

Worry Less Pray More

WORRY LESS PRAY MORE

Unlocking the 5 Keys to Successful Prayer!

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God Taught Me Ministries
New Jersey

God Taught Me

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TITLE PAGE

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Produced by

[God Taught Me Ministries](#)

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Title page

Introduction

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About the Author

Dedication

How can we help you?

INTRODUCTION

I was in Chic-Fil-A once looking at the menu and looking specifically at the milkshake menu! I started to say to the Lord, “Lord, I’d sure love to have a milkshake, but I know Lord it’s not a good idea calorie wise.” Yes, you read that right I prayed for a milkshake!

Then, as I’m sitting down with my lemonade and my chicken sandwich, all of a sudden an employee comes out of the back of the store holding a milkshake, and I’m not joking, with whipped cream and a cherry on top! It’s in his hand and He’s saying, “Ray? Ray? Ray?”

He’s walking around the whole store doing this and then he comes up to me saying, “Excuse me Sir, but are you Ray?” I said, “No, but I wish I was!” We both started laughing.

He went on his search for Ray. However, brother Ray must have left the building because this guy came back and put that milkshake right on my table saying, “Here, Sir it’s on us!” Now just a few minutes ago I talked to God about a milkshake, and now there’s one on my table with whipped cream and a cherry on top!

I was thinking, “This is crazy!” Of course, after thinking that I drank it!”

Hi, I’m Chris Einwechter, a retired twenty-six year veteran of the New Jersey State Police, former crime scene detective, pastor, speaker, husband, and dad. I’d like to talk to you about how to defeat worry by seeing something amazing happen in your life, and that’s how to see more answered prayer than the average person! Imagine that, learning how to replace worry with not just prayer, but answered prayer!

I just saw God do that for a grandmom, a grandmom whose daughter was involved in drugs. Yes, a grandmom who was so worried she could barely talk to me on the phone because she was crying so hard.

She called me and explained how her daughter was struggling with drugs and other issues. As a result, the granddaughter was about to be taken away from the mother's custody due to neglect. There were other parties involved who were going to court in an attempt to receive full custody of the child. This grandmom feared she might not ever be able to see her grandchild anymore.

She also told me about how she couldn't afford an attorney and that the court date was just a few days away. She said she didn't know what to do, and you know what? I didn't know what to do either, except pray.

So that's what I did. I prayed with her on the phone. I said,

"Lord, make a way! Make a way for her to be able to see her granddaughter! Make a way for her to be awarded this custody, Lord! Give her favor with an attorney since she can't afford one, in Jesus name, amen."

Then I said to her, "Now, when I hang up this phone I want you to pull into the first attorney's office you come to and tell your story." That's what she did. She pulled into an attorney's office and learned it would be two thousand dollars. So she gave the attorney a six hundred dollar down payment. They went into court that week, and she was awarded every weekend and the whole summer, every summer for the rest of this baby's life!

What did the attorney do next? Well the attorney said, "You know that six hundred dollars? We're good to go, we're square." God has a black belt in making a way where there's no way and He'll do it for you too!

However, you may be thinking, *"I don't have time to waste on another book, only to see nothing change."* Who does? That's why throughout the pages of this book instead of wasting your time you'll learn the secret to seeing God show up in your *Ordinary Life* and show up like you've never imagined!

You'll also discover why prayer was really designed to kick butt and take names! And why you can pray about anything from milkshakes to marriages; from golf swings to shutting down burglary rings, and everything else in between! Prayer can be fun,

practical and a whole lot more powerful than you've ever realized! So come on let's get started.

PART I

Two amazing little secrets that'll change your life forever!

1

THE SECRET TO SEEING MORE ANSWERED PRAYER

So, how are we going to see more answered prayer than the average person? By using a little tool we both learned in school; it's called math.

What do I mean? Well, let's say you and I were both salesmen and we both had to knock on doors everyday to sell a product. I only knocked on two doors a day while you knocked on a hundred doors. Mathematically, who is most likely going to see more sales? It's obvious the person knocking on a hundred doors stands a better chance of seeing more sales.

So, who do you think is going to see more answers to prayer? Is it the person who seldom prays about anything or the person that prays about everything? Obviously, it's the person who prays about everything.

However, here's the problem. Many folks think, "Oh, I wouldn't want to pray about that." When it comes to praying for a parking spot, a milkshake, help with homework, or something similar, most people think, "I don't want to bother God with that."

Have you ever thought that way? I know I have. But where do we get that thinking from? I can tell you it's not from the Bible. Just listen to what the Bible says about bothering God:

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

(Philippians 4:6 New Living Translation)

Bother God

Bothering God simply cannot happen. Why? Because God desires for you not to worry about anything and longs for you to pray about everything.

I remember an incident that drove this point home for me. I got a phone call from a widow who had a problem. She said, "Mr. Chris, Mr. Chris, I have a leak in my roof!"

I said, "Ah, don't worry about it Josephine. We'll take care of that. We'll get it squared away."

Right after I talked to her, I asked a roofer I know, "Hey, would you be able to go look at this widow's roof for me?"

A few days later he came back to me saying, "Hey Chris, I looked at that roof and it's shot! It'll be about \$3500 to fix it."

I thought to myself, "I don't have the extra \$3500, and I know Josephine doesn't have it."

"Thanks, I'll get back to you," I said. As soon as he left my presence, the Lord spoke to my heart, "Chris, did you even pray about Josephine's roof?"

I answered, "No, Lord I didn't pray about it."

He went on to say, "Chris, you're in the habit of praying about everything; don't ever fall out of that habit."

I said, “Lord, forgive me for not praying about that. You take care of Josephine’s roof.”

About a week later, without saying another word to anyone, that same roofer came back to me and said, “Remember that lady’s roof you had me look at?”

“Yes.”

He said, “I’ll do it for free.”

God taught me that He doesn’t care if I’m the President of the United States, He wants me praying about everything! Furthermore, He’s not bothered when we do.

Break the motor home

Another time, a friend of mine purchased a used motor home and asked if I could drive him up to Buffalo, NY to pick it up. On the way home, I was following him and noticed he was only doing about 20 mph.

He would pull over every now and then to let all these big trucks pass us because we were basically in the middle of nowhere, on a road that only had two lanes. I remember thinking how unsafe it was, and the next time he pulled over I jumped out of my car and asked him if everything was OK.

He said, “I can’t get this thing to go over 20 mph. I don’t know what’s wrong. I called the motor home place and they said we’re too far away now for them to come out and check it. I spent all this money and I don’t know what we should do.”

I looked at him and then at the motor home, and I said, “Let’s pray.” For some reason I was lead to pray that the motor home would actually break down. I prayed it would break down in a spot where we could get help.

So I said, “Lord, I pray that You break this motor home! If it’s going to break anyway, then let it break Lord. But, let it break in a place where we can get help.”

My friend was like, “No, don’t break the motor home!”

He jumped back in, and it fired right up. After we prayed, he was able to drive it up to 50 mph. So here we are going along fine

through this little tiny town, and as we started climbing a large hill the motor home started to sputter.

When we got to the top of the hill, it completely broke down and coasted into a parking lot at the top of this hill. I looked up and saw a sign that said something like, "Joe's Garage."

We broke down right in the parking lot of a garage. The only problem was they were closing for the night. My buddy asked the owner if he could fix the motor home, and this guy just looked for a moment without saying a word and then said, "Well, we're closing in ten minutes." Then he waited a moment and said, "But, I'll fix it."

That's not all. This man spent the next hour and a half to two hours working on the motor home and got it running perfectly. When my friend asked, "How much do I owe you?" He said, "Nothing."

Nothing? This guy could have taken advantage of us like you wouldn't believe. We were from out of town; he never met us before and probably would never see us again. However, he insisted we didn't owe him a dime!

Yes, I prayed for the motor home to break and specifically to break in a place where we would get help, and the Lord sent us to a man at the top of a hill who not only fixed it right but refused to charge us after his shop had been closed for two hours! Prayer was designed to win and it's crazy sometimes how God shows up through prayer!

Yet if we're not careful we can fall for one of the biggest hindrances to answered prayer, which is that old notion that we're bothering God. Here's why it's so dangerous, because thinking we're bothering God stops us from praying about everything, which then robs us of the opportunity to see Him show up in our lives over and over again.

The truth is God is more bothered when we don't pray and depend on Him for things than when we do. Listen to what the Bible has to say about that:

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, And rely on horses, Who trust in chariots because they are many, And in

horsemen because they are very strong, But who do not look to the Holy One of Israel, Nor seek the Lord!

(Isaiah 31:1 New King James Version)

Notice the verse starts out with the word, “Woe.” It’s more or less a warning. So what is the Lord really saying? It’s that He would rather you depend on Him for the parking spot at a crowded mall during the Christmas season than have you try to find a parking spot by yourself; you would not be bothering God if you asked.

There was a time when I was Christmas shopping with my wife at the King of Prussia Mall in Pennsylvania, one of the largest malls in the United States of America. When we first arrived we drove around everywhere looking for a parking spot, but the place was packed.

So I said, “Lord, please provide a parking spot.” Right after I prayed I saw a set of reverse lights come on, right by the front door of the mall. I’m talking by the curb, by the sidewalk and at the front entrance to the mall! A car pulled out, and we pulled in. It was perfect timing because there was what seemed to be a million cars circling around looking for parking spots!

Some might say, “Man, how can you pray for a parking spot when God is so busy?” It’s because He’s never too busy, and if I’m concerned about something then so is God. No matter what the topic, if it’s a minor detail or something huge I’m facing, if it concerns me, then it concerns God.

I was reminded of that truth the time I was preparing a sermon and my little eight-year old burst into the room saying, “Look what mom bought me, dad!” It was a little stuffed elephant, and she was excited about it. However, I kind of blew it off saying it was nice but focused more on my message. Then in walks my twelve-year old daughter who slams down a bunch of back-to-school supplies. She starts telling me of all the different notebooks she just got and markers and so on. Once again I wasn’t really excited and was kind of like, “Oh, that’s nice.” And then I went right back to my message because I only had a few moments left.

That's when God stopped me in my tracks and reminded me of how He treats me when I pray. I felt the Lord lay upon my heart, "Do I not drop what I'm doing when you talk to Me? Am I not concerned about what you're concerned about?"

