

11 Secrets to Effective Prayer

11 Devotions on Effective Praying

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Have you ever wondered why some people seem to have their prayers answered while others (like many of us) see very little effect of our prayers. This booklet is an in depth study of 11 secrets to answered prayer. The only difference between most of us and those who are effective in their praying is that they have already learned the secrets you are about to learn. Set aside time for Bible study, meditation and prayer using this booklet as a guide each day for the next 11 days and you will find your prayer life transformed.

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Eleven Secrets to Effective Prayer

Eleven days of Bible Study devotions that will guide you toward an effective prayer life and that will be an encouragement in your Christian life.

Day one - Secret #1: Believing in mountain moving prayer

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." – Matthew 21:21-22

Key Words and Phrases:

- I TELL YOU THE TRUTH—you can count on it!
- FAITH—knowing that you know that you know
- IF YOU BELIEVE—becoming completely convinced
- YOU WILL RECEIVE—an absolute affirmative; don't doubt , it will happen
- WHATEVER YOU ASK—if you are in faith then whatever you ask in the will of God will come to pass.

Jesus affirms this promise in John 14:14—"If you ask anything in My name, I will do it."

When you ask in the will of God you can rest assured that he will answer. There are certain general areas where we can be assured of the will of God:

- a. It is the will of God for the sick to be healed. (Isaiah 53:5, 3 John 2)
- b. It is the will of God for Christians to live in good health. (3 John 2, Proverbs 4:2)
- c. It is the will of God for believers to have victory over oppression and fear (Luke 4:18)
- d. It is the will of God that his children's daily needs be supplied (Philippians 4:19)
- e. It is the will of God that we have joy in our hearts (John 16:24, Romans 14:17)

Anything that is not in agreement with these statements is an argument that sets itself up against the knowledge of God and we have divine power to destroy such arguments (2 Corinthians 10:5).

When God makes a promise he intends to follow through:

- Gideon prayed for a direct word from God and God spoke to him (Judges 6)
- Hezekiah was facing destruction by an army that was far superior to his. He prayed and the next morning 185,000 enemy soldiers lay dead (2 Kings 19)
- Elijah prayed for the son of a widow and saw him raised to life again (1 Kings 17)
- Apostle Peter was in prison awaiting execution when God heard the prayers of the saints and sent an angel to free him (Acts 12)

Jesus Promises To Respond When We Pray:

Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."

"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:7-12)

This means that God has placed within believers tremendous power that is unleashed through prayer. Effective prayer is:

1. Believing
2. Asking
3. Standing firm in faith

Day Two— Secret #2: The Secret of the Presence of God

There is no secret to being in the presence of God; the secret is that we are in the presence of God. God has chosen to be among us at all times. It is up to us to recognize his presence and enter into the manifestation of his presence.

God is Everywhere—He Doesn't Come And He Doesn't Go

We sometimes talk about the “presence” of God as if there is a time or place where his presence is not. David said, “Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, and if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast” (Psalm 139:7-10).

We Must Recognize the Presence of God

The song says, “I see him in a baby’s smile,” some say they see him in nature and yet others in the vastness of the universe. The truth is that he is in all of those things. At Mars Hill in Athens the Apostle Paul was addressing the Greeks concerning the “The Unknown God” to whom they had erected a statue. Paul said, “In him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). He recognized that wherever we are, whatever we are doing we are in the presence of God.

Failure to recognize the presence of God in our daily lives makes it difficult to recognize his presence in our prayers. If we separate our everyday life from our spiritual life, then even in our prayer life we will feel disconnected from the presence of God. In John 14:23 Jesus spoke of he and the Father making their home with those who love him and keep his word. What an awesome thought.

The knowledge that he lives within us should bring to us a cognizance of his abiding presence in all of our daily activities. If we walk with that knowledge then all that we do will bring glory to him. Armed with that knowledge we will have great boldness with God and with man.

Those Who Were Mighty in Prayer Recognized God's Presence

Those who had outstanding power in prayer in Bible days were the ones who learned the secret of the presence of the Lord. When we look at the lives of men like Abraham, Moses, David and others we see men who have learned to recognize the continuing presence of the almighty God.

