

Prayers of the Bible

Praying the Scriptures and Promises.

Lecture 3 of “Praying to Get Results”
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Not In Words But In Power

- **I Corinthians 2:4-5** *My speech and my proclamation were not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a powerful demonstration by the Spirit, 5 so that your faith might not be based on men's wisdom but on God's power.*
- **I Corinthians 4:20** *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.*
- **I Thessalonians 1:5** *For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, in the Holy Spirit, and with much assurance. You know what kind of men we were among you for your benefit,*
- **2 Timothy 3:5** *holding to the form of godliness but denying its power. Avoid these people!*

The Power of the Promises!

- **2 Peter 1:2-4 (HCSB)**

May grace and peace be multiplied to you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. 3 His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. 4 By these He has given us very great and precious promises, so that through them you may share in the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desires.

Partaking.....

- The purpose of the Promises is so that we can be ***partakers in the divine nature*** and escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1:2-4)
- So we can be LOVING (God is Love)
- So we can be FORGIVING (God abundantly pardons)
- So we can be GENEROUS (God gives all things freely)
- So we can be HOLY (God is holy and perfect)
- So we can be WISE IN ALL THINGS (as God is..)
- The promises were NOT given just so we can be happy and successful (though these are good things)
- The promises are not to fulfill the world's standards and expectations but are so we may partake in God Himself!

The Divine Nature

- We become eternal, immortal beings with spiritual bodies after the resurrection, when the corruptible puts on incorruptible and the mortal puts on the immortal and we share the nature of the heavenly man, Christ Jesus (I Corinthians 15:35-58, Romans 8:17-25)
- This divine transformation will be the “revealing of the sons of God” and involves the liberation of all Creation and a manifestation of great glory (our glorification).
- Therefore we are on a journey to take on the divine nature. We are not worldlings and earth-dwellers, we are Spirit-filled temples of the Living God.
- To pray effectively we require a vast spiritual vision of what we are becoming in Christ.

Praying and Partaking...

- What aspect of the Divine Nature are you **TOTALLY LACKING IN** so that it would be utterly impossible to be like God unless you got a massive, gracious, free and blessed heavenly download of that quality?
- Tell God that you are a totally empty vessel in need of Him, and that you want to be like Him and to partake in the Divine Nature but that it is utterly impossible for you to do so. **BE POOR IN SPIRIT!**
- Then prayerfully ask for the quality you completely lack (e.g. self-discipline) and believe that you have received it by faith on the basis of His Word.
- Then **PERSIST** in this kind of “asking, seeking, knocking” kind of prayer (see Matthew 7:7,8; Luke 11:11-13, 18:1-10)

Partaking In A Divine Destiny

- God gives us everything we need for life and godliness by His divine power, unleashed through His promises (2 Peter 1:2-4) and Heavenly Blessings (Ephesians 1:3) so that we can complete the good works that God has prepared beforehand for us to do (Ephesians 2:10)
- We have ACCESS TO EVERYTHING so that we may DO SOMETHING for the glory of God!
- The promises and blessings are the power for partaking in the pathway of God's plan e.g. when Jesus sent out the Twelve and the 72
- They are God's gracious provision for our divine destiny

Our Life Purpose

The life purpose of every born-agian Christian is:

to repent from being a spiritually dead and totally self-centered sinner driven here and there by various lusts

and through grace, by faith, to become a loving, holy son or daughter of the Living God,

made into the image of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ

and in the process to complete the good works that God has foreordained for us to do.

Ephesians 2:1-10, 3:14-21, Romans 8:28-30

You Cannot Change Yourself!