He was absolutely right. When I pray God is right there, He's ready and never too busy for me. It doesn't matter what the topic, the problem, or the worry. I can bring it to Him because He wants to hear it and wants to help me work it out.

I dropped what I was doing and asked my daughters to show me their stuff again, and this time I was trying to be more like the Lord by being concerned about what they were concerned about. What a comfort to know that we have a God who wants us to share all our worries and fears with Him. Why? It's because He cares about us.

"Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you."

(1 Peter 5:7 NLT)

Thoughts to consider:

So again who do you think is going to see more answers to prayer? Will it be the person who seldom prays about anything or the person that prays about everything? Mathematically who's it going to be? It's the person who prays about everything!

Yet in order to do so you'll have to watch out for that old notion of, "I don't want to bother God." It's a huge hindrance to answered prayer.

So how can we start? We do so by talking to God about the things that concern us. Sometimes I do that by standing on my back deck at night looking up at the stars. Other times I simply take a walk and talk to God and actually talk to Him about everything that is worrying me at that moment. I mean sometimes I'll go right down a list naming every worry. I encourage you to do the same thing.

Here's an example, so you can get started:

"Lord, thank You for being concerned about what I'm con-

cerned about. Today, I'm worried about my finances. I keep trying to save and instead it doesn't look like I have enough money to pay for the things I need. Would You not only help me not to worry about them, but would You also make a way for me to pay my bills? Thank You, in Jesus name, amen."

Of course you can put that prayer into your own words and maybe you're not concerned about your finances, but something else like your relationships, or your children, or your job. Begin by telling the Lord what you're concerned about. The fact is God is concerned about what you're concerned about and longs for you to live a life that prays about everything.

Now let's move on to the next chapter and discover the secret to God being good to you!

2

THE SECRET TO GOD BEING GOOD TO YOU

“God is good!” Chances are you’ve heard that before, but just who is God good to? Maybe you thought God was only good to those who believe they’re perfect or to those who are religious. That’s not the case, just listen to what the Bible has to say about that:

“The Lord is good to those who depend on him, to those who search for him.”

(Lamentations 3:25 NLT)

It’s shocking, right? The Bible teaches that God is good to those who depend on Him, period. That’s great news for people like me because I’m far from perfect! Yet, God keeps showing up in my life over and over again. Why?

It’s because the secret to God being good to you is not found in your attempt to be religious or perfect, but in developing a powerful habit of dependence upon God for everything. God is good

to those who depend on Him. And how do we depend on God? We do it through the means and the mechanism of prayer.

We all know that we can spend our time doing many things. Yet, what if we take the time to develop the habit of praying and depending on God as a Father for everything? What if you became a black belt in depending upon God for everything? Your life would change, I can tell that you much! Yes, without question God is going to be good to you!

But why, just why would God be good to an imperfect person like me? It's not only because He promises to do so but mainly because we are making a conscious decision not to depend on our own horses or our own chariots, as it said back in Isaiah 31:1. However, we are depending upon the Lord and it's not our perfection, but our dependence that gets God's attention! If you really understood how serious God takes your dependence upon Him, your life would change almost instantly.

Depending on God to solve a murder

You already know you can depend on God for a milkshake, but how about a murder? I learned about a murder investigation that was going nowhere. It was going nowhere because of a lack of evidence, a lack of a suspect, and a bunch of other unanswered questions. A woman's body that couldn't be identified had been found on the side of a road.

I had worked on several murder scenes while being a CSI detective assigned to the New Jersey State Police Crime Scene Unit. However, this one bothered me more than the rest.

I was now assigned to the Evidence Management Unit, and one day I had to pick some evidence up at the New Jersey State Police Barracks where this murder investigation was being worked on.

I began talking to the detective who was leading this particular murder investigation. I could see he was frustrated as he went on to tell me how he had no clue as to who the victim was, nor any real evidence or a single suspect. All he had was an unidentified woman murdered and left on the side of a road.

As I listened to him, I felt myself getting upset at the fact that someone might get away with this woman's murder. This was a woman who didn't even have a name at this point.

I remember finishing up what I had to do there and pulling out of the barracks. I don't think I was down the road a mile when I called the detective back on my cell phone saying, "You're going to have your murder suspect!"

He was like, "Really? How?"

I said, "Because I'm going to be praying for one!"

I left that place so fired up that I started crying out to God in my car asking Him to intervene in this case. I even went to my church that same night and had the whole church praying for this case. After that, I basically just locked this investigation in on prayer. I prayed, and I prayed for something to happen.

A few weeks later I got an email from the detective, and in the subject line he wrote, "Your prayers have been answered!" I remember calling him up to find out what had happened, and he said, "Chris, I'm telling you your prayers have been answered!"

He went on to explain that it was nothing short of a miracle how a little tiny shred of evidence surfaced.

Then the investigation took a turn and led them to the United States State Department in Washington D.C. Then it led on to Mexico where they located a family member who helped them identify the victim and also the person the victim was last seen with in Mexico.

As a result, a suspect was later located in the United States, arrested, and confessed to the murder. One item of evidence lead them from New Jersey to Washington D.C., to Mexico, then back to New Jersey, and then finally to an arrest!

One miracle happened after another, not because somebody is perfect or has a so called gift, but because prayer is designed to kick butt and take names!

Dependence is what gets God's attention! God is good to those who depend on Him, not to those who profess to be perfect nor just to the religious but the dependent!

So the key is dependence, and again you depend on God

through prayer. However, here's the problem: who do you know that really prays about everything, that prays about the milkshake or a parking spot? If you know anyone at all, you could probably count them on one hand. Why is that? It's because praying about everything is not natural for us. Yet it's always the sweet spot of heaven!

Praying about a golf swing

I even prayed about my golf swing when I couldn't hit a ball straight to save my life! I said to the Lord, "Lord, you created everything! You created the sun, the moon, and the stars. You know how to hit a golf ball!" He does; He knows everything! So I prayed about it and, you know what? I continued to do so; I prayed and I prayed, "Lord teach me how to hit a golf ball. I know You know how to hit a golf ball Lord; so please teach me!"

I noticed that my golf swing kept getting better and better. About a month later, I went on a golf trip and wound up winning an award for shooting the lowest score out of thirty-three men! One of those men walked up to me and asked, "Chris I've seen you play golf before; who are you taking lessons from?"

I said, "You really want to know?"

He said, "Yes, I really want to know."

So I said, "I asked God to teach me how to hit a golf ball."

He was like, "Man, that's crazy. Who does that?"

You'll do that as well if you want God to be good to you! You'll not only do that, but you'll begin to pray about everything! By sheer mathematics you'll begin to see more answers to prayer than the average person!

The real secret is to get to the point where you're not even thinking about it anymore, you're just doing it, until it's just like breathing. You practice every day by replacing worry with prayer and by believing God wants you praying about everything. When you're worried, say to yourself, "Worry less; pray more!" Remind yourself that it's OK to pray, about everything!

God is not offended when we pray about everything, He's offended when we don't.

How answers to prayer can escape us

There's a story in the Bible about a King named Asa who started out relying on God for everything. An army of a million men attacked him, and he prayed and sought God's help. Of course God showed up big and defeated that whole army!

Then something crazy happened. For some reason (and the Bible doesn't really reveal it) Asa stopped depending upon God. He was attacked again by another army, and instead of praying about it, Asa went and took money out of the treasury of the Lord and gave it to another King. Basically, Asa bought protection instead of relying on the Lord.

Then God sent Asa this message:

And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said to him: "Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the Lord your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand."

(2 Chronicles 16:7 NKJV)

Asa's enemies **escaped** from his hands. The question is: what has escaped from our hands for failing to rely on the Lord? For starters, we miss the chance for God to be good to us. Did you see how God reacted to Asa not praying about everything? God longs for your dependence. He's not impressed when we try to muscle our way through life without Him. He's impressed when we depend on Him!

Asa was reminded of how his past victories were accomplished:

"Were the Ethiopians and the Lubim not a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the Lord, He delivered them into your hand."

(2 Chronicles 16:8 NKJV)

"Because you relied on the Lord, He delivered them into your hand." Victory over worry or victory over anything else can

be delivered to you, if you make a conscious decision to rely on God instead of something else.

So what happened to Asa? Unfortunately, Asa's life ends like this: he got a disease in his feet, which he didn't even pray about, and the Bible says, "So he died."

Who wants to be like that? Instead, let's develop the habit of relying on God for everything. We can start by never giving our prayer life a day off. No vacation days for our prayer life!

If we do, then it won't be long before this comes true in our lives:

"The Lord is good to those who depend on Him, ..."

(Lamentations 3:25 NLT)

It won't be long before you start seeing God showing up in places you never imagined!

Thoughts to consider:

Is God bothered when I depend on Him or is He more bothered when I don't? God is obviously more bothered when we don't. Seeing God show up more often than not requires dependence upon Him as a Father. It's not hard; it's just not natural and will take a real conscious effort.

We can begin by asking the Lord to help us:

"Lord, I'm not used to talking to You much. However, I'm starting to see how You desire me to depend on You because You love me. Teach me how to do just that; teach me how to depend on You like a child depends on a Father, in Jesus name, amen."

Awesome! Now, in the next few chapters we're going to discover exactly what causes our prayers to be super successful! I mean who wants to spend time praying and not get any results, right? I know you don't, so let's unpack prayer so it'll pack a real punch!

I'll show you how to do that next.

PART II

Unlocking the 5 Keys to *Successful* Prayer! It's the secret sauce to a powerful prayer life!

3

PROVIDING YOUR PRAYER THE PROPER CONNECTION

Just imagine if you became a black belt in answered prayer! Imagine the possibilities, the lives, and the things that could be changed all through a powerful and successful prayer life!

We can do that as long as we provide our prayer with all the right stuff, which includes some very important ingredients. For starters our prayers need to be properly connected before they can become successful. Quite often a lack of answered prayer can be traced right back to this first step. To help you understand what I mean, I'd like to tell you about a rather large theft I investigated. It was a theft of almost half a million dollars back when I was assigned to the New Jersey State Police Financial Crimes Unit.

