
Better Way to Pray

Andrew Wommack, book notes

God Already Moved

Most Christians see prayer as an opportunity to “move God.” They believe He can do anything, but that He hasn’t done it yet. In this mentality, prayer is how to make God do something. If this is what you believe, your prayer life rests on an extremely faulty foundation.

God has already done everything He’s ever going to do! He moved once and for all in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Through the atonement, God has already forgiven and healed every person who will ever be forgiven or healed. He doesn’t even have to lift His little finger now to cause a healing or salvation!

As far as God’s concerned, the sins of the entire world have already been forgiven. The Lamb’s perfect sacrifice dealt decisively with the past, present, and future sins of every believer and nonbeliever alike. This doesn’t mean that all are just “automatically” saved (or healed). All individuals must receive for themselves by faith what Jesus Christ has already provided in order to actually benefit from it. A gift given isn’t fully yours until it’s received!

As Christians, we are to instruct people to believe and receive what God has already done for them through the atonement.

Yet God’s Word clearly proclaims, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him” (Col. 2:6). In the same way you appropriate and walk in forgiveness of sin, you receive healing, deliverance, prosperity, and everything else! If begging God to save the lady in the first scenario is inappropriate, then doing so for healing or anything else in the Christian life is absolutely wrong too! Christ already made full provision for the abundant life through His atonement. It’s now not up to Him to do, but you to receive what He’s done!

In our Bible schools and teaching seminars, we confidently instruct people not to “pray” for the sick, but to heal them. Jesus commanded us in Matthew 10:8 to “heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, [and] cast out devils.” There’s a huge difference between healing the sick and just praying for them!

Although this might sound foreign to you, these are just normal results when you understand and believe that God has already done His part. Jesus Christ completed everything necessary to save and heal every person. You believed and received salvation.

Healing comes the exact same way! It shouldn’t be any harder to receive your healing since He provided it at the same time as forgiveness for your sin.

The question isn’t, “Will God save you?” but “Will you accept His salvation?” The gift has been given, but will you receive it?

It’s the same with everything else in the Christian life! God has already healed, prospered, and delivered you. Yet most people beg and plead, attempting to manipulate and control God through prayer. Their underlying attitude is “How do I make God do something He’s unwilling to do?” That’s totally wrong! Prayer is not trying to twist God’s arm to make Him do something. Prayer is receiving by faith what He has already done!

CHAPTER 2 - How Long Do You Pray?

Constant Communion

Prayer is communion with God! If He’s with you all of the time, you ought to be praying all of the time. The expression of this communion isn’t limited to a particular set of body positions. In the Bible, people knelt, raised

their hands, and even looked up into heaven at times, but don't make a religious form out of these things and require their presence in order to consider something "prayer." You can pray with your eyes open or closed, hands raised or down, standing, kneeling, or prostrate. Since meditation is prayer (Ps. 5:1), you don't even have to talk out loud! Your communion with God should be constant.

CHAPTER 3 - Serious Misconceptions

Death and life are in the power of the tongue. Proverbs 18:21

Even in "prayer," your words produce either death or life. Praying God's solution from the Word releases life but praying negatively and focusing on your problems only energizes and strengthens them—whether you realize it or not!

CHAPTER 4 - Our Father...

Begin prayer by acknowledging your special relationship to God your Father. Don't just approach Him as "God," "Judge," or "Creator"; that's impersonal and distant. Every New Testament believer has a close, personal relationship with God that supersedes even the very best of what Old Testament saints had. Isn't that awesome?

People outside the church hear the way we talk about the Lord: "God sent the September 11 attacks. He's judging America, and we need to pray for His clemency. The Lord will completely destroy our ungodly nation if we don't get down on our knees and beg for forgiveness now." It's no wonder people aren't turning to God. That's not an accurate representation of who He is!

God's not mad at you! It doesn't matter how sorry you are. He took all of His anger out on His own Son two thousand years ago at the cross. Jesus proclaimed, "It is finished!" (John 19:30). Now you can approach Him without fear based on what Christ has done. God's just glad to hear from you. He's not going to find fault with you. God isn't like that!

Go ahead and enter His gates with thanksgiving and praise Him. Thank Him for the fact that He is holy and kind, pure and good. Praise Him for being your Father and not your Judge! He'll be the Judge of nonbelievers, but He isn't going to judge you. Your judgment was placed upon Jesus. When you stand before Him on that Day as a believer in Christ, it'll be for the presentation of your eternal reward, not condemnation. There's simply no need to be afraid of your loving heavenly Father!

Manifesting Heaven on Earth

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Mathew 6:10

Jesus continued to praise God, declaring, "Father, I know that it's Your will for things to be done on earth the way they are in heaven." In heaven, no sickness. Therefore, it's not God's will for you to be sick! There's no poverty in heaven. So it's not God's will for you to be poor here on earth! In the presence of the Lord, there is abundant joy, shouting, singing, praising, and worshiping. That's what heaven is like, and it's how He expects us to be here on earth!

Religion has sold us a bill of goods!

It's taught us to always expect God to be half ticked off. It's convinced us that we must constantly try to appease an angry God. Wrong, wrong, wrong! That's not the way Father wants it to be. If Christians really understood this part of the model prayer, they'd quit believing that God is the one who brings bad things into our lives to teach us something. God doesn't make people sick. He doesn't put poverty in your life. He didn't cause your marriage to fail because you weren't serving Him at the time. God didn't kill your child because you weren't reading the Bible.

Religion teaches that garbage. It's no wonder we aren't getting better results in prayer! God wants His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven! This should serve as a guideline for what we expect from Him. We should pray that what's already waiting for us in heaven would begin to manifest here in our lives on earth. Eternal life has already begun!

Better Way to Pray

God wants us to be this way with Him. He desires all believers to be so familiar with His love that our approach toward Him is bold. (Heb. 4:16.) He yearns for His children to believe that all the provision they need has already been made. They just have to reach out in faith and take it. "Father, thank You! I receive my healing. I take my prosperity. I love You, Father!" You aren't making God do something. You just know in your heart that He's already supplied, so you reach out and receive it.

Not many Christians approach God this way. We come before Him more like beggars than children. We should pray, "Father, I thank You that You have already provided everything I need. You never deny me anything good!" Instead, we enter His presence feeling like God doesn't really want to move in our life. Therefore we beg and plead with Him to make Him move on our behalf. That attitude stinks! It's religious bondage, not true prayer. God is offended, and it doesn't bless you. Tear that stuff up and start over! "Give us this day our daily bread!" Just take advantage of what He's already done. Appropriate it!

Through faith in Christ, we transferred kingdoms. Jesus has already delivered us out of the kingdom of darkness and set us in the kingdom of light. The evil one lost his legal hold on us completely, and we now belong to our loving heavenly Father. For this we praise Him. Hallelujah!

CHAPTER 5 - Make a Prayer Sandwich!

Christ's model prayer started with praise: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name..." and ended with praise: "...For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen" (Matt. 6:9,13).

This is what I like to call the "Sandwich Technique." Start your prayer thanking Him, praising Him, and declaring how big He is. Then, slide in your petition and end by praising Him some more. When you approach God with your request by slipping it in between two healthy slices of praise and thanksgiving, you'll find that you don't really have that much to ask Him for.

"Oh God, the doctor told me that I'm going to die! I remember this same condition killed Aunt Suzie. It's so bad!" That kind of "praying" just discourages you. It builds up fear and depression. What if you prayed more like this? "Father, thank You that Your name is above every name. Cancer has a name. AIDS has a name. These things the doctor told me are in my body have names. You are above them all! Thank You that You are greater, stronger, and more powerful than all of this!"

Spend another five or ten minutes just praising Him for His greatness, then by the time you're ready to put your request in, it'd be more like, "Father, this is so small in comparison to what You're able to do. I shouldn't even have to ask, but the doctor did say that I'm going to die. So since Jesus has already provided my healing, I'll just receive it!" Then go back to praising and worshiping Him. In light of who God is, nothing is really that big of a problem.

PRAISE

Whatever you focus on will magnify in your eyes. Focus on the problem and it'll grow. Focus on God (who is your solution) and your vision of Him will increase. This is why the direction of your prayer is so important. Will you choose to magnify God or your problem? The one you magnify will grow stronger in your life and the other weaker.

A huge amount of prayer ought to be praise! Praise is important because it blesses God and strengthens you. The Lord inhabits the praises of His people. (Ps. 22:3.) That's the main reason why church services usually start with praise and worship!

One of the words in the original language for prayer literally means "worship." Another means "to kiss the face." Prayer is worship and worship is prayer. Prayer is kissing our Father's face. Prayer is loving and communing with God.