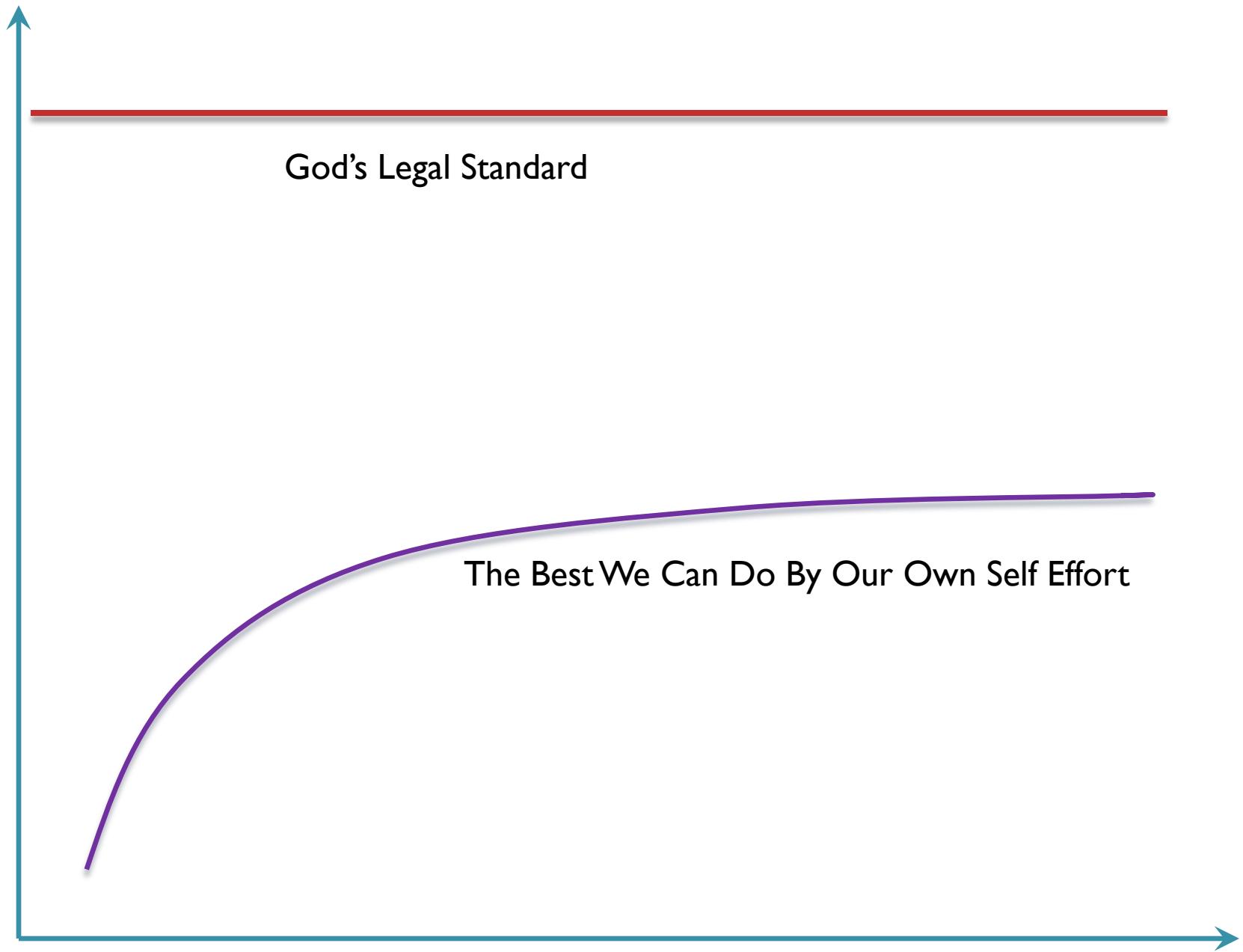
We simply CANNOT change ourselves from a sinner to a saint because such a process involves:

