

PATHWAYS of PRAYER:
Foundational Principles to an effective prayer life.
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Foundational Principle #1...

Prayer is both a relationship and conversation with God.

Holy Spirit of God is given to guide us into an ever deepening relationship with Jesus. This relationship, Jesus said, is characterized by loving God with “ALL” our – heart (emotions, attitudes and feelings), mind (thoughts and thinking patterns); strength (behaviors, habits and acts of obedience we take with our bodies), soul (will and choices) and relationships with others. The deeper and more mature we are in loving God the more power we gain in our prayer life. (John 17:3; John 14:12-13, 15-17)

The conversation is the relationship! God has chosen to reveal Himself in a multitude of ways and wants to have conversation with us about what we see, hear and sense. Conversing with God involves both listening and talking. As we grow in our ability to hear God’s voice, we discover our talking shifts to a new level of maturity in our praying. Maturing leads to a wonderful surprise as we discover prayer is both “listening to and talking with God without ceasing”. (John 15:7-8; Isaiah 40:27-31; I Thessalonians 5;17)

Foundational Principle #2 ...

Effectual prayer arises from “truth declarations” about God found in the Word of God.

To learn about God and from God we must grow in our understanding in three realms:

1. The nature of God. The Bible is full of language describing the character or heart of God. Knowing the heart of God and knowing that God cannot be opposite to His nature increases our ability to trust Him. Trust in the nature of God is essential to understanding the ways of His heart and to following the paths of Holy Spirit in prayer. (Exodus 33:18-20 and 34:6,29; Psalm 118:1,29)
2. The promises of God. The Bible is full of promises from God. His promises are given as an invitation to see our inheritance in Christ. They speak from the future into our present so that we can live from our present into His future! As our confidence in the promises of God increases our ability to pray with confidence grows. It is vital to remember the promises of God are anchored to His nature. Because His character disallows Him from changing we have confidence that what He promised, He will do! (Psalm 37; Ephesians 1:17-19; II Peter 1:3-4; Hebrews 10:35-36)
3. The deeds of God. The desire of God’s heart is to manifest Himself in the world. How God manifests Himself is not something we determine but is something we can expect. Expectation arises out of – trusting in the nature of God and being confident in the promises of God. Praying with expectation must follow trust and confidence in order to avoid “telling God what to do”. When we are attuned to the nature and promises of God we pray in alignment with His purposes. Powerful prayer arises out of growing trust, confidence and expectation!

(Exodus 13:16; Psalm 46:1; John 14:12-14; Hebrews 11:1, 6)

Foundational Principle #3...

Powerful prayer demands we live in our true identity in Christ.

- Identity is about seeing ourselves as God sees us in Christ.
- Identity is about thinking of ourselves as God thinks of us in Christ.
- Identity is about speaking of ourselves the way God speaks about us in Christ.

Because we are born into a world at war, this notion of identity requires two kinds of battles. The first is in discovering our true identity. The second battle is holding our ground as we learn to live in our identity in Christ. Identity is about declaring “who I am in Christ”. When we know the truth about who “I am in Christ”, Holy Spirit power comes upon us freeing us to live as Jesus sees us. As well, we gain power to avoid “living in” the lies the enemy of our souls wants us to believe and then to live by. Powerful prayer demands we live in our true identity in Christ!

Living in “truth based” identity demands we declare our identity as truth proclamations from God’s Word. Stating God’s truth about who “I am” frees us and emboldens us to live to our full redemptive and regenerated potential. Here are some “I am” statements taken from the scriptures to be claimed as truth statements for our lives:

- I am a **child of God** loved unconditionally; therefore, His love for me is not based on my “good enough” performance. (John 1:12; I John 3:1; II Peter 1:1-4)
- I am an **ambassador** of King Jesus; therefore, I have His authority to take command of every feeling, thought, behavior and choices in all my relationships for His purposes in me and through me.
(II Corinthians 5:17-21; Acts 1:8)
- I am a **Spirit filled warrior**; therefore, I courageously and faithfully fight to advance Kingdom causes.(Ephesians 6:10-18)
- I am a chosen member of the **royal priesthood**; therefore, I have a unique one of a kind role to play in caring for the well being of people around me. (I Peter 2:9-12)

Foundational Principle #4...

In approaching God, there is a prayer pattern which honors Him.

The pattern consists of...

- DELIGHT in the nature of God.
- GRATITUDE for His provisions.
- CONFESS dependence on Him.
- ASK with desperation, longing and expectation for Him to act.
- LINGER in His presence.