

**Agape House of Worship
Midweek Service & Bible Study**

**Theme: Igniting the Power of Prayer
Part 1 – The Necessity of Prayer**

**Date: Wednesday, August 4, 2021
Facilitator: Pastor Jide Lawore**

Luke 18:1 “Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.”

Of all the spiritual activities we engage in as believers, the chief of them all is prayer. That is why prayer is perhaps the one activity most believer struggle with the most. Make no mistake, the enemy is after your prayer life. The true measure of a person is his prayer life—what he prays, how often he prays, and so on. We sometimes say, “A man is what he reads.” Or “You can know a man by his friends.” The true measure of a man is not what he is before men, his public life. But, when he is alone, in his private time before God, what is he then? Who is he when it is just him and God? This shows us the importance and the necessity of learning about prayer.

Why do you think people struggle the most with prayer?

What are the biggest struggles you have with prayer?

Why do we need to pray?

Another important question in the subject of prayer is this: Why do we need to pray? Some says, “Well, God is all-knowing. God knows all my needs, so I don’t need to pray to Him.” This is true; in prayer we do not tell something to God that He does not already know (Matthew 6:8). God is the immutable God; hence prayer does not change Him and what He does. God is the sovereign God, how can I dare to approach Him and ask Him for things? In Psalm 139:4, the psalmist says, “Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.” And Matthew 6:8 Jesus says, “your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” In Psalm 56:8, the psalmist says, “You...Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?” So, God knows our situation. The question then is: Why do we still need to pray?

It is important for us to understand that when God gives to us the gift of prayer, He is not giving us something that He needs, but something that we need. Does God need prayer? No. Does prayer change God? No. But do I need prayer, as a Christian in this world? The answer is, Yes. In prayer, God as it were ties Himself to my human need of communication, knowledge, and trust in Him. This is why God gives us prayer. Prayer changes us, not God. Prayer is a way for us to come into subjection to the will and the dealings of God with us in our lives.

Matthew 6:9-10 “In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.”

The Men and Women Who Shaped History Through Prayer

We tend to feel that before a person can become a man or woman of prayer, they must be a "great saint. " We have the order in reverse. Before a person can become a "great saint" they must first become person of prayer. Today we will take a look at men and women who shaped history through prayer.

I. Abraham, the Father of Faith.

Abraham was certainly not perfect. He had a pagan background. Some scholars tell us that even though Abraham's father was sincere, he was a moon worshiper. So, Abraham had a long way to go in his relation with God. Yet he was a man of prayer.

- Abraham built an altar of prayer - Genesis 12:1-8.
- Abram became a friend of God. James 2:23, Isaiah 41:8, Genesis 18:17
- Abraham became the father of faith. Romans 4:16

II. Nehemiah, the Courageous Leader.

Nehemiah was an exiled immigrant employee who became a great leader that led the children of Israel into rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem. However, his great ministry started with a burden and prayer before springing into an action. Nehemiah’s prayer is a great model of intercessory prayer.

Elements of the Prayer of Nehemiah 1:4-11

- Praise
- Petition
- Identification
- Confession
- Reminding God of His promises
- Humility
- Request

III. Esther, the Beauty Queen that Changed History.

Many of us probably remember the story of Esther as the beauty queen chosen to replace Vashti, but the real story of Esther is that of how fasting and prayer changed history and saved a whole nation from destruction.

Esther 4:16 “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”

IV. Daniel the Man of Excellence

Most of us know Daniel as the man of excellent spirit and the great prophet. However, Daniel’s story is a story of faith birthed through prayer. Daniel was an exile in Babylon who trained for three years to serve in the king’s court. Daniel and his friends chose to honor God by not eating the choice food and drinking the drinks from the king’s table. Then, in Daniel chapter 2 the king had a dream and he wanted someone to tell him the dream and the interpretation. No one could do that! So, King Nebuchadnezzar issued a decree to kill all of the wise men, magician, and diviner type people. When Daniel heard about the decree, he asked for some time and he and his friends prayed to God for mercy. God answered their prayers by revealing the dream and its interpretation to Daniel! (Daniel 2:14–19)

Daniel 2:14–19 When Arioch, the commander of the king’s guard, had gone out to put to death the wise men of Babylon, Daniel spoke to him with wisdom and tact. 15 He asked the king’s officer, “Why did the king issue such a harsh decree?” Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel. 16 At this, Daniel went in to the king and asked for time, so that he might interpret the dream for him. 17 Then Daniel returned to his house and explained the matter to his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. 18 He urged them to plead for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that he and his friends might not be executed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. 19 During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven

Daniel 6:10 “Daniel always prayed to God three times every day. Three times every day, he bowed down on his knees to pray and praise God. Even though Daniel heard about the new law, he still went to his house to pray. He went up to the upper room of his house and opened the windows that faced toward Jerusalem. Then Daniel bowed down on his knees and prayed just as he always had done.”

V. Elijah the Great Prophet.

James 5:16-17 “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. 17 - Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years

Even though most of us do not think of Elijah as just an ordinary man. He was used by God to do amazing, miraculous things. This, though, is part of James's point. James point is that Elijah's power came from God, in response to Elijah's prayers. Elijah was first a man of prayer before being a prophet.

VI. Jesus our Savior and Ultimate Role Model.

Mark 1:35 - Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

Our greatest instructor in prayer is Jesus Christ. He Himself was a man of constant prayer during His ministry. He would pray at night, going into the mountain while His disciples traveled or while they slept (Luke 6:12). You remember the agony of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane immediately before His death (Matthew 26:36-56). And He prayed earnestly before God. The disciples observed that Jesus was a man of prayer. So, in Luke 11, they came to Him and they said, “Lord, teach us to pray.” Jesus gave to them the model for prayer in what we now call “The Lord’s Prayer,” or the “Disciple’s Prayer.” We want to be instructed out of this model in the coming weeks on the subject of Prayer.

Luke 11:1 – “One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”

Even after His death and resurrection Jesus continues His prayer as He intercedes for us before the father.

Romans 8:34 “Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.”