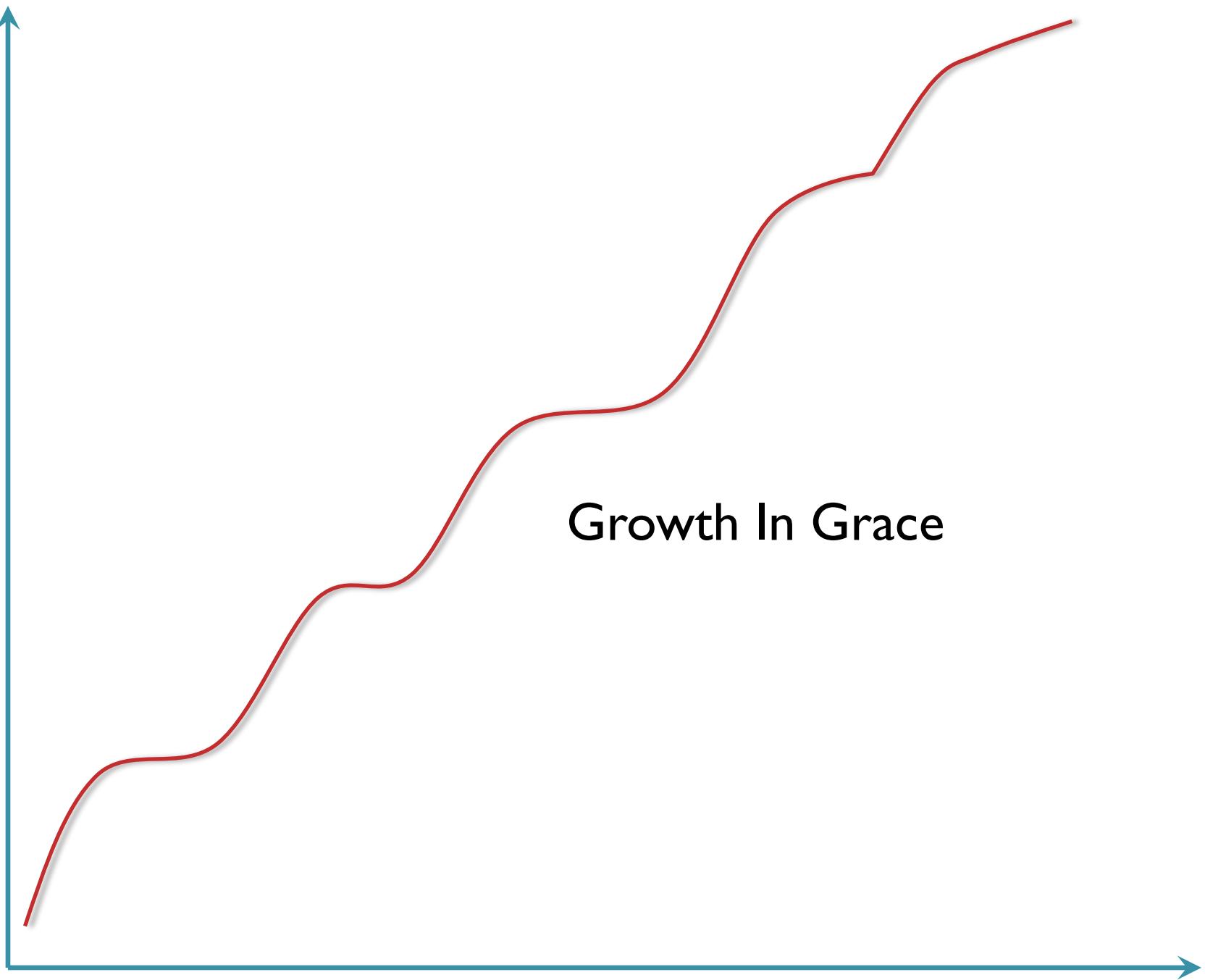
- a) Knowing ourselves and all our weaknesses
- b) Knowing the right methods for correcting all of our weaknesses and the right order in which to correct them
- c) Knowing what the image of Jesus Christ is in all its various dimensions
- d) Being able to develop all the positive aspects of His character
- e) Having the right wisdom, power, time, talent, advisors, circumstances etc to help us with this vast endeavor

THIS IS OBVIOUSLY TOTALLY OUT OF REACH!