Thankfully, I found out who stole it and how. The only prob-

lem was my suspect had fled the State of New Jersey. That led me to my next step, which was to meet with a Superior Court Judge in his private chambers in order to obtain an arrest warrant.

However, I didn't just walk into the judge's chambers, put my feet on his desk, and say, "What's up, Judge?" It doesn't work that way in the real world, and it doesn't work that way with prayer either. As you can imagine, I had to be granted permission to see that particular judge. I also had to go through tight security checks before I gained access to his personal chambers.

Connect

The first step toward answered prayer is sort of like that. That's why we need to learn how to provide our prayer with the proper connection. The word *connect* means to join together in such a way that it provides access and communication.

So what allows us access and communication to the Lord like that?

Here's a hint . . .

"Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.'"

(Matthew 18:2-3 NKJV)

The most powerful way to approach God is from the position of a child and again unanswered prayer can often be traced right back to this key. Remember prayer was designed to win. However, a poor connection will always hinder that; therefore, we need to get this first step right.

We can start by understanding that there is a huge difference between knowing God as just a God and knowing Him as a Father. Remember my friend who was confused about my praying about my golf swing? I reminded him that he had three daughters and said to him, "If one of your daughters asked you to teach her how to throw a softball, would you do it?"

"Of course," he said. "Sure I would."

So why do we think it's any different with our Heavenly Father? That day when asked about my golf swing I said to my friend, "God's my Father and I simply asked Him to teach me how to hit a golf ball."

Should we expect any less with the Lord? No, we shouldn't. However, sometimes we don't understand the difference between knowing God as just a God and knowing Him as a Father. Check out this powerful reminder found in the book of Matthew:

"Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"

(Matthew 7:9-11 NKJV)

God is a Father, a Dad, who, like that verse points out, knows how to take care of His own. Yet I didn't discover that until I was thirty-years old.

Why? Because I first had to overcome yet another huge hindrance to prayer and chances are you will to. What is it? The thought that says, "Aren't we all children of God?" That's a great question, and the answer to that question will enable you to have a prayer life that packs a punch!

From the perspective of a CSI detective

I used to be a Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) detective, and a great approach for any crime scene detective is to ask questions like, "Why is that door over there open? Why is that window screen on the floor?"

Let's approach this question the same way, and look at it from the perspective of a crime scene detective. Look at the following passage from the Bible, and let's ask why this one word *adopt* is found there:

God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by

bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

(Ephesians 1:5 NLT)

Stay neutral as if you were really processing a crime scene and ask, “Why is there a need to adopt anyone if we’re already automatically children of God?” Would there be a need to adopt a baby you just gave birth to in a hospital? Think about it. The Bible talks about adoption for a reason and has the word adopt written between its pages.

If you were a detective, you might say to yourself, “There must be a reason. There must be a reason that shoe is over there. There must be a reason that door is open, and there must be a reason the word adopt is found in the Bible.”

The fact is there is a reason and it starts with the two primary types of people we have on the earth. The two types are God’s child and God’s creation. We all start out as God’s creations, but not everyone is a child of God.

The answer to this goes back to when God created Adam and Eve. He gave them instructions to follow, but instead they sinned by yielding to temptation. As a result of Adam and Eve’s disobedience, they became separated from God. Sin separates us from the Lord because He is Holy. Not only were they separated, but they passed on a sinful nature to all of us. How did that happen? They began to have children, and their children started having children, again passing that same sinful nature right on down to each one of us.

What was the result? We’ve all sinned in one way or another. That’s the reason the Bible says this:

“...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ...”

(Romans 3:23 New International Version)

According to God’s law, there is only one true way to pay for our sin, death. For us to be truly forgiven, a death must occur, and that death must be sinless:

“For the wages of sin is death.”

(Romans 6:23 NIV)

I used to think the required payment for sin was more like

church attendance or good works that I thought might outweigh my sins someday. I've overcome that notion and have gone on to develop a powerful prayer by understanding what the Bible clearly says instead of what I thought. Death is the only payment accepted for our sin. So let's go back to our question, "Why was the word *adopt* placed in the Bible?"

A better plan

It's because God came up with a better plan and offers adoption to correct this problem of sin. He needed a legal plan, a legal move that would be able to buy back something that used to belong to Him. It was something that was separated because of sin, and that something was us. However, what could satisfy the law? What could provide the payment of death needed for our sin without bending the rules?

It's almost like we would need to start over with another Adam. That's basically what God did. He sent Jesus straight out of heaven with a mission, to pay for our sins and open the door for forgiveness. How did He do it? How did He do it without bending the rules while satisfying the requirement of the law? How could Jesus die for our sin if something sinless is required to die? Also, how could He do that if every person born of a woman is now born with an inherited sinful nature? How could God get around that sinful nature thing without bending the rules?

This is how He did it. God sent His Son Jesus to be born of a virgin, someone who has never given birth to a child. Why is that so important? It's because Adam and Eve passed on a sinful nature to each one of us. However, Jesus was born of a virgin so He wouldn't inherit that same sinful nature we did. It's pretty cool when you really think about it. Basically, the sinful nature that was passed down all the way from Adam was interrupted by the virgin birth, making it possible for Jesus to be born sinless.

Yet, that was just the beginning. Jesus of course started out as a baby and the enemy of our souls was not happy. He prompted King Herod to order the murder of innocent children right after

the birth of Jesus, in an effort to crush out our only chance of forgiveness. Thankfully an angel advised Jesus's parents to move Him out the area and sent them to another land that provided protection.

Jesus then grew up, and the time came for Him to go and face temptation like Adam did. Adam failed, of course. Jesus went into a desert for forty days without food while Satan threw everything he had at Jesus Christ in an all out effort to get Him to sin. Satan tried to kill Jesus when He was a baby, then later tried to tempt Him to sin, and then reversed his attack in the end by trying to get Jesus to give up on us altogether by not going to the cross.

Jesus won those battles and remained sinless. So now we have a first, a person who was sinless like Adam, and tempted like Adam. However, Jesus, unlike Adam, made it through temptation and is truly the first sinless person to ever walk this earth. Now He happens to be the only one ever to be qualified to die for our sin. However, that wasn't so easy either.

Is there another way

Remember what happened just before Jesus went to die on the cross? Here came the enemy of your soul again, one last effort. Jesus was praying and asked His Father if there was another way, another way for you and I to be forgiven. We know the Father must have said there was no other way because Jesus finished praying by saying, "Not My will be done, but Yours." Then He went on to be beaten and then crucified. Jesus battled Satan every step of the way, from His birth to His death, all for you and me.

If everyone were automatically a child of God, there would be no need to adopt anyone. There would be no need for forgiveness, and there would be no need to send Jesus through a virgin birth, through forty days of temptation, and finally through a beating and then a death upon a cross.

Yet the fact is there was and still is a need. It's because the law requires death for our sins. Think of it this way; a little boy goes

into a candy store and steals some candy. He gets caught by the store owner and the law allows the store owner to lawfully whip that child. No one can stop it or hold the store owner accountable because it's the law of the land.

However, as the store owner is preparing to whip this little boy the boy's father walks up. The little boy is crying, scared, and looks over at his dad and says, "I'm sorry dad." The father then looks at the store owner and says, "I know my son has stolen from you. I know you are allowed to whip him for it." As he is talking to the owner, he takes off his shirt, and kneels down, and turns his back to the owner. He then says, "Sir, would you please whip me instead?"

Nobody forces the dad; he does it all on his own out of sheer love. The dad satisfies the requirement of the law by allowing his body to be beaten instead of his son's. That's what Jesus has done for you and me. Nobody forced Him, but He came to earth, went through one battle after the other, and laid down His body. He allowed it to be beaten out of sheer love. He satisfied the requirement of a death needed to pay for your sin.

He was mocked, spit on, punched, and whipped not because He was overpowered or forced but because of love. He really did pay for our sin.

Adoption, the only option

Therefore, adoption is the *legal* process that God uses to bring you and me into a right relationship with Him, which is a Father-daughter or a Father-son relationship. Basically Jesus, because of all He faced and all He has done and the legal way He did it, makes things right between us and God.

"For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past,"

(Romans 3:25 NLT)

God makes you right with Him when and only when you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Your sins become paid in full and you become a true adopted child of the Most High God! Then and only then do you become properly connected to God as His child and then you are granted access to Him anytime you want.

This whole process, of course, provides your prayer with the proper connection.

However, not if you don't take advantage of it. So how do we take advantage of what Jesus did for us? We simply officially ask to be forgiven. We do so as an act of our own free will, and that's important. God will not force anyone to become His child and become forgiven. For it to be a legal move, you have to decide.

Imagine if you desire someone to be your friend. Suppose it was someone you would love to hang out with the rest of your days, and all you had to do was press a button to get it done. So you do just that; you press a little button, and all of a sudden this person is now your friend for life. You hang out, you get along, and everything is fantastic everyday, all day!

However, one day you realize that the only reason this person is your friend is because you pressed that button. They didn't choose to be your friend. No, you forced the issue by pressing a button. It's more like they were like a robot with no choice involved.

God wants to be chosen. He'd rather have you make the choice on your own than have Him make it for you. If He forced you, then you'd be like a robot. That's the reason the Bible describes a party in heaven every time someone accepts Jesus Christ as their Savior.

"In the same way, there is joy in the presence of God's angels when even one sinner repents."

(Luke 15:10 NLT)

Why? It's because it was your choice. Suppose my daughter was playing a soccer game and just before she was going to attempt to kick the ball into the net I tackled the goalie and the ball goes fly-

ing right into the net! Of course she didn't really earn that goal, right? So would there be any need for a celebration?

No, no there wouldn't because I removed the goalie. What if I started jumping around on the sidelines? What do you think the other parents would be thinking? Yes, they'd think I was crazy! The bottom line is there's no need to celebrate that goal.

Now, if you understand that, then you're starting to understand that it really is your choice. If you're ready to make that choice of knowing God as your Father, then here's a prayer that'll absolutely help you get it done.

"Dear Lord, thank you for not giving up on me. Thank you for sending Your Son Jesus to die in my place. Thank you for giving me the chance to know You as a Father and not just a God. Today I officially ask to be forgiven for my sins, and today I accept Jesus Christ as payment for my sins and as my Lord and Savior. Lord, today I officially give You my life. Please take my life and change it by teaching me how to enjoy You as a Father, in Jesus name, amen."