Brothers and sisters, most of what we're doing is not prayer. It's griping and complaining. It's doing things to make you feel better, like you've earned something from God. "God will hear me now because I prayed for an hour!" Wrong! "Stretching" your prayer provides zero benefit. It's just religion.

If you begin approaching God with a new attitude, it'll make a big difference in your life. God wants you set free from the religious bondages that have been imposed upon you. He didn't lead you under them. Other people put them on you. Or perhaps they were self-imposed. Either way, God wants you free because He's not like that!

CHAPTER 6 - Begging From God

Insulting God

God is not like this "friend" who must be badgered. "You need to grab hold of God and not let go until He gives you what you're asking for!" No! That's against God's character. It's an insult to Him! Yet this very attitude has been widely taught and practiced as "prayer." "You just have to stay after God and make Him do it." You aren't going to make God do anything!

If the Lord hasn't already supplied your need by grace, your faith can't make Him do it. Contrary to popular belief, faith does not move God. He's not the one who's stuck! Neither does He need to "move." God has already done everything! The Lord is never taken by surprise because He established the supply long before you ever had the need. It's not like He has to go out and do something to provide your answer. Since He's already done His part, you don't have to beg and plead.

God has already done it! He's not up there in heaven with His arms folded, demanding, "Beg a little harder; you're not serious yet. Once you've suffered enough, then I'll answer...maybe!" That may be the perception you have, but God's not like that. He's trying to get His blessings to you!

If the Lord didn't need our cooperation to see His power manifest, there'd be zero sickness on earth today. Nobody would wear eyeglasses, suffer allergies, or even endure a cold. God is so willing to meet all of our needs that He's already done it. He's trying to get His healing to you. He's trying to bless every last one of us!

God wants revival more than you do! You don't have to plead with Him to pour out His power. The way we've been taught to beg in "prayer" is absolutely wrong.

I used to preach, "If God doesn't judge America, He'll have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah!" Now I boldly declare, "If God judges America, He'll have to apologize to Jesus!" The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah happened before the cross, but since then Christ has atoned for sin. There's a big difference between then and now. God is not ready to judge this nation.

"Since God isn't going to judge us, does that mean we're safe, secure, and problem free?" No, we're ruining ourselves by giving place to the devil! If America doesn't turn around from going in this wrong direction, there's far worse ahead. But it's not God who's causing the tragedy, forsaking us, or withholding His Spirit. We've turned our back on Him. Yes, we must repent and turn from our self-destructive ways, but we don't need to plead with God to pour out His Spirit all over again. Can you see the difference?

CHAPTER 7 - "Repent, God, Repent!"

Abraham got by with this because it was a different covenant, and Jesus hadn't yet atoned for us. However, it's wrong for a New Testament believer to plead with God this way. The Lord was angry at sin in the Old Covenant, so it was okay for Abraham to do this. But to apply this Old Testament example to us today, saying, "God's mad! If our nation doesn't repent, He's going to judge us!" is simply not true. Yes, He judged Sodom and Gomorrah, but no, God's not going to do the same thing today.

Many voices called the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, "God's judgment on America" for our many national sins. "God has given us a warning. If we don't repent, then He's going to do widespread terrible things!" No, He's not.

At the time of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Lord's wrath toward sin hadn't yet been satisfied. Therefore, He judged them and did other similar things in the Old Testament. However, Jesus Christ made a huge difference! Now, we're in the New Covenant and God's anger toward sin has been appeased.

CHAPTER 8 - Jesus: The Only Mediator

“What Have You Done With Jesus?”

The vast majority of examples and models of prayer we’ve been given, especially for “intercession and spiritual warfare,” all go back to the Old Covenant. They’re awesome examples, but not for us today! God’s not ticked off or even in a bad mood. He’s happy and blessed. His family is growing and His kingdom advances daily! God’s wrath toward sin was poured out on His Son. He’s not angry at people anymore because His justice was satisfied through the Lamb’s perfect sacrifice.

Since God’s not angry, should we still preach? Of course! God has made the provision available, but each individual must believe and receive for themselves. If they don’t, then the wrath and judgment remain because those who don’t accept Jesus as their Savior will go to hell.

Most people think that God is against meeting their needs. That’s why they beg and plead with Him in “prayer,” because they believe He’s ticked off at their ungodliness in His sight. They visualize God with arms folded, putting them off, saying, “I’m not giving you anything!” So they “pray” and stay after Him until He eventually “wears down” and has to answer them. “Don’t let go until He gives you what you want!” No, Jesus taught the exact opposite! It’s people who have twisted these verses and called it “importunity in prayer.” What a rotten attitude!

CHAPTER 9 - A Ploy of the Devil

....lusting for all kinds of material things, we just don’t have time for God!

God isn’t holding back His Spirit. He’s trying to work in the U.S.A. It’s just that the Holy Spirit doesn’t move independent of people. He told believers to go out and heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out demons. Instead of doing what He’s commanded us to do, we’re asking God to do what He told us to do. God has already released His power. It’s in us. Now we must release His power to others.

God has already placed the same power that raised Jesus from the dead on the inside of us! It’s not time for Him to pour out His Spirit. The Lord already has, and He’s indwelling every born again believer. We just need to start speaking the truth and encouraging each other to act on it!

CHAPTER 10 - Come Out of the Closet!

If “pleading the blood” actually kept demons out of church services, they’d be empty! God’s Word doesn’t make a distinction between “oppressed” or “possessed.” The Greek word simply means “demonized.” If you’re depressed, you’re demonized. Satan is messing with you. Many sicknesses are also demonic. Most believers have evil spirits hovering around constantly harassing and afflicting them. If all the demons were truly bound and kept out of church services, there wouldn’t be anyone left. You just can’t do that!

God isn’t the one who’s led the body of Christ into a hundred million “intercessors” begging Him to pour out His Spirit. Ten believers out doing the work of the ministry—raising the dead, healing the sick, and speaking the truth—would accomplish more good than all of those people pleading with God to do what He’s already done!

Who Brought Whom?

How do demonic entities over cities derive their power? They get it from the people who believe and act on their lies! Evil spirits aren’t able to dominate or control anyone against their will. Human beings are the ones who empower demons by believing their lies and cooperating with their unholy desires.

CHAPTER 11 - Roadblocks to Hell

(NOTES OF FIRST 4 PAGES IN EVANGELISM NUGGETS)

If the person is living a sexually immoral life, they could be opening themselves up to many different kinds of sexually transmitted diseases. You could pray, “Father, I recognize that they must receive forgiveness for their sins on their own from You, but I’m going to stand against the negative effects of those sins according to John 20:23.

Satan, even though they have opened up a door, you are not going to give them any sexually transmitted diseases. I rebuke AIDS. They will not reap it in Jesus' name!"

Your prayer can grant them a measure of protection, but they can void it. If they do, you'll have to pray it again tomorrow. Just keep releasing His power and protection into their life until they respond favorably. Ultimately, you can't make them receive the Lord, but you can put positive spiritual pressure on them by releasing the power of God into their life.

Don't leave your unbelieving mate! How do you know whether or not your influence will persuade them to be saved? If you stay, loving and praying for them, they just might receive the Lord. You can't "claim" your spouse or force them into salvation, but God will use you to convict them. They'll see and hear the truth through you, but they alone must choose whether they want to go to hell or not, because God doesn't force anyone to receive His Son.

Here in the West, we have plenty of religious expressions of Christianity as well. It may not be as obvious to us because we've grown up with it, but they are false nonetheless. Some of these attitudes and misconceptions have even crept into charismatic circles. Much effort is expended while very little—if any—real benefit is experienced. In light of this reality, something must be wrong!

CHAPTER 12 - The Primary Purpose of Prayer (THIS ENTIRE CHAPTER IS ONE BIG NUGGET)

Prayer is communion with God. It's fellowship, relationship, and intimacy with Him. Prayer is conversation. It's dialogue (two-way), not monologue (one-way). Prayer is both talking and listening. Ninety-five percent of the time I spend in prayer I'm just thanking, loving, praising, appreciating, and hanging out with the Lord—nothing special or dramatic. The vast majority of prayer is simply visiting with God!

There have been times when I've stood and taken authority over the devil, done warfare, bound and loosed, and seen miracles happen because of it; but all of this is just a tiny part of my prayer life as a whole. Yet, these things are normally taught as if they are so very important! People hear me minister on prayer as primarily loving God and immediately respond, "Oh no, that's too simple. We need to be strong in 'prayer' by regularly doing all of these other things!" I totally disagree.