Our Weakness

- We are weak because of “the flesh”
- We are weak because we live in a fallen world
- Self-effort always fails because “self” cannot do it!
- Legalism always fails “for the Law made nothing perfect”
- Even Jesus did not succeed by self-effort, Jesus succeeded because He was full of the Holy Spirit and was the fullness of Deity in bodily form.
- Flesh + Law + Self-Effort = Total Defeat (Romans 7)
- We need powerful promises received freely by grace if we are to be able to partake in any amount of holiness at all!





By Grace Through Faith

1. Believe a Promise
2. Receive That Promise by Faith (Activation)
3. Experience That Promise
4. Get Led to Another Promise
5. Believe That Promise
6. Receive That Promise by Faith (Activation)
7. Experience That Promise...

Abraham

1. Was Given a Promise Of A Son
2. Believed The Promise
3. Activated The Promise By Acting In Faith
4. Received and Experienced the Promise (Isaac was born)
5. Was called to Mt. Moriah
6. Offered Isaac as a “sacrifice” (stopped at the last minute)
7. Received and experienced the Promise of complete dominion over his enemies.

Some Faith Actions...

- Hebrews 11 : Faith actions activate divine promises...
- Noah Building an Ark
- Abraham Going out of Ur
- Abraham offering up Isaac as one from the dead
- The Patriarchs Dwelling In Tents in Canaan
- Moses' Mother Hiding Her Son
- Moses Leaving Egypt
- Joshua Marching Around Jericho

Faith actions are more than just normal “obedience to rules” they involve “seeing Him who is unseen” and believing Him!

Elisha and The King

- **2 Kings 13:14-20 (HCSB)**
 - *14 When Elisha became sick with the illness that he died from, Jehoash king of Israel went down and wept over him and said, “My father, my father, the chariots and horsemen of Israel! ” 15 Elisha responded, “Take a bow and arrows.” So he got a bow and arrows. 16 Then Elisha said to the king of Israel, “Put your hand on the bow.” So the king put his hand on it, and Elisha put his hands on the king’s hands. 17 Elisha said, “Open the east window.” So he opened it. Elisha said, “Shoot! ” So he shot. Then Elisha said, “The LORD’s arrow of victory, yes, the arrow of victory over Aram. You are to strike down the Arameans in Aphek until you have put an end to them.” 18 Then Elisha said, “Take the arrows! ” So he took them. **Then Elisha said to the king of Israel, “Strike the ground! ”** So he struck the ground three times and stopped. 19 The man of God was angry with him and said, “You should have struck the ground five or six times. Then you would have struck down Aram until you had put an end to them, but now you will only strike down Aram three times.” 20 Then Elisha died and was buried.*

Attitudes That Activate

- Luke 6:27-38 (HCSB)
- 27 “But I say to you who listen: Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29 If anyone hits you on the cheek, offer the other also. And if anyone takes away your coat, don’t hold back your shirt either. 30 Give to everyone who asks you, and from one who takes your things, don’t ask for them back. 31 Just as you want others to do for you, do the same for them. 35 But love your enemies, do what is good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. **Then your reward will be great**, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is gracious to the ungrateful and evil. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful. 37 “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. 38 Give, and it will be given to you; a good measure — pressed down, shaken together, and running over — will be poured into your lap. **For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.”**

Receiving Joy....

SCRIPTURAL PROMISE:

God promises us joy as a fruit of the Spirit and tells us to “rejoice in the Lord always”

BELIEVING PRAYER

- Pray for the joy of the Lord: “Father in Heaven please send me your heavenly joy FREELY in Jesus’ Name, Amen.”
- Believe that you are now freely and abundantly receiving and will experience the joy of the Lord, by grace, through faith as a direct download from Heaven. Open up your heart to joy!

FAITH ACTIVATION

- Say something joyful e.g. “ I rejoice in God my Savior..”
- Do a simple joyful action: smile, twitch your nose, sing a song, etc..
- State: “The joy of the Lord is my strength, I am joyful in the Lord and I am strong in the Lord!”

How You Received The Joy...