The Secret Closet of Prayer

"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."

—Matthew 6:5-6

A natural question is, "If God is everywhere, then why do I need to get alone to pray?" The answer is not simple, but we have come to realize that if we want power with God in public we must have communion with him in private. A comparison might be that of a couple who are very close in their relationship. People say, "Anytime you see one of them you know the other is near." Yet these people have a different relationship in private than they do in public. It is that way with God. We can communicate openly, without interruption and without concern about who hears or knows what we talking to him about.

Day Three— Secret #3: The Secret of Praise

This then is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one, for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. – Matthew 6:9-13

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray he responded with the verses above. Many of us call this prayer the “Our Father” prayer. When Luke records this event it followed a time when Jesus was at prayer, and presumably the disciples were observing him as he prayed (Luke 11:1-4). Apparently what they saw and heard created in them a desire to pray in the same way. As we go along in this series on prayer we will teach more about the Our Father prayer, but in this lesson we want to focus on the aspect of praise in this prayer.

Notice the prayer begins with recognition and adoration, “Our Father in Heaven”; giving him respect as the originator of the heavens and the earth. “Hallowed be your name”; giving him worship by acknowledging his holiness. The conclusion of this prayer gives him praise, “Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.” The prayer begins with praise and worship and ends with praise and worship.

Praise and communion with God

We are instructed to, “Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name” (Psalm 100:4). Some have said that God’s greatest need is for our worship. That is not accurate. God does not need our worship. God is complete in himself and has no needs outside of himself. *We need to worship God.* It is our need for Him that should drive us to him in praise and worship.

Many have found the best way to enter into the presence of God is through communion with him. This communion goes beyond a recited prayer or songs of praise. It includes these, but it is so much more. Communion with him is living in continual praise and thanksgiving. It is having a lifestyle of praise. Communion takes place when you are going about your day and spontaneous praise goes up to him. A thanksgiving for casual events throughout the day; parking place in a crowded area, for the food we eat, for our home, for health, for friends, for...

Praise Should Accompany Petition

“In everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Philippians 4:6).

There is a process that takes place in us when we sincerely praise another, especially when we praise God. Praising another requires that we move ourselves out of center stage and place another there. Praising God puts him center stage. It opens us up to his majesty. It brings to us a sense of humility.

Many Have Received Baptism of The Holy Spirit When Praising

“The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the Lord. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, they raised their voices in praises to the Lord and sang: ‘He is good; his love endures forever.’ Then the temple of the Lord was filled with a cloud and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the temple of God”. – 2Chronicles 5:13-14

In Luke 24 Jesus told the disciples that he was “going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high” (v49). He was then caught up to heaven, but the disciples, “worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God” (v52-53).

The next mention of the disciples is in Acts 2:1-4, “When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”

They were given the promise; they went praising and worshipping; they received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Day Four—Secret #4: The Secret of Praying With Vision

Visions For Prayer: Kingdom, World, Harvest, Personal Ministry (or service)

The most common prayers are “us” prayers. We pray, “give us this day,” “forgive our debts,” etc. Think about your prayers for a moment—what is the ratio of others prayers to “us” prayers?

Kingdom Vision: His kingdom is established, it has come and is coming; it is up to us to be in agreement with Him.

- What is his Kingdom? (The Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit—Romans 14:17)
- Where is his Kingdom? Is it just a heaven thing or is it an earth thing? (Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven—Matthew 6)

World Vision: His will on earth is that none would perish, but that all would receive His life. His will on earth is that the 10 effects of the fall in Genesis 3 become totally eradicated. As we gain this vision and live accordingly we will

- One passage says, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come,”—Matthew 24:14
- In Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15 we are told to take this message to the whole world and make disciples of all who believe.

Harvest Vision: In Matthew 9:35-38 Jesus reveals his heart. When he saw the crowds who were harassed and helpless, like a sheep without a shepherd, he was moved with compassion. He calls us to have that same vision. He calls us to see those around us whose lives are still a tangled mess and to have compassion on them. He calls us to pray for laborers to be sent into the fields to harvest, or to gather in those who have needs.