Awesomeness

If you've said that prayer, awesome! You now truly believe Jesus died for your sins. You're now truly adopted into the family of God! You're forgiven, and now you're connected, ready to build a prayer life that packs a punch!

I'll show you how to do that next!

4

PROVIDING YOUR PRAYER THE PROPER SUPPORT

You've just provided your prayer with the proper connection, and now it's time to provide it with the proper support. I remember a time when a friend of mine came to me and shared how a robber was running around his neighborhood kicking in doors and robbing homes. He went on to talk about how his wife was worried, and not just worried, but overcome with worry to the point where it was effecting her life and their home.

She was a stay at home mom and feared this person would break into their home next. So I said to my friend, "Hey man, you know we can pray against that robber?" Meaning that we could actually stand against that robber in prayer. We could get an actual warrant for that robber's arrest in heaven, in other words, a prayer warrant.

And here's the reason why, because that morning when talking with my friend I knew it wasn't God's will that a robber would be running around kicking in doors and striking fear in the hearts of people that lived in that neighborhood. I knew that was not God's will.

So what did we do? We prayed together at 6:00 am, specifically asking God to cause this robber to get arrested, to cause this robber to slip up somehow and allow the police to make a lawful arrest. And I remember saying,

"Lord, we ask that You won't allow this robber to do things that are opposite of Your will."

At around 4:00 pm, I got a text message from my friend letting me know that the robber had just been arrested!

One robber, arrested in one day's time with one prayer! Why? Because our prayer had a key ingredient: Support. Our prayer was supported and backed up by God Himself. Which is key for the success of any prayer. And not just any support but God's support. Without the proper support our prayer is not going anywhere.

Your weapon jams

To help you understand what I mean let's say you were a Marine stationed in Afghanistan right now and you found yourself in the middle of a firefight where your weapon jams. And you thank God that even though your weapon jammed you made it out of there alive.

Now you're back at your base and you go right to the person in charge of the weapons, the armorer. Of course you ask to get a new weapon because the one you have is jammed and you almost died out there today.

The question is, are you going to be issued a new weapon? Yes, but why? Because it's a life and death situation? That's true – it is, and that's a great reason to get a new weapon, but it's not the ultimate reason.

If you were that Marine, you would indeed get a new weapon

and the reason would be is that you're supported. Support simply means to back up. You are backed up by the United States of America, whether it be for a new pair of boots, food, clothing, or a new weapon because as a Marine you would need those things to accomplish the will and desire of the United States of America.

It just makes sense because you would be carrying out their mission, the mission of the United States of America. So to help accomplish their own mission, they'd be willing to provide whatever support is necessary to get the job done.

A bakery

Or look at it this way. What if you owned a bakery and I worked for you? You're the owner and I'm your employee, and I happen to call you up at 4:00 am one morning. You answer the phone and I simply tell you that I'm sorry for calling you so early, but for some reason we don't have any supplies needed to start baking – no sugar, no eggs, and no flour. We can't even make one single cup of coffee or anything else that's going to help you make a profit.

You're the owner and so the question is: are you going to get out of bed at 4:00 am and go get those needed supplies? Sure you are, and if you didn't what would that be? Foolish, because it wouldn't make any sense.

Would it make any sense for the United States not to support any Marine that they send on a mission, a mission that they want done? It would be foolish, right? Yes, it would be.

However, the real question is this, would it make any sense for God not to *answer* any prayer He supports? No, it wouldn't make any sense. Again, it would be foolish.

Now watch this, because this is powerful and life changing:

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

(1 John 5:14 NKJV)

Your prayer warrant

At first glance that verse may not mean too much to you. But that is your prayer warrant, your arrest warrant, or whatever you want to call it. All I know is it's powerful and it's a real warrant for real change! God says in that verse that if you pray anything, anything at all according to His will, He hears you! Now look at the next verse:

And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

(1 John 5:15 NKJV)

A prayer warrant for change! So far you've provided your prayer with the proper connection by giving your life to Jesus Christ and now you have this incredible free access into God's chambers. Now whenever you pray, you're in God's presence. You can go into God's very own chambers anytime you want seeking support to change anything.

And if you discover that what you're asking to change is indeed God's will, then you're coming out of those chambers with a warrant signed by God! When I prayed against that robber I knew I had God on my side, meaning I knew it was against His will. I knew I was asking something that God says He'd answer. And He did!

This is the second ingredient needed for your prayer's success, and to changing things that seem unchangeable! Granted we still have three more steps to go over and apply in order for our prayers to be fully successful, but at this point you have a warrant for change!

So just like a real arrest warrant that I could hold in my hand, it doesn't mean I'll make that arrest. There are still things I need to do to make that happen. It just means I have a legal warrant to do so if I should locate my suspect.

Proper access to God has now allowed me to gain a warrant. What I do with that warrant is up to me.

Imagine the possibilities

However, just imagine the possibilities. Let's say you go to God with a marriage. Is it God's will for a marriage to be blessed or cursed? Blessed, right? You go to God with your finances. Is it God's will for you to be burdened and stressed out because of debt? No, God desires you to be free from the strains of unnecessary debt. Is it God's will for your children to go in the direction of the Lord or another direction? Of course, the direction of the Lord. All these things certainly are God's will.

When we take a request to God that is clearly His will, He promises to support it. And when we pray against things that are not God's will, such as I did with the robber, He promises to support it. Much like when I took that actual warrant from my financial theft investigation into the Judge's chambers, that Judge signed his own signature to my warrant because He supported it.

Now that warrant which was signed by a Superior Court Judge can be used anywhere in the United States of America. If they find the suspect named on that warrant all the way in Alaska, the authorities can make a lawful arrest even though the warrant was signed back in New Jersey.

Why? Because my warrant was valid. It was found to have probable cause to be issued and was supported by a Superior Court Judge. Therefore, it's now supported by every single law enforcement agency in the Nation.

What does that do for you? When your prayer is also supported by God, it's backed up by God Himself and by every single angel in heaven! You are literally praying for something that God and all of heaven want to see done and you may not understand the impact of that just yet, but let's just agree that it's powerful!

I've seen situations where it looked like it was totally impossible. I just saw a marriage recently restored that had all the makings of a disaster. A disaster except for one thing, God's will! My wife and I took this woman through a process of seeing God's will become a reality in her marriage. And when I say it looked like it would never happen, it looked like it would never happen!

You may be facing something right now and not have anything else except for God's will. It may look impossible; it may be impossible! But, if you have at least God's will going for you, then the possibilities are endless no matter what it looks like!

Your secret weapon is God's will! Because it's what God promises to support.

And granted some might say,

"Well, Chris, if it's God's will for me to have a great marriage then why don't I? If it's God's will for me to be out of debt, then why am I not? If it's God's will for my children to be doing well and walking with the Lord, then why are they in such a mess?"

Answers to prayer are not automatic

Here's an important key that you must understand to have real success in prayer. Just because something is God's will does not mean it will automatically happen. Answers to prayer are not automatic. There are things we are responsible for. Things that we, not God, need to do in prayer so the answer will come.

Answered prayer is simply not automatic, even though it could be God's will for it to happen. For example, remember a guy named Samson? Samson was the strongest man in the Bible, set apart at birth for the work of the Lord.

But what happened to Samson? Samson basically self-destructed. My point is I'm sure that not everything God desired to accomplish in Samson's life was accomplished, again even though it was God's will to do so.

Is it God's will for everyone to come to faith in Jesus Christ, so they could be forgiven and know God as a Father? Yes, but does that always happen? No, some folks reject Christ, but that's not God's will.

My point is just because God desires to do something amazing in our life or change something in our lives that seems unchangeable does not mean it will automatically happen. Again, because answers to prayer are not automatic.

And there is a prayer that many folks pray and it's called, "The

Our Father.” It’s found in the book of Matthew and the first part goes like this:

In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

(Matthew 6:9-10 NKJV)

“Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

God has a will, and He would like to see it done on earth just like it is in heaven. But how does God accomplish that? Through prayer, specifically successful prayer. The truth is you may never have that good marriage, you may never get out of debt, your children may never go in the direction of the Lord, and your neighborhood may never calm down unless somebody starts *successfully* praying God’s will out of heaven!

However, what happens if we do? If we properly stand against those robbers, if we properly stand against those things that are clearly not God’s will, then change will happen! Because God will support us. Yes, He will back us up until His will is accomplished in our lives.

Your prayer needs support from God to move forward, and if you pray anything according to His will He promises to hear you and to grant you the request you’re asking!

But, the million-dollar question is: how do you know what God’s will is? How do we know that what we are asking is God’s will?

Discovering His will

That’s a great question and the good news is that He provides a way and a method to discover it. Let’s start with what the Bible says in Ephesians 5:17:

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

(Ephesians 5:17 NKJV)

That's more good news! God is not hiding His will from us, because He says for us not to be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

OK, the Lord is not hiding His will from us, but just how do we discover it?

Through the two primary ways which are:

- Reading God's word.
- And prayer.

Let's say, for example, you wanted to buy a new home but you were unsure whether it was the Lord's will because you now know that in order for your prayer to be successful – it must be supported! In other words, it must be God's will.

In regards to the home purchase; the Bible teaches us to acknowledge God in all our ways, and He, in turn, will direct our paths (See Proverbs, Chapter 3, Verses 5 through 6). The promise is if we seek God for direction, He will direct our path. This is one of my all time favorite things to pray and ask God, because I always see Him come through when asking Him for advice or direction.

Investigative prayer

Basically, that means you have to spend time in prayer and in His word to find out what God wants you to do. This takes time and it takes real effort. I like to call this investigative prayer – prayer that does an investigation.

Now there are some things we don't need to pray for in order to seek direction because they're clearly God's will. For example, a good marriage, stable finances, and such things as stopping a robber in your neighborhood. These types of issues are found in God's word, and studying the Bible gives us a better understanding of what God's will is in certain situations.

The bottom line is our prayer needs to be supported, and if we pray anything according to God's will – it will be supported! If

we're unsure, we seek God in prayer and study His word until God reveals His will. It's been my experience that God requires diligence when seeking to know His will. In other words, He doesn't always reveal His will with one single prayer. Be patient and diligent (keep praying about it), and remember that God's promise is to direct our path.