- You did not pay anything for it
- You did not earn it by good works
- It was not the result of a program
- A psychologist did not work with you for two years
- You did not go through a magic ritual
- You received joy, from Heaven, by grace, through faith and activated it by simple actions that were consistent with that faith!
- If you were skeptical that you would receive joy, then you probably did not receive joy, because doubt annuls the promises of God.

How You Can Receive Peace and Poise

PROMISE

- Believe that God promises you peace and poise in every situation in life. (Psalm 91)
- Believe that God is sovereign and is with you, will never leave you or forsake you and is working all things together for good and if God is for you then who can be against you? For greater is He who is in you than he that is in the world.

PRAYER

- Pray: “Father in Heaven, in Jesus’ Might Name I now receive peace and poise in life and in situation X”
- Open up your heart to be filled with peace and poise

ACTIVATION

- Think of peace and poise, say the word “Calm...”
- Act as if you were poised, peaceful, strong and able to cope with everything that comes your way...
- Tackle something that would have made you nervous before

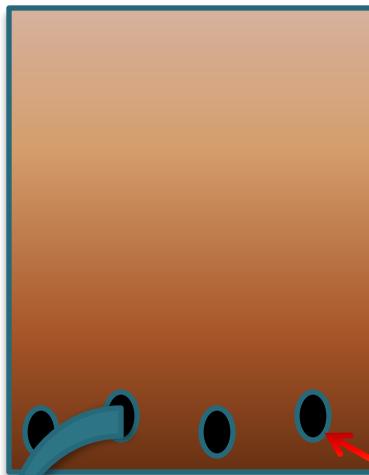
Receiving A Ministry

- You receive a call from God (Acts 26)
- No one earns or deserves the call of God it is by grace (2 Timothy 1:9, 1 Timothy 1:12-16)
- You receive power from on high... (Acts 1:8)
- You receive authority (Luke 9, 10)
- You take on the ministry by faith
- You start doing things by faith uncertain of the outcome
- You see results and improve those results
- You stay in the ministry through faithfulness
- You perfect the ministry through attention to detail
- All the while you are moving from faith to faith, receiving a fully supply of the Spirit.

BLESSINGS



**BLESSINGS
AND POWER
ARE EASILY
LOST!**



***The Born-Again Christian
- A Prepared Vessel***

SIN AND FOLLY:
Pride, Wrong Doctrine, Worldliness,
Greed, Carelessness, Slackness,
Lusts, Disobedience, Laziness,
Wrath, Rudeness, Godlessness (Esau)

How Promises Work

- Promises are given by God
- Received by Grace
- Activated by Faith and Believing Prayer
- Inherited through Faith and Patience
- Made Excellent through Diligence
- Retained through Righteousness
- **NB:** *Blessings are not ATTAINED by righteousness but they are RETAINED by righteousness*

Knowing Which Promise To Pray

- The thing you need most in order to partake in the Divine Nature, be filled with all the fullness of God and to display the fruits and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit.
- The thing you need most to complete the good works that God is asking you to do
- The thing you need to do some special ministry in that particular moment
- The thing you need to be able to overcome your greatest fear or to escape your deepest emotional trap or to deal with your sense of personal threat so you can move in mastery
- A promise that is specifically pointed out to you by the Holy Spirit, from the Word, and generally in-context

Promises Can Take Time To Be Fulfilled

- Abraham's promise of Isaac took 25 years!
- It took a long time, but it nevertheless WORKED
- Abraham's promise of numerous descendants is still being unfolded nearly 4000 years afterwards.
- The promise of Christ's return has taken nearly 2000 years.
- Promises can face severe demonic opposition (e.g. the promise of a deliverer from the Seed of the Woman)
- We need to persist in the promises by faith and not “go back to Egypt” and we are not to take disastrous “short-cuts”

The Prayer of Jabez: Blessings

- **I Chronicles 4:9-10**
- Jabez was more honorable than his brothers. His mother named him Jabez and said, “I gave birth to him in pain.”

Jabez called out to the God of Israel:

*“If only You would bless me,
extend my border,
let Your hand be with me,
and keep me from harm,
so that I will not cause any pain.”*

And God granted his request.