- There is a harvest that is ripe NOW: “Do you not say, ‘four months are and then the harvest’? I tell you, *open your eyes and look* at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.”
—John 4:35
- We must look beyond ourselves to see the world of need around us. We are admonished in James 4:3 that our prayers go unanswered because we are self-centered in our praying.

Personal Ministry Vision: God has given many clear direction as to their particular part in the harvest vision, others have yet to find a particular direction. God has given each of us a mandate in Matthew 25. Whatever your talents or abilities there is something mentioned there that you can do:

- Feed the hungry: Has God blessed you with enough? Share it.
- Give drink to the thirsty: Jesus said that if you give a cup of water in his name you will receive a reward (Matthew 10:42, Mark 9:41)
- Give lodging to the homeless: When was the last time you took a stranger in?
- Clothe the needy: We can and should be sharing with those less prosperous than we are.
- Care for the sick: We can take care of children, clean house, prepare meals
- Provide restoration for those in prison: One of the stated purposes for Christ coming to earth was to “Proclaim freedom for the prisoners and... to release the oppressed” –Luke 4:18

Day Five—Secret #5: The Secret of Praying in the Will of God

“Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”—Matthew 6:10

Now this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.—1 John 5:14

He withdrew about a stone’s throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”—Luke 22:41-42

Steps to Praying in the Will of God:

1. **Learn his Revealed will**—He reveals his will through; word, prayer and instruction.
 - Read what Jesus taught (the four Gospels); what the disciples did when they followed what Jesus taught (Acts) and what the Disciples taught concerning the teaching of Jesus (the Epistles)
 - Learn to commune with God in prayer; learn to hear what he says then test what you have heard by sharing it with spiritual leaders.
 - Listen to what God says through preaching and teaching; When God gives you an inspiration while hearing someone else preach or teach he is revealing his will to you personally. Record those ideas and pray about them. God will give you further direction as you follow what he gives you.
2. **Become committed to his will**—“Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”
 - We must commit ourselves to living out his revealed will. Whatever applies to us from the Bible we must be committed to doing. If we are challenged in fulfilling what he has commanded us to do then we need to seek him for the power to do what he has asked.
 - We must take action on his revealed will. Just setting back waiting for a “personal word” will lead us to spend a lot of time on our backside. God isn’t likely to give us further instruction until we are doing what he already told us to do.
 - Note: parents will sometimes give out orders to their children without ever checking to see if they have done what they have already been told to do. If there is no accountability to what they have already been told they will grow up believing that they do not have to be accountable to society, civil authority, or God. That’s why God does not give us additional instructions until we are doing what he has already instructed us to do.
3. **Submit to His Will**—“Yet not my will, but yours be done.”
 - Even Jesus had to go to a rock (a place of being crushed) to pray until his will became surrendered.

- We are instructed to “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Ephesians 5:21). If we can not submit to the authority of law and love in our natural life, how can we submit to God in the spirit realm?
- I have noticed that being submitted to the will of God begins by being submitted to proper authority and to the needs of my brothers and sisters.

Finally, James warns that too often our petitions to God are out of a lack of submission, but rather so that what we receive can be used for our own ambition (James 4:3).

Let us seek out the will of God, then seek the face of God until he has empowered us to surrender our self-will, then do his revealed will. When we have done that we will find great power in prayer.

Day Six— Secret #6: The Secret of Knowing What to Pray For

The first step to knowing what to pray for is to be in agreement with the Our Father prayer, “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” It is that sense of being committed to and being submitted to the will of God. One thing we know is that the will of God is being done on earth as it is in heaven. The question becomes, “are we in agreement with his will?”

One thing to keep in mind is that it does no good to pray for something that he has already revealed to be against his will.