Most teaching on prayer today centers on how to request and receive something from God. It's all about getting your prayers answered, and if you're really spiritual, how to receive answers for other people too (intercession). Although it's appropriate to ask for your needs to be met (John 16:24), this should only be a very small part of your prayer life. If it's your primary focus, then it's also one of the main reasons why your prayers aren't very effective. Asking and receiving is one purpose of prayer, but it's definitely not the purpose of prayer. God wants to meet your needs but seeking to receive something from Him shouldn't dominate your prayer life!

Added Supernaturally!

If you made the main thing the main thing—loving, worshiping, and fellowshiping with God as your primary purpose in prayer—you'd soon discover that you wouldn't have as many needs! When you seek first God's kingdom, things are just supernaturally added to you.

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" (Matthew 6:25)

Lost people are completely occupied with the pursuit of what to eat, what to wear, where to live, etc., but believers shouldn't be that way. God is fully aware of your need for these physical things, but He's commanded you to "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." As you do, "all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). When you're passionately in love with God, He takes care of you—supernaturally—better than you could ever take care of yourself!

By literally living to love Him, you release powerful spiritual dynamics that positively affect the flow of provision in your life. Most people can't wrap their brain around this truth because it's simply too far outside their realm of experience. It just floats right over their heads! I'm not talking about making your family or career the main thing and loving God on the side, or merely having Him add an "extra quality" to your lifestyle. I mean God is your complete focus, the very center of your life!

For an average Christian, the Lord is just another addition to their already busy life. Their focus is on making a living, raising the kids, maintaining their residence, acquiring more creature comforts, and doing many other temporal activities. On the side, they try to add God into the mix, but He's definitely not the center. They work their tails off because the burden of producing wealth remains on their shoulders. Stressed out, they constantly struggle under care because they're the ones always trying to make ends meet!

However, when God is truly the center of your life, everything else works out. The Lord makes it work supernaturally. I can't explain how, but it's a kingdom principle. When God prospers you, it's effortless. Yet, I've met very few Christians who are truly in this divine flow. When your whole heart is simply "God, I love You!" you'll find that He has many ways of working things out.

Praise Changes Perspective

People tell me, "Andrew, it doesn't seem like your feathers ever get ruffled about anything. Things go wrong, but it just doesn't faze you!" It's true! Just yesterday the contract on our new building appeared to be falling through again. I wasn't bothered by it because I love God and knew He'd work it out somehow. It was just another annoyance, hindrance, and pain. All the devil can do is aggravate you; he can't stop anything. Staying up half the night bombarding heaven wouldn't have helped, so I just went to bed. I wasn't going to let it change my life! Today I was informed that things have worked out and we're back on track. Hallelujah!

Your perspective changes when you put God first by praising Him! Many of your cares cease being problems anymore. As you spend time with the King of kings and Lord of lords, His attitude becomes your attitude. The entire way you think changes because of His influence. You aren't even bothered by the things that upset others and cause them to spend days, weeks, months, and even years praying about it!

When problems arise, many people feel like they have to fix them. Personally, I don't feel like I have to fix a thing. God is my Source and I keep my focus on Him. In the face of adversity, I tell my staff, "You hide and watch, I'll seek first His kingdom, and everything will work out. When the dust settles, we'll look back and say, 'God blessed us—and it was awesome how He did it!'"

I NEVER ASK GOD FOR MONEY

If you put God first and just loved Him, you wouldn't have to spend much time asking Him for finances. There's just a supernatural divine flow! Andrew Wommack Ministries must have \$720,000 a month right now (summer 2005) just to break even. That's \$24,000 a day! Just to do what we do, it's \$1,000 an hour every hour of every day of every week—and that's not going to last long! The Lord has shown me that I need to be up to a million dollars a month soon. That's almost \$1,400 every hour of every day! Yet, it's been decades since I've asked the Lord for any money.

I never ask God for money. I don't pray for Him to increase our income. I just say, "God, since we need more money, I must be thinking too small. I need to start increasing my vision!" Then I meditate on the scriptures about God supplying my needs, but I don't pray, push, pull, beg, or plead with Him for more money.

If we run into a financial bind, I'll make sure that I'm not doing something in my flesh. Once I'm convinced that I'm doing what He's told me to do, I'll just start encouraging myself that God is my Source. I'll tell myself, God is Faithful! I'll even use Scripture and preach to myself, but I don't ever ask Him for money.

That might seem weird to you, but the Word says, "Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be Better Way to Pray

added to you!" I've spent decades without asking the Lord for a penny, yet He's blessing our ministry more than ever before. It's working a whole lot better than my asking and begging. In prayer, I just say, "Father, I love You! You're the center of my life." If you would just worship and fellowship with Him, He would supernaturally add everything you need. You wouldn't have to know how to "bind poverty" and all these other things because you'd do better accidentally than you've ever done on purpose!

Blessed or Stressed?

Stress wouldn't be a part of your life if you were constantly in God's presence loving and worshiping Him. I don't have any stress in my life; I'm too blessed to be stressed! I'm not bothered by things because it's just not worth it. People criticize me and say all kinds of mean things, but nobody's going to rent space in my mind! I have more important things to think about than their criticism.

Compared to fulfilling the vision God has put in my heart, critics just aren't that important to me. I love them and I'm not trying to be mean, but I have something bigger than them, me, and what they say about me consuming my thoughts. When people criticize me, I just stay focused on loving God. I don't have to pray, "Father, did You hear what they said about me?" It simply doesn't matter because I'm seeking first His kingdom and righteousness. I'm not burdened, depressed, or defeated. I seek God and I'm a happy guy. I really am!

"Well, Andrew, that's because you don't have any problems!" I have problems just like anybody else! As a matter of fact, ministers usually have more problems than others because they have big bull's-eyes drawn on them in the spirit. The devil hits preachers with all kinds of things. If I wanted to, I could obsess as much as anybody else because I've had some pretty bad stuff happen to me. But the words of that song say it so well, "Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace." Looking into the brightness of God's glory blinds you to other things. I don't have the worries and cares that other people have because I don't see what they see. One reason for this is because my prayer life is 99 percent, "Father, I love You. You're awesome!" I just fellowship and visit with God, which is what prayer is all about. I really don't ask Him for much.

I never ask God to anoint me because His Word says He already has. (1 John 2:20.) I pray, "Father, thank You that we are going to have a good meeting because I'll speak the truth You have spoken to my heart." God's Word is already anointed!

Loving God

Your life will become stable as you enter God's presence and primarily use prayer to love and worship Him. You'll have a whole new outlook. You'll think differently than those who don't love and worship Him. If you'd quit asking for things and just start loving Him, you'd start seeing everything in your life change for the better. The Lord did say, "Ask, and you shall receive," but it's not what prayer is all about!

Prayer is simply loving God! It's saying, "Father, You're a good God! I adore You! You are awesome!" Enter His presence with generous amounts of praise and thanksgiving. Singing and worship should also be a huge part of prayer, but most people give God so very little. Instead, their prayers are consumed with taking. "God, I have nothing to give You, but I need this and that and this and that. Please, send it quickly!" If loving and communing with God isn't your primary purpose in prayer, you're missing out on what Christianity is all about!

CHAPTER 13 - Intimacy: The Heart of Salvation

Unfortunately, eternal life to most people is just a religious cliché meaning "to live forever in heaven." However, eternal life truly begins the moment you're born again. (John 3:36.) It's a present tense—not future tense—reality. If you're a believer, eternal life is now!

Intimate Personal Knowledge

What is eternal life? Jesus, its Author, defined it as: And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. JOHN 17:3

Eternal life is knowing God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ!

Knowing in the original language speaks of personal, intimate, experiential knowledge. It's not referring to simply "knowing about." That's when you can describe certain facts about something or someone, like knowing a famous person's name, where they're from, and the color of their hair without ever having met them face to face. Knowing in John 17:3 is knowledge in the biblical sense. (In Genesis 4:1, Adam knew his wife Eve, who then conceived and bore a child.) It's the most intimate of all relationships!

Jesus Christ died to produce knowing both Him and the Father intimately now in this life, not just at some future time in heaven. This is the goal of salvation!

The church has cheapened, weakened, and cut the heart right out of the gospel by preaching "Repent or burn!" and "Avoid hell—be born again!" It's true that those who don't receive Christ will go to hell. That alone is reason enough to lay down our lives in aggressive evangelism. However, it's not what Scripture reveals is the true goal of the gospel.

