

# Praying with Confidence

**How to tap into God's power.** (Dr. Bill Bright 8 Minute Read)

For more than a year before Campus Crusade for Christ began, I led church teams into college dormitories, fraternities and sororities in the Los Angeles area, yet, to my knowledge, not a single person committed his or her life to Christ at any of these meetings.

But when God called this ministry into being in the spring of 1951, we immediately formed a 24-hour prayer chain and divided the prayer time into 15-minute periods. Scores of Christians invested time in prayer every day on behalf of our new ministry at the University of California at Los Angeles.

During the very first sorority meeting at UCLA after the prayer chain began, more than half of the 60 women present expressed a desire to receive Christ. Over the next few months, more than 250 students at UCLA—including the president of the student body, the editor of the newspaper and a number of top athletes—committed their lives to Jesus Christ.

This unprecedented demonstration of God's blessing was no accident. God was responding to the prayers of many of His children.

You, also, have been given the privilege of being used by God to help change the lives of individuals and nations. God has literally made available to you His vast reservoir of power, wisdom, love and grace, if only you are willing to believe Him.

Through the years, we have learned that the average Christian does not know how to pray. A friend of mine who has been a Christian for more than 50 years told me, "I never pray in public, and I know very little about prayer or how to pray."

Many Christians—new and old alike—still need to learn some basic, simple truths about prayer.

## What Is Prayer?

Simply put, prayer is communicating with God. Every Christian has a direct line of communication with God, available at all times. Prayer is much more than words, however. It is an expression of the heart toward God. It is an experience, a relationship, not an activity.

## Who Can Pray?

Anyone can pray. However, only those who walk in faith and obedience to Christ can expect to receive answers to their prayers. On the eve of His crucifixion, Jesus promised to those who belong to Him, "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it" (John 14:14).

God listens to the prayer of any truly repentant individual. He proved His love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still in our sins.

You must come with a clean heart, and a believing heart. Jesus said, "And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive," and, "It shall be done to you according to your faith," (Matthew 21:22, 9:29). Yet few of us take seriously these words, and few dare to claim what God has so generously promised us.

## Why Are You to Pray?

God commands you to pray. The New Testament is filled with commands to pray: Pray continually. Watch and pray. Pray with thanksgiving. Pray in the Spirit.

Our Lord's example. Christ was obedient in prayer. Although His day was filled with many pressures and responsibilities, He made prayer a priority. If Jesus was so dependent upon this fellowship in prayer alone with His Father, how much more should you and I spend time alone with God?

The examples of the disciples and others. The lives of the disciples and the biographies of Christians who have been mightily used of God through the centuries all testify to the necessity of prayer. They, too, are examples of obedience to His command to pray.

To have fellowship with God. God waits anxiously for you to come to Him in prayer. Proverbs records, "The prayer of the upright is His delight" (15:8). This should motivate you to spend more time with our Lord because you wish to please and delight Him.

To become a fruitful witness for Christ. The divine order is first to talk to God about men and then to talk to men about God. Witnessing is simply gathering the results of prayer, both the prayer of the one who is talking about Christ and the prayers of others.

## **How Do I Pray?**

Consider certain basic elements of prayer. These can be easily remembered by the word "ACTS," an acronym for the following words:

**Adoration:** To adore God is to worship and praise Him, to honor and exalt Him in your heart and mind and with your lips. Reading aloud psalms of praise and other similar portions of Scripture can greatly enrich your prayer time.

**Confession:** By seeing God in His purity, His holiness and His love, you become aware of your own sin and unworthiness. As the Holy Spirit makes you aware of sin, you will want to confess it. Receive God's forgiveness and cleansing which will restore you to fellowship with Him.

**Thanksgiving:** There's no better way to demonstrate your faith than to say, "Thank You." You can thank God not only for the many blessings of each day, but also for the problems and adversities. Giving thanks demonstrates that you really do trust God.

**Supplication:** Supplication includes petition for your own needs and intercession for others. There is nothing too small or too great to bring before the Lord.

Take time to pray for others. Christians often do not realize the importance of intercession. Pray for other Christians and encourage them to pray for you.

Pray especially for a daily opportunity to introduce others to Christ. It may be that He would have you claim for Him a college campus, an office or a community; or that every person within the radius of a mile of your home would be personally visited by one who would lovingly, prayerfully and intelligently present the claims of Christ.

Remember that, as you bow in prayer, you are tapping a source of power that can change the course of history. Prayer is the greatest privilege of the Christian life and the most revolutionary source of power known to man.

Adapted from the Transferable Concept How You Can Pray with Confidence, by Dr. Bill Bright, co-founder of Campus Crusade for Christ. © Cru. All rights reserved.

## **Action Point:**

The Scripture commands us to "pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17, New International Version.) How can you be creative about making this a habit in your daily life?