Prayers in Scripture that were out of God’s will and were not answered:

1. *Elijah’s prayer that he might die* (1 Kings 19:4)—The prophet was discouraged and wanted to die but God sent an angel to minister to him instead.
2. *Balak’s desire for Israel to be cursed* (Numbers 22)—God had already pronounced blessing upon Israel and Balak could not pronounce a curse. Incidentally; this is proof positive that one person cannot confess a curse on the life of another who is under the blessing of God.
3. *Jeremiahs prayer for blessing on people who rejected the will of God* (Jeremiah 14:1-16)— Sometimes God is putting the pressure of consequence upon someone’s life to bring them to repentance and we, with compassion, pray that God will rescue them from the trial.
4. *For destruction of enemies* (Luke 9:55-56)—This is a lesson to zealots today who want to breathe curses upon those who do not walk their way. When the “Sons of Thunder,” the brothers James and John, wanted to call down fire from heaven and devour those who did not agree with them Jesus responded, “You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them.”
5. *Covetous prayers* (James 4:3)— James said, “You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.”
6. *Prayers of personal ambition* (Mark 10:35-40)—Throughout his teaching Jesus affirmed that the Kingdom of God is not about position but about servanthood. It is about how can I decrease so that he may increase?

Wherever there is a promise from God we know that we can pray that promise:

1. *Pray to receive the Holy Spirit* (Luke 11:10-13)—Jesus said the Father will give to those who ask Him.

2. *Pray for those who spitefully us you* (Matthew 5:44)—It is human to dislike an enemy, and even curse him; It is divine to pray for him. Jesus, on the cross, prayed, “Father, forgive them” (Luke 23:34).
3. *Pray that the Lord will send laborers into the harvest* (Matthew 9:36-38)—That prayer is still valid today; there are more non-christians in the world today than there are Christians. Because of the explosion of population world wide there are literally billions of people who do not know Jesus. Pray the Lord send forth laborers into the harvest.
4. *Pray for the brethren* (Luke 33:32)— Jesus said to Peter, “But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to me, strengthen your brethren.”
5. *Pray for protection and safety of God’s ministers* (Acts 12)—While Peter was in prison awaiting execution the believers were praying for him and God sent an angel of deliverance.
6. *Pray for those in authority* (1 Timothy 2:2)—Paul writes to Timothy and instructs him to pray “for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”
7. *Pray that you will be counted worthy to stand before Christ at his coming* (Luke 21:36)—“Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man.”
8. *Pray for the unity of all believers that the world may believe* (John 17:21)—“That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.”
9. *Pray for sick to be healed* (James 5:16)—“Pray for one another, that you may be healed.” It is God’s will that we are healed. He promised it, we must live in the faith of that promise.
10. *Pray for the remedy of the effects of sin* (Mark 16:15-18)—God has revealed his desire that those who believe him become empowered to deal with the effects of sin in the lives of men and women. We need to stay before the throne of God in prayer that we continue in an anointed ministry that sees the hand of God working in deliverance and restoration from the effects of sin.

Day Seven— Secret #7: The Secret of Daily Contact

Luke 11:3—Give us each day our daily bread

The principle: Because we are in a walk of faith it is a daily walk. God does not give us enough of anything on any given day to last the rest of our lives. Look at the examples in scripture:

- 1. He created the world so that our lives would be divided into 24 hour segments.**
 - A. Not enough to overwhelm us, but enough to challenge us.
 - B. Even in the garden, with Adam and Eve, we are given a hint as to the importance of daily communion with Him. After Adam had sinned God came walking in the garden in the cool of the day to commune with him (Genesis 3:6)
- 2. Exodus 16—The manna and the quail; they were given enough sufficient for one day. If more was gathered it rotted before it could be used, except on the sixth day when they gathered enough for the sabbath.**
 - A. In verse 4 God said, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this they will follow my instructions.”
 - B. This was a test of their ability to trust God (faith) and of their commitment to obey.
 - C. In Deuteronomy 8:3, Moses Reminding Israel of the Manna said, “He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”
- 3. Matthew 6—This concept of trust and obedience is carried over into our daily lives in the teachings of Jesus.**
 - A. Notice that Jesus goes from teaching on giving, prayer and faith in verses 1-18
 - B. In verses 19-24 he asks the question, “Where is your treasure?” Or another way to ask it is, “What do you trust; your ability to provide or my ability to provide?”
 - C. Then beginning in verse 25 he talks about the Father’s desire to provide for us.