Jesus gave His life so you and I could know Him in an intimate, close, and personal way. If all you've ever received is forgiveness of sins so you won't go to hell, you haven't yet experienced the true goal of salvation. Although missing hell is a wonderful benefit, it's not the heart of the gospel! If all you've received is forgiveness of your sins, you've missed the main purpose of salvation.

Complete salvation is being able to be so intimate with God that He's your very best friend. He's the closest person to you—more real than even your spouse and children. If you aren't yet experiencing this kind of relationship with God, you're missing out on what eternal life is all about.

Sin wasn't the object of Christ's coming; it was simply the barrier that stood between mankind and God. Jesus took our sin upon the cross and forever removed that barrier. However, His ultimate purpose wasn't to overcome sin, but to restore us to a close, personal, intimate relationship with God. This is the eternal life Jesus came to provide.

Hungry Lions & Flaming Stakes

The reason the first-century church had much better results than this century church is because they experienced this eternal life! Without the assistance of modern media, this ragtag group of mostly uneducated servants changed the world. The gospel spread like wildfire throughout the entire known world due to their aggressive witness those first thirty years. What caused this greater impact? The infectious quality of their intimacy with God!

"God, Meet My Needs!"

Today, there's hardly a Christian in a thousand who would have that kind of attitude! Most believers' relationship with God is so superficial and self-centered. Their constant cry is "God, meet my needs!" I'm not suggesting that God wants all of us to be martyrs, but our focus definitely needs realignment.

As you seek Him first with a heart full of love, worship, and gratitude, you'll experience the joy and peace of God to such a degree that it wouldn't even bother you if they repossessed your house or your car. You'd say, "Who cares? God will take care of me. Besides, I have a mansion up there where the streets are paved with gold!" If you could get that kind of attitude, prosperity would be no problem. You wouldn't have to spend any time praying about your own needs!

Salvation has been cheapened to the point where it's just an opportunity for us to look at our big Father up in the sky to meet all of our needs. When most people came to the Lord, they came for selfish reasons—especially those who were just escaping judgment.

We ought to be telling people of God's greatness, goodness, and grace. He's not angry with us anymore because His own Son bore the sin, judgment, and punishment we deserved so we could be intimate with Him. That's how much God loves us! If we preached that, people by the droves would jump out of the stands to join us!

Instead, “Turn or burn” is preached, and people look at God as their “fire insurance.” Once new converts have been assured that they’ve truly escaped hell, most don’t give God much time or effort beyond that. They’re instructed to “hang in there,” serving the Lord just enough to make it to heaven.

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. When people are taught that the reason they should be saved is to escape hell and then use God to meet all of their needs, then that’s what they’ll have faith for. If that’s the goal, they’ll serve Him just enough to get what they need. Then, as they enter into prosperity, God is forgotten. Sound familiar? That’s the way salvation has been preached!

Chased or Chasing?

God loves you so very much that He gave His own Son for you! He’s not mad at you but desires intimacy with you more than you could ever imagine. He’s not holding your sins against you but views you through your righteous, born-again spirit. Almighty God wants to hang out with you because He loves you! Since most believers are ignorant of this truth, they aren’t enjoying a very intimate relationship with God. The whole Christian life—specifically prayer—has been reduced to, “How can I make God do this? How can I receive that from God? How can I make Him do this for someone else?” We aren’t using prayer for what it’s really for!

Prayer is communion and fellowship with God. It’s saying, “Father, I love You” and hearing Him answer, “I love you too!” It’s listening to Him in your heart and feeling His pleasure as you spend time with Him. If you did that, you wouldn’t have to spend much time asking for things because they’d just supernaturally show up.

The Word reveals that all of God’s blessings should be coming upon us and overtaking us. (Deut. 28:2.) I haven’t seen very many Christians with blessings chasing them, but there sure are lots of believers out chasing blessings! People come to my meetings with their tongues hanging out, saying, “I’m here at another service trying to make God do something.” Just stop, and start loving God by saying, “I’m sorry, Father. Yes, there are things I need in my life, but it’s no big deal. The main thing I need is just to love You, fellowship with You, and know that You love me. I worship You!” Your life would transform tremendously!

On the other hand, the Christian life is a painful, difficult struggle when 95 percent of your prayer life is asking for things, repenting, bawling and squalling, griping and complaining, telling God what the doctor said, informing Him of your bills, and such. You’re missing out on what Christianity is all about: knowing and loving God!

God Wants You!

God isn’t as concerned about what you do as He is who you are. He wants your fellowship more than your service, but the church has emphasized “Do a work for God!” We’ve equated His love and acceptance of us to be proportional to how well we think we’re performing. We’ve become “human doings” instead of “human beings.” We feel obligated and duty bound to serve Him because we feel we owe God. This debtor mentality is what gives us the concept “I have to do something for God!”

If you give God your heart, He’ll have no problem getting your service. But your service can never replace intimate fellowship! If the Lord has your heart, He’ll also have your wallet. However, your giving alone will never be a substitute for your worship. What God wants is you!

Adam and Eve didn’t have all this stuff that occupies our entire Christianity, yet they met with God every day in the cool of the evening to fellowship with Him!

You were created for God’s pleasure! He loves you and wants to show you how much He loves you so you can then say, “I love You, too!” That’s what God created you for, not just to do something. It’s true He wants things done, but your service is a byproduct of your intimate relationship with Him.

Many scriptures reveal God’s displeasure when we give Him our service but not our hearts. If your heart isn’t in union with God, it’ll profit you nothing. We haven’t understood how much God wants us. He desires you much more than your service!

(Story of born-again spirit filled lady in prison on death row...) For the first time in my life, I understand that I am born again because God loves me. I can really bless and minister to Him by saying, "Father, I love You!" Now I have a purpose for living! For the first time in my life, I'm free. I am more free in this jail cell than I ever thought I could be!

This sister in solitary confinement experienced more liberty than most people who aren't in prison anywhere simply because she discovered that eternal life is all about knowing God intimately!

When you are intimate with God, He's blessed and you change! You're infused with stability and strength. Instead of falling apart at the slightest little thing, you can boldly and honestly declare, "Come what may, I'll make it through because God loves me!" If this doesn't describe your Christian life, then it's time to change your primary focus in prayer from getting your needs met to loving and worshiping God!

CHAPTER 14 - You're a Good Dad!

Minister to God "Blessing" the Lord is ministering to Him. When you say from your heart, "Father, I love You. You're a good God!" it blesses Him. The prophets and teachers in Antioch "ministered to the Lord" in Acts 13:2. They weren't preaching at Him or exhorting Him to repent! They were praising, worshiping, and loving Him. Anyone who loves has a need to be loved in return. If the object of your love doesn't love you back, it's miserable. God is love and He loves you. (1 John 4:8.) When you love Him, it blesses and ministers to Him!

You may not realize it, but God needs ministry. He wants you to bless Him because it's the purpose you were originally created for. Pray, "Father, You're a good dad and an awesome God! Thank You for my health, for letting me live here in this country, for my opportunities, and for my job." Instead of cursing your life and making it worse, thank Him that it's as good as it is! God will be so blessed by your love and worship that He'll want to drag you out of bed and give you everything He can think of to bless you! It'll just come upon and overtake you. All these other people will still be begging and pleading with God for these things that are just flowing in your life because you love Him.

Spend 95 percent of your prayer time singing, praising, and worshiping. "Father, I love You!" Then every once in a while, say "Oh yeah, the doctor thinks I'm going to die, but that's not so bad. It'd be awesome to be with You. I'm actually having trouble deciding whether I should stay or not because of how wonderful You are!" Instead of spending all of your time rebuking fear and whiteknuckling it with "Oh God, help me believe!" you'd say, "Either way, Father. If I die, I win. If I'm healed, I win. I can't lose!" That's the attitude you ought to have. Nothing else would matter!

When in bad situations, some Christians discipline themselves to "praise" God through gritted teeth. They know that praising the Lord is strength to "still the enemy and the avenger" (Ps. 8:2). Although they may not truly mean it from their hearts, they're doing "spiritual warfare." Since praise drives out demons, they exercise themselves to "praise" those problems right out of their lives. Hey, if that's the best reason you've got, it's better to praise God like that than to gripe and complain!

Here's a radical truth: They weren't praising God just to escape their problem; they really loved Him! Backs beaten in shreds and ankle-deep in filth, they just continued worshiping and enjoying the Lord's glorious presence.

Raised From the Dead!

Prayer is primarily for loving and worshiping God. If you would seek first His kingdom and just fellowship with Him, you'd find your needs already provided. You wouldn't have any "problems" because nothing would bother you. Instead of being depressed, the joy of the Lord would be your strength!

Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Psalm 16:11

If you're depressed, you're not in the presence of the Lord. He's with you, but you're not with Him because something else has you occupied. Get back in God's presence and you'll find fullness of joy!

My prayer life is all about loving God. I don't ask for very much or do very much, but great things are happening. My Christian life is fun, and I don't fret about things. Worry is blasphemy against God's promises anyway. It stems from not being very intimate with Him. I realize this way of praying may not fit your present mold, but until you get better results, maybe you ought to try it!

What I'm sharing is simple, but it's very profound. Of course, it takes effort to set aside self and focus on loving God. However, I've found that as I minister to Him, I get more blessed than He does! I'm not sure exactly how it works, but God won't ever let me out-give Him! As I bless the Lord, I have all of the emotion I can handle. He takes care of me and treats me well—much better than I deserve. I spend my time loving Him!

You shouldn't ever need to bawl and squall because you're always praising and thanking Him. "With thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6). This approach to prayer shrinks problems down so small that they're literally no big deal.

The best results come from loving, thanking, praising, blessing, and worshiping God as the highest priority in life. It's simply staying in communication with Him all day long! Nothing this world has to offer can even compare to experiencing God's pleasure.

Ready To Change?

God doesn't just love you; He likes you, too! You might not have heard Him tell you that before, but it's true. He isn't just your Creator who felt obligated to provide salvation. God appreciates you. It's a joy to experience telling Him how much you love Him and then have Him turn right around and do the same!

Your entire prayer life would be transformed if you'd get the heart of what I'm communicating. Everything in your life would change, and you'd become a totally different person. Loving God is all that matters. Everything else is incidental!

The true goal of salvation - loving and worshiping God!

CHAPTER 15 - Answer That Fig Tree!

Mark 11 contains some tremendous lessons about how to receive from God in prayer.

And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: and seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever. And his disciples heard it. Mark 11:12-14

For a fig tree to have leaves, it should also have had figs! Fig trees produce fruit prior to or at the same time as when they leaf out. Seeing the leaves and being hungry, Jesus went over to it expecting to pick some figs. When none were to be found, He cursed the tree and commanded it to die.

And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. Mark 11:20

In Matthew 21:19 the Bible records that the fig tree died immediately when Jesus spoke to it, even though the disciples didn't see the results until first thing the next day. At the very moment Christ spoke, the miracle took place and the fig tree perished. However, since the tree died in its roots, it took approximately twelve hours for what had happened below the ground to be manifest above the ground. That's a beautiful picture of what takes place in prayer!

God is a Spirit, and He moves in the spirit realm. It often takes a period of time before what God has done in the spiritual world manifests in the physical world.

Most Christians think that if God wants something done, then—BAM—it's done. They don't understand the limitations and restrictions God deals with in order to answer prayer.

The Lord put certain laws in motion when He created the heavens and the earth. He Himself abides by these laws. That's why it often takes some time before what's true in the spirit manifests itself in the physical.

God answered both prayers instantly, but it took three minutes for the first messenger to appear and three weeks for the next. God wasn't the variable. He's consistent. Both times the decree immediately went forth from His throne as soon as the request was made in prayer. There's simply more happening here than we've previously understood.

God's Word promises your recovery, but not that it'll manifest instantly. Mark 16:18 declares, "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." However, this idea that "If God wanted to, I could be healed and these symptoms would leave immediately!" cannot be verified by Scripture. Many things govern how quickly you experience your healing.

If you receive prayer and don't see instantaneous results, resist the temptation to think, Well, nothing happened! Even though you still feel weak, the junk could be totally kicked out of your system! Much is happening below the surface that you cannot see. If you try to use only your five senses to discern whether or not He's moved, you'll miss out on the things of God!

The results weren't visible until twelve hours later. Sometimes it takes time for what God has already accomplished to manifest itself in the physical realm.

And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursed is withered away. Mark 11:21

The Lord used this teachable moment to illustrate how prayer works: And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. Mark 11:22

This happened through faith in God. Faith is a powerful force, but you must believe in order to reap its benefits. Faith is governed by law. (Rom. 3:27.) Just like the natural realm, the spirit realm operates according to God's divinely instituted order. Ignorance asks, "Why didn't God help this person? Why did He let them die?" Healing, deliverance, prosperity, and salvation don't "just happen." Spiritual laws must be obeyed in order to receive the desired results.

Even though electricity has been on the earth since God created it, men had to discover the laws that governed it before they could use it....Many things we do today could have been done long before, had it not been for our ignorance!

God controls Himself and the universe He created by the laws He spoke into existence. These laws govern how He works.

"Well, I prayed!" But did you pray correctly? "I don't know if I did it all right, but if God wanted to He could just heal me!" They don't think there are any restraints on God. Granted, the restraints are self-imposed, but they're restraints nonetheless. God follows His own laws!

My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Psalm 89:34

When God gives His Word, He never violates it. He never says something He doesn't mean, and He always means what He says. For example, the Lord gave you a tremendous privilege by saying, "You resist the devil and he'll flee from you" (James 4:7). However, He also just limited Himself because now it's your responsibility to resist the devil, not His.

Since the authority has been given to you, God won't rebuke the enemy for you. Praying, "Oh God, please get the devil off my back!" isn't going to work. The Lord set down a law by speaking His Word. You must resist the devil and he'll flee from you. Be as sincere as you want, but freedom from demonic oppression won't come until you follow His guidelines. You must exercise the authority God gave you or it won't work!

Another law is this: You will have what you speak.

A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled. Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof. Proverbs 18:20,21

Life and death are in the power of the tongue. You will have what you say! (Matt. 12:34; Mark 11:23; James 3:2-12.)

Many people desire to be healed but speak forth all kinds of negative things. They say what the doctor told them, what their body feels like, what other people's opinions are, and then wonder why they aren't seeing God's healing power manifest in their life. Spiritual laws are in place and functioning!

(Example of laws of gravity and electricity.... can be used for good or harm)

Whether you lacked understanding or willfully chose not to cooperate doesn't really matter. The results are the same because you violated the law. God didn't do it; you killed yourself!

They're violating the laws of faith and killing themselves by speaking those words of unbelief!

God will not suspend His laws—natural or spiritual—just because you meant well!

The Lord commands us to speak to our problem. This is a truth about prayer most people have missed. Speak to the mountain!

Most Christians speak to God about their mountain instead of speaking to their mountain about God! The "mountain" represents whatever your problem is. Jesus declared, "Speak to your mountain and command it to be cast into the sea!" The average Christian prays, "God, I have this mountain. Would You please move it for me?" The Lord told you to talk to it, not to Him. Whatever it is—speak to it!

CHAPTER 16 - Speak to Your Mountain

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. Mark 11:24

When Jesus prayed over this fig tree, there was never any type of petition or request made to God. (Mark 11:14.) Instead, He called taking His authority, believing, and speaking to the problem "prayer."

The purpose of prayer is not to inform "poor, misinformed" God! Your heavenly Father already knows what you need. (Matt. 6:8.) Telling Him what the doctor said, how bad you feel, and that dear old Aunt Suzie died of it is counterproductive. Don't just sit there griping and complaining; the Lord's already done it! By His stripes, you were healed! (1 Pet. 2:24.)

You're probably wondering, "If God has already healed me in the spiritual realm, then how do I pray to see that healing manifest here in the physical realm where I need it?" First of all, enter His gates with thanksgiving. (Ps.

100:4.) Begin to praise and magnify Him for the fact that it's already done. This builds your faith and encourages you. Say, "Father, I thank You that by Jesus' stripes I was healed. I receive it now by faith!" Then turn to whatever the issue is in your body and talk to it. Don't just speak to God about it. Praise the Lord for what His Word says He's already done and then speak directly to your problem.

Then I trained Mary how to minister to herself using Mark 11:23. I told her, "If another pain comes back, it's not that God didn't heal you. It's the devil knocking on your door to see if you'll open it back up again. If you say, 'Oh no, I wasn't healed' or 'I lost my healing' then you open the door and Satan will come back in. But if you say, 'No! By His stripes, I was healed. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. I command this pain to leave!' You'll retain your healing and everything will be just fine."

"You didn't do what I told you to do." "What's that?" "You didn't speak to your mountain. You talked to God and praised Him. What you said was good, but you didn't do what the Word told you to do."

The Bible says, "Speak to those problems!"

It doesn't matter what your intentions are. There are laws that govern how things work. God said, "Talk to things!" and we don't do it. Then we wonder why we aren't healed.

You have faith, but it needs to be directed. Use it in cooperation with the laws that govern how it works. Resist the devil. Talk directly to him. Speak to your problem and command it to change. Direct your faith with your words.

