C. "Another reason why the promises are not fulfilled in us is a want of perseverance. The Bible insists largely upon the importance of perseverance in prayer. The case of the "woman of Canaan" is recorded in the 15th of Matthew; and that of the unjust judge in the 18th of Luke, and many other instances recorded in the Bible, set the importance of perseverance in prayer in a strong light. It is often the case, that individuals will pray with confidence for blessings for a short time; but becoming discouraged because the blessing does not come, or supposing perseverance to be unnecessary and that the blessing will come in its time without it, they cease their efforts and wrestling, and, in this respect, restrain prayer before God. Now it is very often the case, that perseverance is naturally indispensable to our obtaining the blessing--that nothing else can

prepare our minds to receive it; and it is often the case that it cannot be granted, but through our own agency and protracted and agonizing efforts. Some obstacle may be, to be overcome, either within or without ourselves, that can be overcome in no other way. As Christ said on a certain occasion, ‘This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.’” (From **The Promises** by Charles G. Finney)

D. “Delay is often the test and the strength of faith. How much patience is required when these times of testing come! Yet faith gathers strength by waiting and praying. Patience has its perfect work in the school of delay. In some instances, delay is of the very essence of the prayer. God has to do many things, antecedent to giving the final answer -- things which are essential to the lasting good of him who is requesting favour at His hands.” (**The Necessity of Prayer** by E.M. Bounds)

E. Sometimes it may be a time that God must prepare the believer as E.M. Bounds so eloquently stated. The Bible teaches us that, “*for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*” (Gal. 6:9). God certainly has a proper season in which He will manifest the answer to certain prayers.

F. We must also remember that we are in a spiritual warfare as is taught in Daniel 10 and quite often, the enemy has determined to block the answers to our prayers. We must be just as determined to see the answer come through. It is this answered prayer that brings glory to God the Father: “*And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*” (John 14:13). Satan does not want to see God glorified and therefore, will attempt to stop the answers to your prayers. You must persist in prayer without ceasing until you have received the answer to your requests.

G. “But why is this constant, persistent, sleepless, overcoming prayer so needful? ... First of all, **BECAUSE THERE IS A DEVIL**. He is cunning, he is mighty, he never rests, he is ever plotting the downfall of the child of God; and if the child of God relaxes in prayer, the devil will succeed in ensnaring him.” (From **How To Pray** by R.A. Torrey)

7. **Praise** - If we truly believe God, we will thank Him and PRAISE Him - Phil. 4:6-8; Heb. 13:15; 2 Sam. 22:4; 2 Chron. 20

A. This is the final “p” in our lesson but most certainly not the least important. On the contrary, this is a very important principle if we expect to receive answers from God. God is not about to pour out His blessings upon ungrateful people who do not trust Him enough to praise Him and thank Him for these blessings.

B. As Heb. 13:15 points out, praise can often be a SACRIFICE. Sometimes, due to circumstances we may not *feel* like praising God. Nevertheless, we must make a sacrifice and praise Him in spite of how we may feel. There is no doubt that as we study the Bible that the most effective prayer warriors were those that learned the secret of praising God.

C. Praise is an outward expression of our faith in God. I question the person who tells me that they have faith in God but will not praise Him during the trials of life.

D. “Between the *have received* in heaven, and the *shall have* of earth, the key word is *believe*. Believing praise and prayer is the link.” (From **With Christ in the School of Prayer** by Andrew Murray)

E. “Many keep praying and asking and then wonder why there is no answer. One reason may be that they have not shown that they believe God will really answer. If they had such faith, they would thank God for the answer, even at the time of prayer. The Bible says, ‘Watch and

pray' (Matt. 26:41, KJV), not "Pray and wonder if He will answer." We are to watch Him answer.

"Thankful prayer is not wishful praying. We would hardly thank God for something we are only wishing for, but if we are convinced that it is God's will to answer, it shows faith and expectancy of heart to thank Him for the answer even when we pray for it." (From **Christ Preeminent** by Theodore H. Epp)

F. "While speaking of the peace of God that surpasses all understanding, A.B. Simpson said this: It is a peace that fills the heart with constant thankfulness and the lips with praise. Our prayers are turned to praise, and as we thank Him for what we have, we have new cause for more thanksgiving. The surest way to receive answers to prayers is to praise for what we have received and then to praise for what we have not yet received." (From **The Christ In The Bible Commentary** by A.B. Simpson).