- D. Finally he challenges to the faith of living one day at a time in verses 31-34. His final word on the subject is, “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”
- E. This entire passage, beginning with the teaching on prayer, implies that we must develop a diligent, daily prayer life.

4. The example of the life of Daniel:

Daniel 6:10—Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

- Because his practice had been to pray daily he had maintained that communion with God.
- When help from God was needed he did not call an emergency prayer meeting, he just kept praying every day.
- As a result of Daniel’s faith and faithfulness King Darius circulated the following message, “May you prosper greatly! I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end. He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.”

Day Eight— Secret #8: The Secret of the Blood of the Covenant

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors (Matthew 6:12)

When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:11-12).

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16).

1. Confessing our sin

- A. We cannot approach God with unconfessed sin and get his favor.
- B. Isaiah 59:1&2—Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.
- C. Daniel's Confession in Chapter 9
 - 1) v.5—"We have sinned and done Wrong"
 - 2) v5—"We have been wicked and have rebelled"
 - 3) v5—"We have turned away from your commands"
 - 4) v6—"We have not listened to your servants and prophets"
 - 5) His confession and repentance brought results: v20-21—"While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and thin of my people... Gabriel... came to me in swift flight about the evening sacrifice."

2. Accepting the blood of Christ for our sins

- A. The old system: There would be blood sacrifices for atonement of sin offered annually by the high priest.
- B. The new system: "He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:11-12).
 - 1) One sacrifice was enough for all of mankind
 - 2) One sacrifice was enough for all of our personal sins
 - 3) One offering of His blood was enough to secure eternal redemption.

3. Repenting, or turning away from, our sins.

- A. To approach God effectively we must be committed to a godly lifestyle.
- B. Ezekiel 14:1—Some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat down in front of me. 2)Then the word of the LORD came to me: 3)"Son of man, these men have set up idols in their hearts and put wicked stumbling blocks before their faces. Should I let them inquire of me at all?"

4. Standing firm in the faith concerning the work of Calvary.

- A. Hebrews 4:14—"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, **let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.**"
- B. Remember this: The devil is the accuser of the believers—if he can convince you to surrender your confidence in God to forgive your sins and grant you repentance, he will.
- C. Jeremiah 31: 34—No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "**For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.**"

5. Approach the throne of grace with confidence (boldness).

- A. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence (Hebrews 4:16)
- B. "So that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:16)

Day Nine— Secret #9: The Secret Hindrances to Prayer

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors—Matthew 6:12

"I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."—Mark 11:23-25

“For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins”.—Matthew 6:14-15

FORGIVENESS IS CONDITION OF ANSWERED PRAYER:

Jesus made being able to forgive a condition of answered prayer. In fact, he even made it a condition of being forgiven. The principle of forgiveness is so important that Jesus said if we do not learn to forgive then God will not forgive our sins (Matthew 16:15).

UNFORGIVENESS LEADS TO JUDGMENT:

In Matthew 18 Jesus was asked about forgiveness. Peter asked, “How many times should I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times” (v21)? Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy times seven” (v22). Then he goes on to tell the story of an unforgiving servant.

Jesus concludes this story with this verse, “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart” (v35)

WE SHOULD HAVE THE ATTITUDE OF CHRIST:

Remember the attitude of Jesus. He was accused unjustly. He was beaten unmercifully. His beard was plucked until his face was a bloody mass. When he asked for water they gave him vinegar. In the midst of all this he raised his head toward heaven and cried, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34).

The Apostle Paul, writing about the suffering and humility of Christ in Philippians 2 wrote, “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus” (v5).

LOVE, FAITH AND FORGIVENESS ARE LINKED TOGETHER:

Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 adds a little perspective when he writes, “If I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing” (v2). Faith, love and forgiveness seem to be intrinsically intertwined. It appears that you cannot have one without the others.