Hezekiah's Prayer: Deliverance

- **2 Kings 19:15-20 (HCSB)**
- *15 Then Hezekiah prayed before the LORD: LORD God of Israel who is enthroned above the cherubim, You are God — You alone — of all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the heavens and the earth. 16 Listen closely, LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, LORD, and see. Hear the words that Sennacherib has sent to mock the living God. 17 LORD, it is true that the kings of Assyria have devastated the nations and their lands. 18 They have thrown their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but made by human hands — wood and stone. So they have destroyed them. 19 Now, LORD our God, please save us from his hand so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the LORD God — You alone. 20 Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent a message to Hezekiah: “The LORD, the God of Israel says: ‘I have heard your prayer to Me about Sennacherib king of Assyria.’”*

Nehemiah: Prayer for Success

- **Nehemiah 1:4-11 (HCSB)**
- 4 When I heard these words, I sat down and wept. I mourned for a number of days, fasting and praying before the God of heaven.
5 I said, Yahweh, the God of heaven, the great and awe-inspiring God who keeps His gracious covenant with those who love Him and keep His commands, 6 let Your eyes be open and Your ears be attentive to hear Your servant's prayer that I now pray to You day and night for Your servants, the Israelites. I confess the sins we have committed against You. Both I and my father's house have sinned. 7 We have acted corruptly toward You and have not kept the commands, statutes, and ordinances You gave Your servant Moses. 8 Please remember what You commanded Your servant Moses: "If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples. 9 But if you return to Me and carefully observe My commands, even though your exiles were banished to the ends of the earth, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place where I chose to have My name dwell." 10 They are Your servants and Your people. You redeemed them by Your great power and strong hand. 11 Please, Lord, let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and to that of Your servants who delight to revere Your name. Give Your servant success today, and have compassion on him in the presence of this man.
At the time, I was the king's cupbearer.

A Prayerful Church

- **Acts 4:23-31 (HCSB)**
- 23 After they were released, they went to their own people and reported everything the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 When they heard this, they all raised their voices to God and said, “Master, You are the One who made the heaven, the earth, and the sea, and everything in them. 25 You said through the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of our father David Your servant: Why did the Gentiles rage and the peoples plot futile things? 26 The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers assembled together against the Lord and against His Messiah. 27 “For, in fact, in this city both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, assembled together against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, 28 to do whatever Your hand and Your plan had predestined to take place. 29 And now, Lord, consider their threats, and grant that Your slaves may speak Your message with complete boldness, 30 while You stretch out Your hand for healing, signs, and wonders to be performed through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.” 31 When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak God’s message with boldness.

Praying For Enlightenment

- **Ephesians 1:15-23 (HCSB)**
- *15 This is why, since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, 16 I never stop giving thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. 17 I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. 18 I pray that the perception of your mind may be enlightened so you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the glorious riches of His inheritance among the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power to us who believe, according to the working of His vast strength. 20 He demonstrated this power in the Messiah by raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavens — 21 far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And He put everything under His feet and appointed Him as head over everything for the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of the One who fills all things in every way.*

Prayer for Your Christian Life

- **Colossians 1:9-12 (HCSB)**
- *9 For this reason also, since the day we heard this, we haven't stopped praying for you. We are asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, 10 so that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God. 11 May you be strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience, with joy 12 giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the saints' inheritance in the light.*

Unpacking The Promises

- All of the previous six prayer unpack the potential of the promises, character and purposes of God.
- For instance the church in Acts knew unpacked the pouring out of the Holy Spirit by asking to be filled with boldness and specifically asking for signs and wonders and miracles to follow.
- Paul unpacks the power of the gospel by praying deeply for the enlightenment and sanctification of the churches that he ministered to – even though this was ALREADY God's will.
- Hezekiah's prayer unpacked the promise of covenant protection and resulted in 185,000 Assyrians being slain by an angel – even though deliverance was already God's will!