A few wise tips:

- Pray and ask God to reveal His will in the situation you are praying about. It could be a purchase, a relationship, a job offer or whatever. Pray and ask God very specifically to reveal His will ever so clearly. You can even remind Him of His promise to direct our path if we seek Him in all our ways. I've done that several times and believe He doesn't mind being reminded.
- Record your prayer request on paper and date it. I don't know what it is but every time I've done that it's powerful. God seems to like when we record our requests. Look at your request daily and then pray about it.
- Thank Him in advance for the answer! God loves thanksgiving, it's all through the Bible and it's powerful. Thank God in advance by telling Him you trust Him and know somehow somehow you're going to receive direction.
- When you receive your answer, because you will, put the answer right back into prayer! If God revealed to you to do something that looks impossible, then pray until it happens knowing, you have His support!

Finally, know that God will not lead you, ask you or have you do anything that is not His will. This can be checked and double checked alongside scripture. He won't lead you to do something outside of His will or His word. However, He will often challenge you to pray for things that look impossible.

OK, so let's remember God will support us when we pray according to His will. It's a key component to answered prayer, a must have. But, it doesn't mean our prayer will automatically be answered. It just means we now have a warrant for real change! It means we have a green light from God to go after and prayerfully pursue our desired change!

Now, let's discover how to see that change become a reality!

5

PROVIDING YOUR PRAYER THE PROPER FUEL

OK, let's take that prayer warrant and make an arrest! Of course, I don't mean a physical arrest. No, I mean arresting in prayer that thing in your life that flat out refuses to change. That thing that you and the Lord desire to see changed, but looks impossible! How are we going to do that? By providing our prayer with something critical, the proper fuel!

I remember when I went to the Dover International Speedway and saw my first live car race. I was up in the bleachers watching and had to go to the bathroom, so I walked down towards the fence that separates the spectators from the race track.

That's when I saw those cars up close flying towards me at speeds close to 200 mph. I've seen race cars on TV, but watching those cars roar by me live was crazy! Later I thought about how powerful those cars are, and that's when God pointed out something important to me. He revealed to me that as powerful and

as fast as those race cars are, they're not going anywhere without fuel.

It's true, you can take the most expensive and most powerful race car on the planet, drain the fuel tank, and it's not moving an inch! Prayer is sort of the same way. Prayer is the most powerful weapon ever given to mankind! Designed by God to win, but without the proper fuel, prayer is not moving an inch either.

And the proper fuel for prayer is faith. Faith is what our prayers need to survive, and without it, our prayers aren't going anywhere.

And so often when it comes to trying to change something in our lives we may often hear, "All things are possible!" We get all pumped up and then we set out to change the unchangeable! However, more often than not we get discouraged because nothing really changes.

Who are all things possible for

Yes, I agree all things are possible, but for whom? Just who are the people that all things are possible for?

Scripture says:

..with God all things are possible,

(Matthew 19:26 NIV)

Of course, all things are possible for God. He alone is the only one who could ever have a name plate on His desk that reads, "The Almighty!"

And in Jeremiah we read:

Ah, Lord God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and out stretched arm. There is nothing too hard for you.

(Jeremiah 32:17 NKJV)

Yes, God is the Almighty! He has made the heavens and the earth by His great power, clearly there's nothing too hard for Him.

He breathed the stars into existence, He formed the universe! It's crazy when you really think about it. For example, did you

know that we can place almost one million earths into our sun and yet our sun is one of the smallest stars in the entire universe? From there and all the way down to how our bodies were created demonstrates the power of an awesome God!

One million

Just take our eyes, for example. When we were in our mother's womb, one million nerve endings had to meet up with another one million nerve endings in order for our eyes to work! Our eyes have over two million working parts! It's amazing and things like that are nothing for God, because all things are possible for Him!

I remember when I started to discover that God could do anything. I didn't really learn who God was, nor how powerful prayer was until I started praying about everything. Applying prayer to my everyday real life is what allowed me to see God show up more often than not. Praying about everything is critical, because it teaches you so many things, including how nothing is too hard for the Lord.

I'll give you an example from the time I was cutting my lawn. It was one of those super-hot summer days and I decided to shut my little push mower off for a moment to take a quick break. That's when I looked around at all the grass I had to cut, and I was thinking, "I'm not even close to being done!" After that I just started talking to God saying:

"Lord, someday I'd like to have a riding lawnmower, and I'm tempted right now to go down to the store and put one on a credit card, but I know that's not what You want me to do."

I started the little mower up again and finished talking to the Lord by saying, "Lord, just remember me."

Out of the blue

I never breathed a word of that conversation to anyone and had pretty much forgotten about it. However, three months later

someone walked up to me out of the blue and asked, “Chris, can I talk to you for a moment?”

“Sure,” I said.

“The Lord has laid on my heart to give you my riding lawn-mower,” she said. And of course I was totally blown away and then I remembered my little talk with God in the backyard.

But, I still said, “I can’t take your mower; how much do you want for it?”

She explained to me that it was so strong on her heart that there was no way she could allow me to pay for it. Her very own son-in-law had already offered to buy it because she was moving to another home where she no longer needed the mower.

She continued to tell me how God had instructed her to give it to me for free. Another example of how all things are truly possible for God!

When is something not possible for God

But is there a time when that changes? Is there ever a time when something is not possible for the Lord?

Believe it or not, there is such a time. There was a time in the Bible when Jesus decided to return to His own home town. Up to that moment, we see that Jesus was performing miracles left and right.

That is until we come across Matthew 13:58:

And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.

(Matthew 13:58 NIV)

Jesus Christ, who is God wrapped in the flesh of a man, was restricted and hindered from doing miracles because of something called unbelief.

It’s amazing to think that the Lord Jesus Christ wouldn’t do something that He set out and desired to do all because of one word, unbelief. Nevertheless, it’s true, and to be honest thank God it is. Yes, thank God it’s in the Bible for all of us to see, so we can learn from it, and overcome this giant of unbelief.

You see we can be properly connected to God as a child, we can have our prayer warrant signed in heaven! We can be supported by God Himself. However, if we give in to doubt and fail to unlock this third key, then our prayers are dead in the water! Remember, answers to prayer are not automatic.

We have two conditions to meet; knowing God as a Father through Jesus Christ and praying in line with the Lord's will. But meeting those two conditions won't give you an automatic answer to prayer. You still have three keys to go and those three keys require you to have a part, a role.

Our faith plays a role. Yes, we have a responsibility, and in this third step it's to believe! And some might ask, "But, Chris, isn't it all on God? Is not the battle the Lord's? Can't we blame God for every unanswered prayer?"

We can blame God, and I've done that. But, the faster we understand and come to grips with the fact that our faith has something to do with an answer to prayer, then the faster we can overcome doubt and start to see amazing results!

Our role and responsibility is to believe

"But, Chris, isn't God full of love, mercy, and compassion? Won't He tend to overlook my doubt?" Yes, He is full of compassion and actually you can't get any more compassionate than God, He's full to the top with compassion. And the Bible states that at times Jesus was moved with compassion to do something and He did, such as feeding five thousand folks or the time when He healed a leper (See Matthew 9:36, Mark 1:41).

When that leper came to Him he asked, "Lord, if you are willing, You can make me clean." And what did Jesus say? "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy.

(Matthew 8:2-3 NIV)

The Bible also points to other times when Jesus literally cried and was clearly moved with compassion. My point is this, He

desired to help so many, but at times, could not due to unbelief, and that hasn't changed.

Your faith is the fuel that gets your prayers off the ground. It's not that God doesn't have any compassion, or that He doesn't desire to see change in our lives. He does!

But, I wonder if He cries even more when His desire is to help us, and can't when we refuse to believe. And if there was ever a time when Jesus would be tempted to override this rule, a time to kick it to the curb and act like this law of unbelief doesn't exist, a time when His compassion would trump our unbelief, then it would have to be when He ran across two blind men.

These two men who had never seen the light of day, never seen the color of a flower in full bloom, or a rainbow in the sky, were blind. If there was ever a time when Jesus would say something like, "It's OK, I know you doubt, but I'm going to heal you anyway!" I think it would have been then.

But that's not what happened. No, when Jesus came across these men He was still full of compassion, full of love. However, He asked them a question first before performing a miracle:

And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them,

"Do you believe that I am able to do this?"

They said to Him, "Yes, Lord.

(Matthew 9:28 NKJV)

Amazing, but true. Jesus first asked them if they believed before He helped them, before doing anything. And thankfully they answered yes.

And to drive this point even further this is what Jesus did:

Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you."

(Matthew 9:29 NKJV)

According to your faith let it be done to you? You mean not Jesus's faith? No, but according to our faith let it be do to us.

Look at what Jesus told a woman, who by the way didn't approach the Lord, nor ask Him face to face to be healed.

For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment,

I shall be made well.” But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, “Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And the woman was made well from that hour.

(Matthew 9:21-22 NKJV)

What made her well? Jesus said it was her faith. It’s the same response He had given the two blind men. It’s super critical to understand that our faith has a role, and don’t let anyone tell you any differently. You and I have a responsibility and it’s to believe.

Some folks are uncomfortable with this. We would rather not know we have the role to believe. We would rather just have it taken care of, especially when we are hurting and need God to move in a certain situation. But Jesus Christ is our standard, and He said according to our faith it would be done unto us.

The best thing to do

What’s the best thing we could do at this point? Come to grips with this truth and don’t deny it, don’t run from it either. No, work with it. You see we can actually begin the process of building our faith once we understand how important our faith is.

There is a story in the Bible about a woman Jesus had met at a well. During their conversation, Jesus asked her to go get her husband and come back. She was honest, and here’s how the conversation went:

“I have no husband,” she replied.

Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”

(John 4:17-18 NIV)

God can work with that

My point is God can work with that, He can work with us when we’re honest with Him. If we are struggling with doubt, then

rather hide it we should simply go to God with it and tell Him exactly how we feel. Then God can work with us and begin the process of building our faith.