The question goes beyond who did what. And it even goes beyond whether they deserve to be forgiven. It goes to the question of whether we truly love God and of whether we have allowed His love to flow through us.

The following story demonstrates the Power of God’s love and forgiveness:

During the Korean conflict a Christian minister was holding a service. During the meeting the soldiers marched into the meeting place and ordered the people to disperse. Then he turned to the young son of the minister and shot him dead at point blank range.

Later, after the war had ended, this soldier was brought to trial for this murder as a war crime. The father of the dead boy was at the trial. The soldier was convicted and the judge was about to pass sentence. The father stepped forward and asked to speak. His request was quite unusual. He asked that the soldier be sentenced to being his son in order to replace the one that had been killed. The judge agreed and sent the soldier home.

This young soldier expected to be treated like a slave and abused, but instead he found that he was actually treated like a son. This father had truly forgiven and saw no advantage in their being another death. He knew it would not bring back his son and he also knew that it would not restore his loss.

Because of this man’s kindness the young ex-soldier became a Christian and later became a pastor. Because one man could forgive, many hundreds later came to believe the Christian message through the young man’s ministry.

Day Ten— Secret #10: The Secret of Prayer That Anticipates Evil

Matthew 6:13—And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Luke 4:5-7—The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship me, it will all be yours.”

It should be noted that Jesus never took issue with the statement the devil made that all the kingdoms of the world had been given to him. Neither did he take issue with the devil’s authority to give him those kingdoms. It appears that evil truly does have authority over the nations and Satan has certainly given authority to some to rule over regions. Remember Ephesians 6:12, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

With these things in mind we should be well aware that there is a pervasiveness in evil that we must guard against. The message of Matthew 6:13 seems to be, “Lord, as you are leading us, guide us around temptation and deliver us from the evil that would destroy our soul.”

We must anticipate evil if we are to stand against temptation. An example of this is when Jesus was instructing that men were coming to take his life. In Matthew 26 verse 31 Jesus told them, “This very night you will all fall away on account of me.” Peter replied in verse 33, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.” Peter was convinced that he would never fall; but he had not considered the temptation.

The temptation that was coming:

1. Fear of torture and death
2. Despair over loss of their Lord
3. To deny they knew him
4. To Isolate
5. To go back to fishing

Jesus responded to Peter in verse 34, “I tell you the truth, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”

Proverbs 27:12—The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it.

Proverbs 14:15—A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps. 16) A wise man fears the Lord and shuns evil, but a fool is hotheaded and reckless.

Jesus gave us good instruction concerning the diligence required to walk in faith. In Matthew 6 he says, “Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

- **Seek first his kingdom**—give the pursuit of God due diligence.
- **Do not worry about tomorrow**—Trust God in your walk. If you are diligent in prayer and building your faith He will lead you through today’s trial.
- **Each day has enough trouble of its own**—Be advised, there will be trouble, or temptation, in any given day. We can not live in fear of it, but we should anticipate it and be prepared.

Some ways to prepare for temptation:

1. **Stay in Prayer.** “Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints” (Ephesians 5:18)
2. **Be aware of your weaknesses.** “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2Corinth.12:9).
3. **Be aware of the evil one.** “Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8)
4. **Resist evil and stand firm.** “Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings” (1 Peter 5:9)

Day 11— Secret #11: The Secret to Increasing Power in Prayer

Matthew 18:18-19—“I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. 19)Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.”

The prayer of agreement creates great power:

- Leviticus 26:6-8—“Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you.”—“One shall put a thousand to flight and 2 shall put ten thousand to flight.”
- Matthew 18:19-20—If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father.”
- John 17: 20-23—“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, **that all of them may be one**, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. **May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.**

Spiritual Unity In the Book of Acts:

- United by the command not to teach and do miracles in Jesus Name; 4:23-31
- United by the imprisonment of Peter; 12:1-18
- Became united to resolve a conflict; 15

God has called us to become united in these areas:

1. As brothers and sisters of New Hope
2. In pulling down strongholds the enemy has over this neighborhood
3. In evangelizing this neighborhood
4. In building a strong Word of God and Spirit of God fellowship of believers