God's Will and Prayer

- Jesus taught His disciples to pray:
Thy Kingdom come, They will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven... (Matthew 6)
- Jesus would not have taught His disciples to pray this way if it was not necessary. So to some extent God's Kingdom coming and God's will being done, depend on our prayers.
- It is not God's will that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9) – but many do perish. However when people pray many are saved! It takes much prayer to do God's will (getting people saved)

God's Will Happens When We Pray

- Getting people saved is God's will and it takes prayer
- Deliverance from demons is God's will and it requires prayer with authority
- Provision for every good work is God's will and yet it takes prayer with persistence
- Healing is in God's nature and is definitely God's will and it takes prayer (James 5).
- Accomplishing a great purpose for God (e.g. rebuilding Jerusalem) takes prayer before it can move forward.
- The filling of the Holy Spirit is God's will and in Acts 8 it took apostolic prayer and the laying on of hands.

But Isn't God Sovereign?

- Some people say:
“God is Sovereign and His will happens whether I pray or not otherwise God would not be God and everything would depend on Man”
- This is known as **FATALISM** and is one of the chief characteristics of deterministic pagan religions (Islam, astrology, Hinduism etc)
- Man was put over the earth to subdue it and to bring it into order. Order (Shalom) on this planet depends on us, and we cannot achieve it unless we PRAY (because we lack the power ourselves). The grand universal order depends on God but the local order depends on us and upon our prayers.

Back To The Arrows...

- The number of times that the Arameans would be defeated depended ENTIRELY upon how many times the King would hit the arrows against the ground!
- God's sovereign will had NOT determined how many times the Arameans would be defeated! Elisha said they could have been completely wiped out! (And that would have been God's perfect will)
- There is a mysterious divine connection between how we pray and what God does.
- The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much!
- Prayer opens the floodgates, triggers the avalanche of blessings and is like the lever that switches the train tracks and directs the course of the train!

Unredeemed Promises

- Every now and then someone discovers a large pile of unredeemed government bonds and makes a fortune.
- The value was there, it was just hidden in the attic and never cashed in.
- The bond was an unused promissory note!
- If we are to partake of the divine nature we need to start cashing in the divine promises through prayer
- Even things that are God's will for us will NOT happen unless we pray for them to happen and receive them by grace through faith!
- Good things such holiness, love, peace of mind, joy, patience, inner strength, healing, and power in ministry will NEVER arrive unless we pray for them.

Praying for Wisdom

- God does not want His children to be stupid!
- It is clearly God's will that Christians be wise and this is all through Proverbs and through the prayers in the New Testament.
- Yet James tells us that we must PRAY for wisdom
- And Paul frequently prays for the wisdom of his converts
- If something as obviously basic, good, necessary and desirable as wisdom requires prayer then **EVERYTHING** in the Christian life requires prayer – diligent daily prayer!

Basic Things That Require Prayer

- Deliverance from Temptation (Matthew 26:41)
- Salvation (Romans 10:1, I Timothy 2:4)
- The Fullness of the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:11-13, Acts 8:15))
- Wisdom and Revelation (Ephesians 1:17)
- Healing Miracles (Acts 4:30, James 5:14-16)
- Developing Christian Character (Colossians 1:10-11)
- Inner Strength (Ephesians 3:14-21)
- The Experience of the Love of Christ (Ephesians 3:14-21)
- Tranquil Lives / Good Government (I Timothy 2:1-4)
- Deliverance from Unbelievers (Rom 15:30,31, Acts 12:5)
- Christian Maturity (Colossians 4:12)

Not Automatic!

- Promises and blessings are like promissory notes that must be activated through prayer and the activating actions of faith!
- You do not have because you do not ask (James 4:2)!
- God will not automatically make you good
- God will not automatically make you loving
- You must earnestly pray for these things!
- You must fervently pray to be a partaker of the divine nature, filled with all the fullness of God!
- You must fervently pray for everything pertaining to life and godliness even though God WANTS and has promised to supply them to you!
- **God will only give us the things that we want to receive** and God will know we want to receive it, and that we value it, when we ask for it in prayer!