

PRAYER AS A LIFELINE NOT A LAST RESORT

Phil. 4:6-7, Lk. 18:1

Idogar, Daniel

INTRODUCTION

Almost everybody prays to God when they have a tremendous need. No matter whether they are a Christian or an atheist. Men, women, and children ask for divine help when they are in severe difficulties. For many people, prayer is a last resort. Prayer is that very needed last line of defense. Prayer is that saving grace when all other options have failed. They pray only when they are desperate.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

- The word Prayer expresses our communication to God. Prayer is a devotional activity, not mere saying of words.
- It is communion and relationship with God. It is the enjoyment of God.
- And it is a divine and unrestricted access to God.

Prayer gives wisdom

- Prayer is the school of wisdom. The wisest man is the one who prays the most and the best.
- The problem with man is that he is too strategic. Do not allow God to let you get to the end before you realize you need to start again.

- We sometimes feel too smart, too wise, too intelligent, too creative. We always get to exhaust a good number of options before we say Let us pray.

Prayer gives wisdom

- Some Christians are living frustrated lives because they are doing it by themselves.
- Rather, be like David - **1 Sam. 30:8**
- Some of us buy extra time of toiling and pain because we will never ask. - **1 Sam. 15:22**
- It doesn't matter what you know how to do. There is always an end to what you know.

Prayer is Therapy

- It is a means by which we pour out the weight of our hearts. Jesus said For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. **Matt. 11:30.**
- We need to talk. Speak. Let it out. By so doing, your heart becomes light.
- Tell God how pained you are. Tell him you feel like giving up. Tell him you don't feel like worshipping again. Tell him you feel like revenging that

person. When you are done, you will feel different. **1 Sam. 1:15-18**

Prayer is the heart of ministry

- Jesus demonstrated this while on earth. He would pray at different times, in different circumstances, and in different places.
- Show me a successful ministry, and I will show you a prayerful ministry.
- Any ministry that is not anchored on prayer is bound to fail. It takes prayer to minister.
- When we pray consistently in our various ministries, unseen problems are solved, and seen problems are solved more easily.

Prayer is our weapon for Spiritual Warfare

- Prayer is a weapon in spiritual warfare. **Ephesians 6:18** instructs believers to *"pray in the Spirit at all times, with every kind of prayer and petition"*.
- Not everything you see is as it is.
- They say what goes around comes around. In truth, what goes around is coming from somewhere.
- Discernment will help you distinguish what needs

prayer or fasting from what is just a mere coincidence.

- When it comes to fighting anxiety, Paul is telling us that the best defense is a good offense.
- Don't wait for the attack to come before you defend; when you do that, you make prayer your last resort.
- Become offensive from the start. Strike before you are struck.
- Build your defensive walls before the war.
- Saturate your spirit before you are broken. Make prayer your lifestyle and your lifeline.

There is something the prayerful man has seen and felt that he cannot stop praying. Peace is highly underrated. Peace is not having money. Peace is not having children. Peace is not having no problems at all. The peace that passes all understanding is divine. The peace that passes all understanding comes from the secret place of prayer. It comes from the lifting of numerous burdens.

- Always to pray is not something we do only on occasion, once in a while, or only at church.
- Always to pray is to approach life with a basic posture of depending on God.
- Always to pray means both in times of happiness and

adversity. It is hard for us to pray. But it is very easy not to pray.

Foundational problems

- Some of us come from homes where we don't pray.
- There was nothing like early morning prayers, nothing like family fasting; it will be very difficult to learn prayer, but not impossible.
- The question now is, are you continuing the pattern to your own children?

Past delay in answered prayers

- Some of us have, over time, gotten fed up with God that we don't see the need to cultivate a healthy prayer life. We forget that there are four ways God answers our prayers.
- ✓ First, God may answer our prayers quickly. **Lk. 18:8**
- ✓ Second, God may answer our prayers later. **Isaiah 55:8-9.**
- ✓ Third, God may answer our prayers better. **Eph. 3:20.**
- ✓ Last of all, God might answer our prayers with a NO.

Some of us feel we don't have the right words or grammar to approach God. We feel we must attain some level of academic excellence to be able to pray. Prayer is not an intellectual activity per se. True prayer is not the product of our intellectual faculties. It is the joining of our spirit with God's in mutual

spiritual communion. **Matt. 6:7-8, Rom. 8:26, Psalm 51:17.**

- The first thing that works against us is our sinful nature.
- In our sinful nature, we are inclined to doubt and even distrust God. **Isa. 59:1,2**

When it seems God has forgotten you. - **Psalms 10:1, 42:3,10, Job 3:3, 23:8-9**

- Some things are hard. It is not just about mere saying or preaching.
- It is hard to have prayer as a lifestyle when it seems God has taken the exit door.
- Calamities left and right; you call on Him and get no answer. It is difficult.
- But don't stop. Yet, situations of life like these have made many either abandon prayer as a lifeline or take it as a mere last resort.

KEY TIPS FOR PRAYER AS A LIFESTYLE

1. Bible study
2. Make a list of things, persons, situations, and challenges for which to pray.
3. Studying the prayers of the Bible is not just a useful exercise but also a most enriching and rewarding experience.
4. Make a prayer agreement with God

While any time is a good time to pray, we benefit from committing to specific times when we will meet

with God. ***Psalm 119:164, Daniel 6:10, James 5:16-18.***

CONCLUSION

Prayer, as a lifeline, is indispensable for the believer's relationship with God. It is through prayer that believers find guidance, strength, and peace, and it is through prayer that they engage in the spiritual battles of life. The Bible consistently affirms the power and necessity of prayer, urging believers to remain steadfast and devoted in their prayer lives.

May God bless these words in our hearts in Jesus' name. Amen.