Although your words are very important, your actions must also be consistent with your faith. If you "believe" one way and act another, you cancel out your faith!

It's not what the Lord told you to do. If the problem is pain, speak to it, saying, "Pain, in the name of Jesus, I command you to leave my body. Whatever is causing this pain, I speak to this part of my body and command it to respond so this thing can stop in the name of Jesus." Talk to it!

Since starting to apply this principle more deliberately in the past five years, I've probably seen four times as many instant manifestations of healing as before. It's a real simple principle!

Many people just don't understand that Jesus laid down spiritual laws. They say, "Well, if God loved me, He would just heal me." No, it doesn't work that way. You receive according to your faith!

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!
Luke 13:34

The Lord Himself lamented over His beloved people. He wanted to bless, minister to, and comfort them, but they wouldn't receive it. In His own hometown of Nazareth, unbelief kept Jesus from doing more. (Mark 6:5,6.) You must cooperate with God's spiritual laws governing faith in order to receive.

Do what the Word says! When you pray, praise God that your problem has been taken care of. Then, exercise your authority and speak directly to the problem. If you don't, you won't see your desired results. Like it or not, that's just the way it works!

Your job is to discover the laws and cooperate with them, not pick and choose which ones you'll obey or make them up! You might think it's cheaper and easier to wire your house with wood, but I guarantee you that it won't conduct electricity the same as copper. It doesn't matter that you like wood better. You just need to discover what conducts electricity, and then go with the flow. Learn what God's Word says about how His power works, and then cooperate!

Believe you receive when you pray, and you shall (future tense) have what you prayed for. Believe that you have received God's answer the instant you pray, and you shall (future tense) see the visible manifestation of it.

Most people don't have a clue what's going on in prayer! They pray, ask, and then passively wait. When something—anything—works out, they think, God must have answered my prayer. If what they asked for doesn't happen, then "He must have said 'No.'" That's simply not true!

You have a larger degree of control than you realize over how long it takes between "amen" and "there it is." The amount of time before manifestation could be one second, one hour, one day, one week, or longer. However, the very moment you pray and believe, God moves and releases His power. Instantly, like the fig tree, it's done! Apart from a hindrance inside or outside of yourself, you should be able to see an immediate manifestation when you use God's power correctly.

Speak directly to the problem. God has already done everything about healing that He's ever going to do. Don't just pray for someone who's sick and then passively wait for something to happen. Take control and make them manifest healing! You may say, "You can't do that!" Yes, you can! That's how we're praying, and good things are happening. It's up to you when your healing manifests!

As a basic rule, God answers prayer instantly. Regardless of what you see manifest or not immediately, believe that you received when you prayed. As you speak to your mountain, you cooperate with an important spiritual law and expedite the manifestation of your answer.

CHAPTER 17 - Shoot Him Again!

I'm not encouraging you into some "mind game" of trying to believe something is real when it isn't so that it'll become real. I'm challenging you to look beyond just the natural realm.

God is a Spirit. (John 4:24.) When He moves, He does so in the spirit realm. When you ask for healing, God gives it to you in spiritual form inside your spirit the very instant you believe Him for it. As a New Testament believer, you already have the same virtue, anointing, and power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead living inside of you. The moment you believe, God releases that power in your spirit. Therefore, you did receive. God did everything He's going to do about your miracle the instant you prayed: He gave the command and released His power, and it's a done deal!

"But I need it out here in my body!" Faith is the bridge from the spiritual realm into the physical realm. It's how what has already happened in the spirit transfers over into the natural. Faith gives substance to things hoped for and evidence—tangibility, physical proof—to something unseen. (Heb. 11:1.) Just because something is in an unseen realm doesn't mean it's nonexistent!

If you think the physical world—what you can see, taste, hear, smell, and feel—is the only realm of reality there is, you'll argue, "I hurt, so I don't care what you say! I'd be a liar to confess that God has healed me when I'm still in pain and have this rash, tumor, or whatever. You're just one of those 'name it and claim it,' 'blab it and grab it' guys, trying to 'make it so.'" The truth is, there really is a spiritual realm; and there's a real spiritual you!

The spiritual world is the parent force. (Col. 1:16; Heb. 11:3.) It created everything you see and will still be in existence long after this physical world is gone. (2 Cor. 4:18.) It's not wrong to acknowledge that there are things beyond what your five natural senses can detect.

There are spiritual entities—angels, demons, and the Holy Spirit—right where you are! There's a reality within you—your spirit—that you can't come into contact with through your five senses. You just have to believe God's Word, which says, "When you pray, you receive." If you start feeling in your body or looking in the mirror to see, "Well, did it happen?" you'll miss it. Your healing comes in the spiritual world. How does it get from the supernatural to the natural? By somebody believing!

Declare by faith, "Even though I can't see it, I know God's Word says when I pray, believe that I receive the answer right now, and then it will (future tense) manifest. (Mark 11:24.) So I believe God did it. In the spirit realm there's tremendous activity and power being released. The virtue of God is flowing through me right now. I haven't seen it yet, but I know it's there." Then, make your answer manifest by putting these laws into motion. Start speaking to things and commanding them to work.

We praised God that it was already accomplished, saying, "Thank You, Father, that You have done it. Right now, it's ours!" Her foot still looked bad, so I turned to it and commanded, "Foot, I speak to you in the name of Jesus." I was drawing out the healing that Jamie had already received in her spirit.

There are things you can do that draw out the supernatural power of God already present in the spiritual well within you!

Use your words to speak life instead of death. (Prov. 18:21.) Direct them specifically toward your problem. (Mark 11:23.) Jesus Himself answered the fig tree. (Mark 11:14.) If your checkbook is always in the red, talk to it! If every time you pick it up, you hear, "God's Word doesn't work! You never have enough!" then look right at it and say, "I command all of this red to leave and black to take its place in the name of Jesus!" You need to talk to your wallet, your investments, etc.

How the Kingdom Works

Speak to your body; it'll respond to you! Scientists have discovered a part of your brain that's voice-activated. If you say, "I'm tired," they found that your brain will hear it and tell your body to prepare for a rest. You'll become more tired as you talk "tired." If you say, "Man, I feel good!" that same part of the brain will start sending endorphins through your body to energize you. The scientific community is just now discovering what God has said all along!

Use your words to command pain to leave! You can speak to your body and make it recover. I've commanded toothaches to leave and my eyesight to work. After we spoke to it, the rash all over my friend's hands left. Don't just automatically turn to a pill; speak to your body!

This is how the kingdom works! We've made it too hard, praying, "Oh God, here's my need. If You love me, do something!" When nothing happens, we become bitter at God and wonder, "Why haven't You done anything?" God has given you the power, but you're ignorant of how to use it. The anointing is already inside you to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, and raise the dead. If you aren't seeing it manifest, it's not God's giver that's broken, but your receiver that needs to be turned on and tuned in. Get into the Word and then use it to speak to your mountain!

Faith Is Discernible

Putting all of this back into perspective, I don't spend much time asking for things. Ninety percent of my prayer is spent loving God. He keeps me in perfect peace because my mind is stayed on Him. (Isa. 26:3.) When I heard a bad report about our building contract falling through, it was no big deal. I'd been fellowshiping with Almighty God! As important as this building was, I knew it wasn't eternal. Besides, I had something better to do that night than worry, so I went to bed and slept. I never even prayed about it, yet this situation took care of itself and worked out just fine.

When loving and worshiping God is your top priority, you'll find that you won't have to spend much time praying over things. However, when you do need to pray over something important, start by praising, glorifying, and thanking Him. Say, "Father, I thank You that You've already taken care of this before I even had it. Thank You that by Your stripes I was healed." Colossians 2:7 reveals that you abound in faith with thanksgiving. Just keep praising and thanking God for what the Word says has already happened in the spirit until you know you're not in fear or worry anymore and faith has been quickened inside.

Faith is discernible. I know when I'm in faith. The first time I ever said, "I know I'm operating in faith and I can raise the dead!" was in 1976. In my heart, I knew it. Even though I don't always walk in that realm, I know how to get there. I'll start praising and thanking God until my faith is quickened.

If you're still in fear, don't pray over whatever it is yet. Just like you don't pull the trigger on a gun unless it's aimed and loaded, neither should you pray your prayer unless you know you're in faith! Draw near to God and deal with the fear. Praise Him for His awesome love until it casts out all that fear. (1 John 4:18.) Once you're rid of it and know you're in faith, come back and do what you need to do to pray over the situation—but don't speak words in fear!