It took me a long time to get honest with God about unbelief saying things like, “Yes Lord, I believe!” I can imagine God answering, “No, you don’t.” Now I’ll pray more about my prayer, meaning saying something like, “OK God, what do you want to do here? What’s Your will, Your desire, what do You want to see done in this situation, and what do You want me to do? How would You pray about this if You were me?”

And if God lays it upon my heart to believe and pray for a breakthrough, then I need to know that it’s my role to believe. I now know that I can be totally honest with the Lord and say something like, “Lord, I don’t believe. I’m struggling to believe this will happen. Help my unbelief.”

We need to give God something to work with. Look at how Jesus dealt with a man struggling to believe for the healing of his son:

So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.

Jesus asked the boy’s father, “How long has he been like this?”

“From childhood,” he answered. “It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.”

“If you can?” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.”

(Mark 9:20-23 NIV)

A very important and compassionate moment, and what does Jesus say? What is He teaching all of us in this situation? That according to Jesus Christ all things are possible for one type of person; to him who believes.

“If you can?” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.”

(Mark 9:23 NIV)

And what did the dad say?

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

(Mark 9:24 NIV)

The Lord can work with that and He did!

When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again."

(Mark 9:25 NIV)

Your role is to believe, God's role is to perform the impossible, and when we believe, all things are possible!

What if we thought about that truth every time we were about to pray?

"According to my faith it will be done to me." That's a sobering thought.

The key right now is not to worry about a lack of faith, but rather begin to take steps to build it up strong. And to begin building right where you are. If you're a housewife, a lawyer, a business owner, or wherever God has you right now, it's more than likely going to be your classroom.

Building your faith won't always be a walk in the park, Satan will do everything he can to keep us in doubt. He can't stop us from breathing a prayer, but he can discourage us from believing that prayer. Prayers with no faith have no fuel.

I've struggled to believe several times and for the rest of my days, as I face different challenges, will have to work on keeping my faith strong and so will you.

A Few Wise Tips:

- First, begin to believe the truth about doubt. That it's destructive and that it will absolutely prevent God from operating in your life. That it will hinder your prayers. Believe that truth first, and then use it as motivation to start building up your faith second.
- Buy your faith a gym membership; meaning begin to

pray about everything! Begin by trusting the Lord with small things, such as parking spots, homework, or pulling out in heavy traffic. Whatever it is, just make sure you begin to pray about all sorts of things and never allow your prayer life to take a day off! No vacation days for your prayer life!

- Remember your faith has a role, that it's not all on God. Your job is to believe; His job is to perform the miracle! Just before you are about to pray about something you could say, "My faith has a role." That's a great reminder of how important your faith is.
- Begin to read your Bible daily. And this is big, reading your Bible daily is like taking a vitamin that will build your faith. "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17 NKJV). Reading the Bible daily will build your faith period. The key is to make it a priority. Start by finding a Bible that's easy for you to understand. I use three main translations, the New King James Version, the New International Version, and the New Living Translation. It's important to find one that works best for you. Pray and ask God to lead you to the one that's best for you.
- And finally, and most importantly step six. Doing exactly what Abraham did! Abraham was told that he was going to have a baby through his wife Sarah. Only problem was the brother was about a hundred years old! And so was his wife, and the Bible basically says her womb was as good as dead. Meaning there was no possible way this was going to happen without God. And here's a tiny secret recorded in the Bible that reveals what Abraham did to keep his faith strong:

And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in

faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

(Romans 4:19-21 NKJV)

Consider not

Did you catch what Abraham did?

“... he did not consider...”

You fuel your prayer by believing! And you believe by considering not! If you want to keep your faith strong, then learn how to only consider what God has promised. And what did He promise us that’s so huge? That if we pray anything according to His will, He hears us (1 John 5:14). And that’s the only thing we need to consider!

You don’t consider what you hear, see, taste, or smell. Abraham didn’t consider his body which was as good as dead. He didn’t deny that fact either. He knew full well that his body was almost dead at a hundred years old. He knew it was true, and he knew it was a fact. It’s just that he didn’t consider it.

Meaning, you may have something you’re believing God for right now, let’s say you just got fired from your job. That’s a fact, and not only were you fired but your former boss said you’ll never work in that type of business again as long as he has anything to do with it.

Now it’s time to pray and ask God to make a way for a new job, to make a way for you to pay your bills. What are you supposed to consider at this point? The fact you got fired? Because that’s a fact, right?

No, you’re not supposed to consider those things! Instead you switch it up and consider what God’s will is. You consider your prayer warrant, because that’s what God backs up!

Does the Lord want you to have a job if you need one? Yes. And He said if you pray anything according to His will He hears you. That’s what you need to consider! Do you see the difference? God is not asking us to believe when it looks possible. He’s asking us to believe no matter what it looks like, and despite the odds!

Sure, it's going to take some work. Anything worthwhile takes work. Our faith has a role, and it would be very wise and beneficial to prepare our faith for that role. Get started today by being honest with God, taking your faith to the gym, and *considering not!*

Now let's learn how to provide our prayers with something just as important: protection!

6

PROVIDING YOUR PRAYER THE PROPER PROTECTION

We're doing well so far! Let's review what we have put in place. We've provided our prayer with the proper connection, check! We've provided our prayer with the proper support, check! And we just provided our prayer with the proper fuel, check! Now, we need to provide our prayer with the proper protection.

Do I mean that we have to protect our prayers? Yes, and that'll keep them out of the service department. Let me explain. One time I was staying at a theme park with my wife and my kids, and we were waiting for one of the buses that take you to all the different parts of the park. We had been waiting for a little bit, but now I started to see a bus coming and was thinking, "Yes, that's our bus!"

And it went flying right on by us with a sign flashing at the

top of the windshield, “Out of service.” Maybe the brakes were going bad or it needed some other maintenance. I don’t know for sure, but I do know that if we’re not careful our prayer lives can flash that sign to heaven saying, “Out of service.” And, hopefully, it won’t last too long.

Here’s what Psalm 66:18 says:

If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear.

(Psalm 66:18 NKJV)

Iniquity means sin, and the verse says that if I regard, or hide, sin in my heart the Lord will not hear. Isn’t that terrible? The Lord will not hear, and there are probably millions of people on the earth today that probably pray and may have some things in their heart they need to clean up first. But the Lord is saying, “I’m not hearing you.”

A prayer life that packs a punch

If you desire a prayer life that packs a punch, you’ll have to learn how to protect it. You can start by understanding that there are two things that don’t make it in this world: dogs that chase cars and prayer lives that live in disobedience.

If you’re a dog and you’re in the business of chasing cars, then statistically things don’t always work out for the best. And neither do prayer lives that live in disobedience. They become shut down, stagnate and robbed of power. It’s the word of the Lord, and it’s crippling.

Now why would God do that? Is it because He doesn’t love us?

No, God is the reason there is love because He *is* Love. The Bible says God is Love in 1 John, not that He knows about love, but that at His very core *God is Love*. He’ll never stop loving you, not even for a second.

This may shock you

So then why does God want us to listen to Him? Why would He

want anyone to obey Him? The answer may shock you so get ready:

Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!

(Deuteronomy 5:29 NKJV)

Crazy, right? God wants us to obey Him, so that it might go well with us!

Sometimes my daughter will do a little baking or something to earn a few dollars, and I'll often tell her not to spend what she earns all in one place. And the reason I would tell her that is because I love her and because I want what's best for my daughter.

And the decisions my daughter makes for the rest of her life can either grieve my heart or bring pleasure to it. Now if I didn't love my daughter, she would have no effect on my heart because I could care less.

Because God is Love and loves you deeply, you have the ability to affect His heart. God is a father with a heart in His chest that beats for you and me. He's not barking out orders like a Drill Sergeant commanding us to do things just because he said so. If your prayer life ever gets temporarily placed out of service, it's all because of love and not a lack of it.

Have you ever seen a football player mouthing off at the football coach on the sideline? What happens? The player is benched until he's ready to listen; then the coach puts him back in the game.

It's no different with the Lord, except that God deals with us with Love in His heart rather than anger. Something more like, "When you're ready to listen, I'll put your prayer life back in the game."

Prayer is what gives Satan a bad day, so it's no wonder he hates prayer. We're no match for him physically, but prayerfully we can stop, harass, and shut him down all day long. He's fully aware of that fact and over the years has developed a black belt in shutting down prayer lives.

And his favorite way of doing that is the Number One prayer killer out there; it's called non-forgiveness. Jesus taught some of the most powerful principles ever recorded in the Bible about prayer, which are found in the book of Mark. He taught about speaking to a mountain and having it removed and cast into the sea (See Mark 11:22-24).

However, after saying all that stuff about moving mountains, He also went on to say this in the very next verse:

And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.

(Mark 11:25 NKJV)

"And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone..." Did you catch what Jesus said? Not whenever you stand thinking, shopping, or something else. No, He said when you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive them so that you may be forgiven. Yes, the number one prayer killer is non-forgiveness in our hearts.

It could be as simple as being offended. Maybe someone didn't shake your hand today or was rude to you. Here's what Satan would love to do, he'd love to take that little offense in your heart and run with it so you'll harbor non-forgiveness towards someone. And here's the scary thing; he'll do it without you even knowing it, successfully sneaking it under the radar and before you know it your prayer life is shut down or hindered.

"If you have anything against anyone, forgive them..."

Recipe for disaster

One time I came home from work during the time my wife and I were putting an addition on our home, and also getting ready for our second child, and my wife was sitting in the backyard (I have to say that putting an addition on our home and having a baby at the same time is almost a recipe for disaster). I walked past her without even saying anything to her, plus I gave her a rather rude look. And she looked at me rather rudely too.

Now, when walking into my kitchen I started saying to myself, “Oh, yeah, I know what I’m doing. I know better than God!” Sarcastically, of course. I was basically saying to myself, “What am I doing? Do I know better than God?” I just disrespected my wife, and I live and die by my prayer life.

And I know what the Bible says in 1 Peter 3:7 where it talks about how, if a man doesn’t treat his wife right, his prayers will be hindered. Listen, I don’t know about you, but I need my prayer life to survive; I can barely spell! I need to make it in this world through prayer and I don’t have time to have my prayer life hindered!

I’ve been in other situations before that have been a little icky, situations where I had to go to someone and say, “Hey, I noticed there is something a little different, something that’s not right. And If I’ve offended you in anyway, please forgive me.”

