

THE SECRET OF EFFECTIVE PRAYER

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We have to first of all thank God before the definition of some key words here like secret and effective but prayer does not need definition as we are all aware that Jesus started with prayer and ended with prayer even at the point of death according to **Matthew 26:36-46**. *“³⁶ Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, “Sit here while I go and pray over there.” ³⁷ And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. ³⁸ Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.” ³⁹ He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.” ⁴⁰ Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? ⁴¹ Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” ⁴² Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, “O My Father, ^[a]if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.” ⁴³ And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. ⁴⁵ Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour ^[b]is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”* Learn from Jesus Christ as a church, learn from Jesus Christ as an individual as we are learning from him altogether now.

The definition of the word secret according to Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary is something known about only by a few people, kept hidden from others, used to describe actions and behaviour that you do not tell other people about. He is a secret drinker, but we will also have biblical definition of the word secret according to **Luke 8:17**. *“¹⁷ For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. **Matthew 6:4** “that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you ^[a]openly”. ⁶ But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you ^[a]openly.*

Let us all also have the definition of the word effective according to Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary. Producing the result that is wanted or intended; producing a successful result. He has now taken effective control of the country. Let us also have a biblical view according to **James 5:13-17** *"¹³ Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. ¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶ [a] Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, [b] fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. ¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months"*. It is now we are to consider the topic: **The Secret of Effective Prayer**.

There are reasons for these secrets to effective prayer as Paul was an example to all the saints according to **Ephesians 6:10-20** *"¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the [a] wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of [b] the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— ¹⁹ and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak"*.

This lesson or topic on the secret of effective prayer is for specific needs of one's desire in life. For us to learn more about the secret of effective prayer – **Luke 1:10-20** *"¹⁰ And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. ¹¹ Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. ¹³ But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. ¹⁴ And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. ¹⁵ For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. ¹⁶ And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of*

Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." 18 And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years." 19 And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you [a]these glad tidings. 20 But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."

Dear brethren, it is also proper to listen to the one highly favoured by God **Luke 1:26-38**. Let us pay attention as the reader read for us. This lesson is assigned to enable me teach and preach, so that our eyes, minds and hearts can be opened to things spiritual. Mary visited Elizabeth and what are you going to learn? **Luke 1:39-45** *"39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, 40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. 41 And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43 But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. 45 Blessed is she who [a]believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord"*. Our reader this time should read from **Vs 46-56**. Birth of John the Baptist – **Vs. 57-58**. *"57 Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. 58 When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her."* The secret of effective prayer is also requested unbehalf of our religious friends i.e. the denominational bodies, churches of men and women as Cornelius sends a delegate **Acts 10:1-5** *"There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian [a]Regiment, 2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave [b]alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. 3 About [c]the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!" 4 And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?" So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. 5 Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter"*.

Peter in Prison was freed as a result of secret prayers - **Acts 12:6-11**. Prayers is for everything, even for our enemies.

May God help us to continue in prayers for its purpose in Jesus Name – Amen.