Don't speak words in hope alone either. Wishing and trying aren't faith. True faith must be present in order to give substance to your hope. and He's already met your need before you ever had it.

Once I know my faith is quickened and I truly believe it's already done in the spirit realm, I take that faith and speak to whatever needs to be spoken to: my body, my finances, demons, etc. Then I use praise to still the enemy. Drawing on everything God's ever shown me, I keep blasting the devil and my situation until I see results. It's not unbelief for me to continue praying this way about something. I believed God did it the very instant I asked. I received His answer when I prayed, but I'm not willing to let it stay there in the spirit realm. I make it manifest in the physical world where I need it!

Keep Praying Until Manifestation!

When I minister healing to someone, I'll pray for them two, three, four, or more times. I don't care! I'm willing to pray for them until I rub all the hair off of their head! However, I'm not going back to God and saying, "Father, it didn't work the first time. Let it work now, please!" No! I believe it happened because God is faithful. He gave, but something's wrong with our receiver. So I work on it. If the devil withstands one dose of the Holy Spirit, I'll shoot him again! Just like Jesus did with the blind man of Bethsaida (Mark 8:22-26), I pray until I see the answer manifest!

You need to get this attitude that God is faithful and He's already met your need before you ever had it. Boldness, confidence, and faith will rise in your heart as you realize that God's supply is always greater than your need!

I started praying, "Father, we thank You that You are exalted above every name. AIDS has a name. AIDS, you bow the knee to the name of Jesus!" Right then, I sensed that her faith had quickened. So I continued, "AIDS, you are nothing but a loser! You have no power, no might, and no dominion!" In this manner, both my faith and the faith of the person I'm praying for is strengthened. Then, by speaking to the situation and releasing God's power, I've seen thousands of instant manifestations!

Another lady received prayer for her two swollen feet. One returned to normal and the other stayed swollen. Some wonder, "Why didn't God heal them both?" He did! It's just that she only received healing in one of them. What do you do then? Keep praying until the other healing manifests. If you can move the devil an inch, you can move him a mile—an inch at a time if you must!

Your Results Will Improve

People think God heals in mysterious ways. If He wants someone healed—BOOM—they are! If there's any delay or problem, or if they have to stand in faith speaking to and rebuking something, they wonder, "Why didn't it work?"

God is using imperfect people. We'd all see greater and quicker manifestations if we weren't so full of unbelief! It's a miracle we see anything happen while bathing our minds in murder, adultery, and homosexuality for entertainment" and listening to the (bad) "news" each day. We're baptized in unbelief!

Since Jesus has to use imperfect vessels like you and me, sometimes His power doesn't come through into manifestation as quickly. Each of us has some unbelief and other junk that hasn't been worked out yet, but don't

let that stop you from doing it! Your conductivity for God's power often increases through use. Don't just give up if you try a few times and don't yet see the results you desire. Even Jesus was limited in what He could do in His own hometown because of their unbelief. (Matt. 13:58.) Keep at it!

As you begin to understand, believe, and practice some of these things, your results will greatly improve!

CHAPTER 18 - Ask & Receive

And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Luke 11:9

If we would just believe Luke 11:9, then everything would be fine! However, many people can't because there was a time in their life when they asked God for something and didn't see it come to pass. Due to that negative experience, they think, It just can't be so simple and straightforward!

A tremendous amount of today's "churchianity" consists of excuses for why God's promises don't work. It's religion! It's apologetics for why you're a failure, depressed, sick, or poor and how God intended it for some "redemptive purpose" in your life. That's completely inaccurate!

When I first became turned on to Jesus and started out in ministry, there were entire denominations who believed miracles had passed away with the early church. Anyone who taught anything about supernatural manifestations of any kind happening today was "of the devil." However, the charismatic movement so disproved and debunked this false assumption that all there are today are little fringe groups of hardcore people who hold on to that unbelief. The predominant thought in the body of Christ today is "Yes, miracles can happen, but not to everyone!"

God Always Answers

God's Word declares the exact opposite! For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Luke 11:10

If you take Luke 11:9 to mean just what it says, then if you ask, you'll receive. God doesn't say no. This isn't something that passed away a long time ago. It's not just available for some "super-saints." Everyone who asks receives!

Experience carries more weight in most people's lives than the Word of God. If you can grasp what I'm about to share with you, it'll totally transform the way you relate to God!

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. JAMES 4:3

Of course, you must ask according to God's Word. If something isn't part of Christ's atonement, then God hasn't provided it for you. That's why if you ask for someone else's spouse, God won't give them to you.

In His atonement, the Lord provided all kinds of good things: joy, peace, restored relationships, healing, prosperity, and much, much more. These are the things you should ask for!

Did You Receive?

The problem is you think you can perceive what God does or doesn't do with your five senses. If you can't see, taste, hear, smell, or feel it, then that's "proof" God didn't do it. The answer to this dilemma lies in understanding the existence of the spiritual realm.

God is a Spirit. (John 4:24.) When He moves, He moves in the spiritual world. The very moment you asked for something, God commanded, and it was given. Although it was a done deal in the spirit, whether or not you see it manifest in the physical realm depends much more on if you knew how to receive it than if God answered your prayer. That's an oversimplification because sometimes there are other people involved, but it mainly comes

down to your receiving in the natural realm what God has already given you in the spirit.

God answers every prayer that's according to His Word. However, we don't always see it manifest because we didn't know how to receive. It's not because God didn't answer!

"Are you saying it's my fault?" Yes, I am. Some people become very upset with me and think, "You're condemning me!" No, I'm not. I'm just letting you know that if somebody missed it, it wasn't God!

Knowing that God is always faithful blesses me! He's not choosing to heal this one and leave another sick, prosper that one and ignore someone else, or give joy to that one and not another. This thought that "God just wanted to bless that person and make this other one miserable" isn't true. God's not like that! In His faithfulness, the Lord has a perfect plan for each and every one of us that includes health, prosperity, joy, blessing, peace, and happiness. It's just that not everybody receives from Him. This isn't because God's not faithful to give, but rather that not everyone knows how to receive. It's really that simple!

CHAPTER 19 - The Variable

While Daniel was still praying, the angel Gabriel showed up and gave him God's answer.

Notice what the angel said concerning when God had answered. "At the very beginning of your supplication, God gave the command and I'm here with your answer." I'm not sure why, but there was a period of time between when God moved and when it manifested.

What if it takes three weeks instead of three minutes? That's when most people lose their faith. If they can't see or feel their answer very soon, then they conclude, "I asked, but God didn't answer!" How do you know? How can you be sure that the Lord hasn't already commanded your answer and it's in the process of coming out of the spirit realm into the physical realm? Can you see all the activity taking place in the spirit realm on your behalf?

If you think you can perceive everything that's going on around you in the spirit realm, you're thinking too highly of yourself! In the natural, there are microscopic bugs and specks of dust floating in the air. Even though you can't perceive them with your physical senses, you know they exist. In the spiritual world, there are all kinds of things happening that you don't realize. It's the height of arrogance to pray and think that absolutely nothing happened if you can't immediately see, taste, hear, smell, or feel your answer. There's simply more to it than what you can figure out with your brain!

It would be easy for you to assume I'm different from you if I were to share an illustration from my life. You'd say, "Well, that's just how it happens for you, Andrew. Somehow or another, things work better for you than me. Besides, you aren't facing the problems I have in my life right now!"

If I gave you an example from Jesus' life, you could blow it off too with, "But that's Jesus! He could do it back then, but this is me here and now." Jesus was God, but He didn't operate out of His divinity. He acted by faith as a man under the covenant. It's the same with the disciples. There's really no difference between them and you as a born again believer—except in your own mind!

Why does God answer one prayer in three minutes and another in three weeks? That's an invalid question. God didn't answer one in three minutes and the other in three weeks. He answered both of them immediately!

Luke 11:9-10 say, "If you ask, you receive." God instantly answers every prayer that's based on a promise in His Word. He's answered every prayer that every believer has ever prayed this way. God has never failed to answer any such prayer, ever!

However, there are things that happen in the spiritual world that determine how fast the answers come, or not, into the physical realm. The manifestation of your answer is affected when you become discouraged, depressed, or

give up. There could have been tremendous activity in the spiritual realm. You could have been very close to seeing the physical manifestation, but you gave up and quit!

Even though all of these things were happening in the spirit realm, his answer wouldn't have manifested. God's Word reveals that it's according to the power that works in us. (Eph. 3:20.)