That’s a hard thing to do. Believe me, I know. And it takes a mature Christian to do it. However, it’s worth it, especially once you understand how powerful prayer really is, and I want to keep my prayer life strong. That day, by the kitchen sink, I was thinking, “What in the world am I doing?” I got on my knees right by the sink and asked God to forgive me, “Lord, forgive me for just treating my wife like that. Help me, Father, to go out there and make it right.”

Then I went outside and said to my wife (and sometimes this is the hard part), “Hun, I’m sorry.” She said she was sorry. We made it right and got it right with God and my prayer life now has gone from out of service to in service, ready to kick butt and take names!

Hot potato

So what can we do to protect our prayer lives? For starters we can use the hot potato method. Have you ever held a hot potato in your hand? It’s hot, right? And we tend to drop it quickly! Listen, when you know you’re not right with the Lord, quickly drop

it like a hot potato! And that'll keep your prayer life vibrant and strong.

Powerful prayer lives are not built on perfect lives. You're not going to live a perfect life because nobody on the earth, besides Jesus Christ, is going to be perfect. We are all going to sin, all of us are going to make mistakes from time to time, and if you even try to live a perfect life it's probably going to drain you.

However, if you rely on God, His mercy, and the hot potato method, then the Bible says this:

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

(1 John 1:9 NKJV)

Have you've ever confessed your sin to God and felt God hasn't forgiven you? I have, that is until I understood just how powerful that verse really is. 1 John 1:9 points out two very important attributes about God that we need to know. One is that God is *faithful*; meaning He'll keep His promise; He'll keep His end of the bargain. In other words, He'll do what He says He'll do. God says, when we confess our sins to Him, He will faithfully forgive us. He'll do it!

Secondly, He is *just*; meaning He doesn't just sweep our sin under the rug; He doesn't just look the other way at our sin. No, He puts the punishment upon the back of Jesus Christ. He's a just God who does what's right all the time.

Remember the candy theft story? How the child's dad comes along and says, "I know my son stole from you, and I know the law requires and allows you to whip him." Then the dad takes off his shirt, turns his back towards the store owner, and kneels down to take the beating his son deserves. Nobody forced the dad to do that, right? No, he laid his own back bare so the candy store owner could whip his back instead of his son's.

Well, when we confess our sin to God He promises to forgive us because He is both *faithful* and *just*. He took care of our sin by sending Jesus Christ to lay His life down for us. Nobody forced Him. He did it so we wouldn't have to pay for our own sin. He took the beating that we deserve.

Anytime you ever feel God won't forgive, try and remember those two words, *faithful* and *just*. He crucified someone who never sinned to pay for our sin. God is basically saying, "If you confess your sins to me, I promise you, I PROMISE you that I will forgive you. And not only will I forgive you but I will cleanse you from ALL unrighteousness."

Chris, Chris

I remember when I would make a mistake and call a friend more knowledgeable in the Lord than I, and I would say, "Man, I blew it today. I sinned against the Lord, and I'm done now!" I had this thing where I felt God hadn't forgiven me. Thankfully, I had a great friend who would remind me by saying, "Chris, Chris! 1 John 1:9 Chris! If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us!"

Yes, God will forgive us if we confess our sins to Him. But, what if you go to someone else? What if you try to go and get right with someone and they basically kick you to the curb? You're trying to do right and please the Lord, but they don't want anything to do with you trying to make it right.

Here's the answer:

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

(Romans 12:18 NIV)

If your heart was right and you did it in an effort to please the Lord, then don't worry about it anymore. The verse says, "...as far as it depends on you..." meaning we are to do our part and if we did what God wanted us to do, then we're good to go with Him. We can't control what others do, only what we do. We only have one audience to please, and that's the Lord. If we do these things, our prayer life is going to be different; it's going to be powerful.

Some folks say that my prayer life is different all the time, that I have a gift because I get results. First of all, it's not a gift, it's about doing what God says. That's really the secret sauce. And I don't always do that. I mean how do you think I know that verse

so well? Because I've made so many mistakes! Remember, a powerful prayer life is not about perfection.

However, my advice to you is this: If you want a prayer life that really is different, that's powerful, and that gets results, then don't hold on to your sin. Instead, learn to treat your sin like a hot potato and confess it to God. Of course, this may be new to you, but work on getting into the habit of dropping it quickly. Don't worry about who's wrong or who's right, what he said or she said; worry about what God says and then try your best to do it. You won't always hit the mark, but if you strive to please the Lord then your prayer life is going to be different!

How important is this to God? Just look at what it says in Matthew about even bringing a gift to the altar:

Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

(Matthew 5:23-24 NKJV)

Even if you were to bring a million dollars to God and you know that something is not quite right, God would rather we put that gift down and go get it right, and then come back and bring our gift to Him. The Lord doesn't really need our gifts to run the kingdom of heaven. He would rather have our hearts. He would rather have us listen to Him so it will go well with us!

The faint factor

Now, let's talk about the single most powerful thing you could ever do to protect your prayer life: strive to please God! A life that's pleasing to the Lord is not a perfect life, but it's a powerful life. And there's a reason for that.

When you strive to please the Lord you are leaving something behind for all to see, evidence. I've worked with evidence most of my state police career and if there is one thing I know it's this: evidence always sets the record straight! It always tells the truth despite what anyone else may say.

When you choose to please God you are presenting some powerful evidence that sends a clear message to heaven. A message that says that you love the Lord.

Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.”

(John 14:23-24 NIV)

God has a heart in His chest and longs to be loved just like any other parent. He’s not looking for folks who simply profess to love Him. No, He’s looking for folks who demonstrate it. How do we demonstrate we love the Lord? By making choices and, yes, sometimes tough choices, all for one reason: because you love the Lord.

Just imagine the Lord up in heaven watching you do something all for one reason, because you love Him. It could be anything, as simple as cleaning a window. Why? Because, it’s not about what you’re doing, it’s why you’re doing it.

For example, let’s say you set out to bake a cake for God, and it turned out to be the worst cake on the planet, a total flop. However, if your motive was to bake that cake because you love the Lord, then guess what? It just became the most powerful cake on the planet, regardless of how it tastes! When the Lord knows you love Him, everything changes, including your prayer life!

Last night I was painting a bedroom in our home. It was getting late, and I was getting tired. I was just ready to quit for the night and went to get something. I came back into the room and there was a note from my daughter that read, “I love you! Don’t give up!” She put that note right on top of a plate of food she made and placed it near my tools.

I couldn’t believe my eyes; it’s not every day a parent gets a note like that from their pre-teen daughter! I was so encouraged that I kept on painting! When you love the Lord you’ll find a way to do things that are pleasing in His sight. Each and every time

you'll be sending Him a note that says, "You're so special to me and I love you!"

That's what I call *the faint factor*, because it has the power to touch God's heart! Let's say you were a parent who came home after a long day of work. You open your front door and you're greeted by one of your children who says, "Hi dad, I'm glad you're home! By the way how was work today? Oh, and I made you your favorite meal. Here, sit down and let me massage your feet."

After you faint, hit the floor and check your child's temperature, that same child goes on to say, "Oh, and the reason I'm doing this today is simply because I love you! Besides, I am starting to realize that everything you do is for my good. Thank you, Dad."

Yes, you just might faint again!

When you do things for God out of the motive of love and thanksgiving you're going to have a prayer life that is different!

And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

(1 John 3:22 NKJV)

Pleasing in His sight! That verse shows us that there is a direct connection between pleasing God and power in prayer. Of course, you may not have everything you ask for because it has to line up with God's will. But you can bet your prayers will certainly make a difference, especially when God knows why the reason you're starting to do things is out of love and respect for Him!

OK, so we know pleasing God is powerful, and we know that won't always be the case because we're human and we make mistakes. However, is there something we can do that will help us start to live a life that tends to please the Lord more often than not? Yes, yes we can!

A Few Wise Tips:

First, we can live a life more pleasing to the Lord if we practice thanksgiving. Yes, I know we celebrate it once a year. But, if you study the scriptures you'll see that thanking the Lord is powerful and pleasing in His sight.

It's not always going to be easy though. There are lots of things that arise in our day that try and deter us from being thankful people. That's why it takes trust and wisdom to thank the Lord:

give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

(1 Thessalonians 5:18 NIV)

Thanking God daily is the key. Not only when we feel like it or when we feel everything is going our way, but we should thank Him no matter what. Besides, it's how we are to approach the Lord in prayer:

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,

And into His courts with praise.

Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.

Psalms 100:4 (NKJV)

As a matter of fact, it's been recorded in the Bible that some battles were fought and won with mere thanksgiving alone. Yes, there were times when God instructed the Nation of Israel not to fight, but to praise instead and then to watch and see what the Lord will do! And, of course, He showed up and defeated their enemies while they praised the Lord! Granted, it's not always easy, but it's always powerful!

Secondly, we need to think upon God's word day and night. Now, why would that be so powerful? Because it renews our mind to the mind of Christ, which helps us obey the word of God more often than not.

You see, we can struggle in obeying the Lord even though we know it's the right thing to do. And we can fail because we don't have enough power to do it all on our own. However, the secret is to renew our minds to the mind of Christ and then obedience becomes more and more automatic.

Just listen to what God told Joshua after Moses had passed on:

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

(Joshua 1:8 NKJV)

Notice the progression:

Meditate, which means to think about a verse or set of verses through the day. This is different from merely memorizing verses. This is thinking about what it means, how to apply it, and so on.

Meditate on it day and night, so that you may resolve to do all that is written in it. First you think about the word, so your mind gets renewed, and then you can obey it. Then what? The latter part of the verse says, “For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”

Why? Because *doing* the word and not just hearing it is what pleases the Lord, when it’s done from the motive of love and thanksgiving. (James 1:25)

Practice the hot potato method, thanksgiving and thinking upon His word and you’ll develop a lifestyle that attracts the favor of God! Remember you won’t always arrive, but strive and you’ll have a prayer life that gets results!

Here’s a little prayer that King David prayed and will help us stay on track:

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

(Psalm 139:23-24 KJV)

It’s kind of like getting an oil change for your car, only this is an oil change for your heart. Asking God to search your heart on a daily basis will help you develop a life that’s pleasing to God and that equals some real power in prayer!