Demonic Hindrance

But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me [the angelic messenger] one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Daniel 10:13

The angelic messenger told Daniel what the holdup had been: demonic opposition. Jude 9 and Revelation 12:7 reveal "Michael" to be an archangel. Notice how the messenger had been withstood since the first day Daniel prayed. God had instantly responded, but the messenger needed Michael's help to break through the demonic opposition with Daniel's answer.

Many people don't understand that we're living in a world that has demonic opposition. They think that if God wants something done, He can just do it. God is greater than the devil, but Satan can hinder Him if a physical person cooperates and gives the enemy authority to do so. Things don't work automatically just because they're God's will and you prayed for it!

The issue could very well be the way this family member truly believed in their heart. Just because someone sounds and looks like they're in faith to receive healing doesn't mean they really are.

"He's quit. He just decided that he's going home to be with Me." This fellow was older and struggling. Although it wasn't God's best for him to just check out, it wasn't sin either.

God Is Always Constant!

You don't always know what's going on inside someone else's heart. For you to take responsibility and say, "I prayed and believed, but God didn't answer. If it was truly His will to heal, then they would've been healed!" is to claim knowledge and ability you don't have. You don't always know what's truly going on. However, God is always constant!

According to His Word—which is all we can base our lives on—God declares, "By His stripes we were healed" (1 Pet. 2:24). He would have all to be healed of their sickness and disease. That's what the Bible teaches. You must go by what the Word says!

The variable isn't God; it's the devil! God answered both of Daniel's prayers instantly, but Satan opposed and delayed the answer from manifesting the second time.

These Christians have more faith in the devil than they do in God! You need to know that Satan blows it lots of times. Why didn't he fight the prayer in Daniel 9? He probably missed it!

The Devil Is the Difference!

Demons don't procreate and have "baby demons." There aren't new ones coming all the time. There may have been many evil spirits per person back in Adam and Eve's time, but since then they've probably been getting spread pretty thin.

Therefore, not everyone has a personal devil! So many people believe they do, but he can't speak to everyone every day. He's shorthanded! Satan has to pick and choose whom he personally afflicts. Just like a predator preys on a herd of animals, he chooses the weak ones and those who separate themselves from the pack. There are things that draw evil spirits to us, but the truth is not everyone has a demon attacking them every single day!

CHAPTER 20 - Hindrances Removed

Most Christians doubt God when they pray and don't instantly see their answer. They whine, "Lord, what are You doing? Why haven't You answered my prayer?" These believers fail to consider that maybe the devil is hindering them, or their answer is simply taking some time to manifest!

This false idea that "God can do anything instantly" serves as a huge inroad for all kinds of unbelief. The Lord established this world with things such as time and space. If you remember that it can take time for things to happen and that demons can hinder your answer, it'll help when you pray and the manifestation doesn't instantly come. Instead of immediately doubting God, you'll either doubt yourself or the devil. A multitude of factors can enter in and hinder or slow down the manifestation of God's power.

The Lord told him, "Bob, I spoke to someone to buy your house the very first day you put that sign in your yard. I have moved to sell your house, but there are demonic hindrances against it."

God isn't personally going to buy your house. He'll send someone else to do it. You need to realize that other people are often involved in the manifestation of your answer to prayer.

God Sends Provision Through People

When you ask God for money, He sends it through people! Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. Luke 6:38

God supplies your requested provision through people. He doesn't have U.S. currency of His own, and He definitely won't counterfeit or steal any. God doesn't just create money and stick it in your wallet either. He speaks to individuals and meets your needs through them. That's why all Satan has to do to hinder your finances is hinder people.

He manifests provision through people.... They are under this concept that if you have a need, God just supernaturally meets it.

Satan had been hindering my friend's answer through another person. God broke the devil's opposition, and the answer manifested when my friend changed his prayer. Instead of asking the Lord every day to sell his house and then wondering why He hadn't done it yet, my friend started praying, "Father, I believe You've answered my prayer. You have already spoken, but there must be some way the enemy has been hindering. Please give me Your wisdom on how to pray!" What a difference!

Shorten the Time

As an Old Testament saint, Daniel didn't have authority over the devil. Therefore, he couldn't rebuke the demonic entity called "the prince of Persia" (Dan. 10:13). Even if Daniel had known that the problem between chapters 9 and 10 was demonic, he wouldn't have been able to do anything about it. However, as New Covenant believers, we do have authority over the devil. (Luke 9:1.)

God always answers prayer instantly. If you understand this principle, then you'll know when your answer delays in manifestation that it's either your faith wavering or the devil hindering—or both.

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall [future tense] have them. Mark 11:24

Also, you need to recognize that some things take a period of time to manifest. Healing should be instant, but you can't microwave a ministry! That's dependent on your maturity and character. Some things must grow and develop before you can see them come to pass. But God is always faithful to answer every prayer.

I've learned that it's better to look right at the problem and declare, "I know God has already answered my prayer because His Word says so!" If His answer isn't manifest, I know now that it's not the Lord who hasn't given, but
Better Way to Pray

it's me or the devil or something else in the way. I take my spiritual weapons and use them to shorten the amount of time between "amen" and "there it is" (manifestation).

When you know in your heart that God has already given it to you in the spirit realm, you don't have to hold on for three weeks like Daniel did for the answer to manifest in the physical realm. As a believer in Jesus Christ, take your authority and command the devil to leave. Instead of telling God about it, speak directly to the problem. Then act on God's Word. Don't just sit idly by waiting; do something!

It's Up to You!

....After speaking to the tooth, she started praising God and thanking Him that her healing was already done. When she asked the Lord for wisdom, He led her to exercise her authority and say, "Satan, in the name of Jesus I command you to leave me alone!" As soon as she spoke those words, the pain immediately and completely left. Apparently, her toothache wasn't just physical. It was a spiritual, demonic thing.

God always answers your prayers instantly, but you don't always immediately know what the hindrance might be. Sometimes it takes a period of time for you to discover how to work through it. Use wisdom and pray in the Spirit until God leads you in a certain direction. Then, take your authority and deal with it. This will shorten the amount of time between "amen" and "there it is." It's basically up to you how quickly your answers to prayer manifest.

The Lord didn't ask for anything twice. He believed and received it the first time. The second time, He took His spiritual power and authority and used it. If the devil withstood one dose, surely he wouldn't withstand two! So Jesus prayed again and the man saw clearly.

That's how our prayer ministers pray in our meetings. We don't just ask God for healing and then smile at you, saying, "Depart in peace. Be warmed and filled!" No, we ask if you've received the full manifestation. "Is your pain gone? Are you able to move?" If you don't have full manifestation, we begin taking authority, speaking to the

affected parts of your body, and commanding them to work. Although we don't see every single individual healed, most people do receive their full manifestation of healing. Glory to God!

CHAPTER 21 - You Can Receive From God!

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Romans 10:17

When you hear teaching from God's Word concerning healing, deliverance, prosperity, or anything else Jesus provided in the atonement, your faith is strengthened to receive. Once you know you've already got it (in the spiritual realm), manifestation (in the physical realm) comes swiftly. As your knowledge and understanding of something increases from the Word, you can release your faith and see it manifest more quickly. When ministering healing, you need to realize that the person you're praying for plays a large role in whether or not they receive. You can't take responsibility for them, but you can be a positive part of the process. Even Jesus couldn't override someone else's unbelief. (Mark 6:5,6.)

SUMMARY

Faith works by knowledge of the Word. God has already healed every person. When you ask and believe, the power is instantly released. If you don't see it manifest, it's not God who hasn't given. Either you haven't yet received, or there's a demonic obstacle preventing the manifestation. God is faithful! Believe it and never move off of it!

God's Word is absolutely true; it never fluctuates or varies. Never compromise on the truth of God's unwavering faithfulness. If you don't see something come to pass, it's not God's fault. It's your fault! I'm not trying to condemn you, but to bless, inform, and instruct you. If God's faithfulness is in question, then all of us are in trouble!

I believe God has done it whether you can see it or not, and it's up to us to manifest it.

Some people think, Well, when you did that, then God moved. No! God moved two thousand years ago in the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son. He instantly answered my prayer thirty minutes earlier, and His power had already been working. We just hadn't directed it right. We hadn't yet spoken to the mountain!

Adopt This Attitude

You let doctors do procedures, treatments, and operations to you that last hours, days, and weeks and cost hundreds and thousands of dollars, but if you ask God for healing and it doesn't happen by the time you hit the floor at the altar, then He failed?

You may not be Jesus, but you're the best He has to work through at the moment! Your perseverance in prayer could mean the difference between someone receiving their miracle or not. It might take you a while, but I encourage you to adopt this attitude: "If I can move the devil an inch, I can move him a mile—an inch at a time if I have to!"

You can receive from God!