After praying that prayer, if the Lord happens to reveal anything, simply confess it and move on believing you’re forgiven for those two main reasons we talked about. Because God is both faithful and just!

Now, let’s move on to the next chapter and learn how to provide your prayer with the ability to overcome anything!

7

PROVIDING YOUR PRAYER THE PROPER ABILITY TO OVERCOME

Well, you've come to your final step: providing your prayer with the ability to overcome! You're well on your way to having a prayer life that truly gets results! Let's get started with one of my favorite places to visit, Ocean City, N.J., which has been voted one of the best places to vacation with your family, and it's a beautiful place. However, if you have ever tried to get a parking spot there in the middle of the summer, you know sometimes it can be a tough task.

One day, I asked my oldest daughter, Shelby, to pray for a parking spot as we were headed into the battlefield of parking spots. As we were going over the bridge, she prayed, we said amen. Now, we were looking and looking, but there were cars everywhere! Soon, though, there it was, our parking spot! A free park-

ing spot, one block from the beach, with a tree, and the only tree I saw on the whole street, providing shade over our entire vehicle! Yes, God is good to those who depend on Him!

I jumped out of the car and took a picture with my phone and reminded my family of how God just showed up in an answer to prayer and told them to look at all the other cars baking in the sun!

TV news crew

Another time I remember walking into the NJ State Police Barracks reporting for work when the sergeant on duty asked me, “Hey, would you mind being interviewed today by a local TV news crew?”

“No thanks, Sir,” I said and then rushed right out on patrol. Moments later, as I was parked between the east and west bound lanes, I noticed a news crew had pulled in. Before I knew what was going on, a news reporter approached me with a microphone and a cameraman. He was filming, and all I heard was, “Your supervisor gave us permission to interview you.”

I was thinking, “Great!” as I pictured them laughing back at the barracks.

So they interviewed me about the speed limit going up to sixty-five mph and wanted my thoughts on it. Not only that, but the reporter threw in a few questions about what I would do if I stopped a pregnant lady for speeding, as well as some other questions that I wasn’t prepared for.

Then, just as fast as they jumped out of that van, they were gone! So then I’m sitting there thinking, “What just happened? I just made a fool out of myself; that’s what happened!”

I started worrying; then, I started praying! “Lord, do something to that video! Please don’t let it be aired!” I took off west bound after that news van. There it was parked in the service area with it’s big old antenna sticking out of the roof getting ready to shoot that video over to the news room.

I quickly ran up to the van and banged on the side door; it opened up, and I was greeted by a man wearing headphones.

“Are you going to air that interview?”

“No, something happened to the sound,” he said.

I tried to look calm on the outside, but inside I’m thinking, “Yes!”

I love instant answers to prayer like that and most people do, but we don’t always get instant answers to prayer. Sure if we’re in the habit of praying about everything we’re going to see more answers to prayer than the average bear.

Anything but instant

However, there are times when we may wonder if our prayers are being heard; times when an answer to prayer is anything but instant. And there are two primary reasons for that.

One reason is God’s timing. There’s an old saying, “God’s never late, but right on time.” It may look like He’s late to us, but His timing is perfect. It might have looked like God was going to be late with Daniel in the lion’s den. Maybe you’ve read the story about how a man named Daniel was thrown into a den of lions because he refused to stop praying to his God.

If you did read it you know that God was right on time when He delivered Daniel from the mouths of those lions. Yes, God’s timing is a factor, and when we’re praying for something that we believe is the Lord’s will, but not seeing any results, the reason could be timing.

The Lord may be lining up things, moving things around and getting it all in place so when it’s finally ready it will be perfect and blessed. Granted, waiting can be tough. That’s when we have to trust that God knows what He’s doing and that He’s watching out for our best interests.

When my wife and I prayed about having children, we prayed and waited. And then we prayed and waited some more, and then some more! However, when God’s timing was ready He blessed

us with two beautiful girls with the exact same birthdays, four years apart to the day!

Only God could do that! And yes, it was hard at times. We wondered at times if God really knew what He was doing and, of course, He came through big time!

Resistance

The second reason our prayers may be delayed is from resistance. Did you know our prayers are resisted? You can pray for a marriage to be blessed (and that's God's will by the way) but, I can tell you no matter what it is, if it's God's will for something to happen or to be blessed, then Satan is always going to have the opposite desire, no matter what it is.

Our prayers are resisted, and how do we know that for sure? Let's check out a passage in the book of Daniel that'll help shed some light:

Then he said, "Don't be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day you began to pray for understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer."

(Daniel 10:12 NLT)

Ok, so here's Daniel. He starts to pray and the Bible says (and this is important), on the very first day his request had been heard in heaven. And the angel that was speaking to Daniel went on to say that he had come in an answer to Daniel's prayer.

But, as you'll soon see, that didn't mean that he saw an answer to prayer nor that the angel was there on the first day Daniel prayed. Again Daniel was heard on the first day he prayed, but look at what the angel tells Daniel next:

But for twenty-one days the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia blocked my way. Then Michael, one of the archangels, came to help me, and I left him there with the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia.

(Daniel 10:13 NLT)

For twenty-one days the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia,

otherwise known as the devil, blocked an angel from getting to Daniel with an answer to prayer. And Michael, one of the archangels, had to come and set the first angel free.

Obviously, there is stuff going on behind the scenes that we can't see, and some of it has to do with our prayers being resisted. The main goal of resistance is to cause us to give up and throw in the towel on our prayers.

How many folks do you think are out there today that started out praying for something that was clearly God's will and gave up because of resistance? I know for a fact I have.

Persistence overcomes resistance

So, what's the antidote? Persistence! Persistence overcomes resistance! One of the most powerful things God has ever given us is persistence. And guess who often taught about persistence when He taught about prayer? Jesus Christ. Yes, Jesus often taught on the principle of persistence.

One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up.

(Luke 18:1 NLT)

Jesus said for us to pray and never give up. Why? Because He knows our prayers are going to be resisted. If there was anybody who walked this earth and knew something about resistance, it was Jesus. Satan did not want Jesus to go to that cross for us.

Jesus teaching about persistence went on to say:

"There was a judge in a certain city," he said, "who neither feared God nor cared about people. A widow of that city came to him repeatedly, saying, 'Give me justice in this dispute with my enemy.' The judge ignored her for a while, but finally he said to himself, 'I don't fear God or care about people, but this woman is driving me crazy. I'm going to see that she gets justice, because she is wearing me out with her constant requests!'"

Then the Lord said, "Learn a lesson from this unjust judge. Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don't you think

God will surely give justice to his chosen people who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will grant justice to them quickly! But when the Son of Man returns, how many will he find on the earth who have faith?"

(Luke 18:2-8 NLT)

One of the most powerful things you'll receive from this little book is the principle of persistence, crying out to God day and night to overcome resistance. Jesus taught us persistence works; that it's powerful and that God responds to it quickly.

How many do you know

So why don't we see the type of breakthrough Jesus is talking about? Well, just ask yourself how many people do you personally know that cry out to God day and night?

How many people are in your home who cry out to God day and night? How many people are living on your street who cry out to God day and night? How many people are in your neighborhood, in your church, or in your entire town who cry out to God day and night?

I'll bet you, if you know any at all, you could count them on one hand. Crying out to God day and night is one of the hardest principles to put into practice and maintain. But, crying out to God day and night is also one of the most powerful things you'll ever do!

It sort of reminds me of a SWAT team, which is usually comprised of laser-focused individuals who flat out refuse to give up.

As a matter of fact, one time I was assigned to a unit that was tasked with executing fifty search warrants all across the State of New Jersey in about a three-week time frame, a major sting operation. I have executed several search warrants during my career as a trooper, and there are those times when SWAT teams approach doors with a warrant and the door won't open.

Sometimes when you pray, the door is not going to open either, and that's when you have to apply persistence to it. Could

you just imagine one of those troopers assigned to hit the door with the battering ram; after hitting it a few times, he turns around to his or her supervisor and says, “Hey Sarge, the door won’t open, do you want me to quit?”

What do you think the Sarge would say? Listen, we might not really want to hear what the Sarge would say! But, you can be sure the Sarge would say something like, “Hit that door, Troop!”

So, do you think you should ask, “Should I quit praying for my marriage, Lord? Should I quit praying for my daughter, Lord? Should I quit praying for You to get me a job, Lord?”

Should I quit praying

What do you think the Lord is going to say? We already know what He’s going to say, because He’s already said it! “Men ought to always pray and never give up” (See Luke 18:1). In other words hit that door again, Troop!

God wants and deeply desires us to accomplish things through prayer. Sometimes we need to turn around and ask Him, “Lord, prayer doesn’t seem like it’s working right now, do You want me to give up?”

“No, I want you to go through that door!”

If you’ve given your life to Jesus Christ then go into those Judge’s chambers and approach the Lord not just as your God, but as your Father! And right there in God’s chambers is where you’ll get your prayer warrant signed; something that is God’s will.

And then you fuel your prayer by believing and refusing to consider anything else! Then what? Then you protect your prayer life. If you make a mistake, you simply confess it to God and repent. You believe what 1 John 1:9 promises, and then you’re right back on track with a prayer life that’s ready to kick butt and take names!

Now, you face that door of opposition, that door that’s standing between you and your miracle, you and your marriage, you and your finances, you and your family, you and your neigh-

borhood! This is where your attitude begins to say, “I’ve had enough!”

And then you begin to cry out day and night, like I did with the murder investigation. You begin applying that powerful principle of persistence to that door that seems locked! And don’t feel bad if at times you need to stare at that door and ask, “Lord! Do You want me to quit?”

But, if you know the Lord doesn’t want you to quit then you continue to cry out and soon you’ll go through that door in prayer and declare to your opposition that in the name of Jesus Christ, you’re under arrest! And you’ll get your breakthrough, you’ll see your change!

That’s how you apply these five keys to something that seems unchangeable! Yes, persistence will always overcome resistance! And that’s why we should always pray and never give up!

The steps to successful prayer:

1. **Provide your prayer the proper connection.** *Coming to know God as your Father through Jesus Christ His Son.*
2. **Provide your prayer the proper support.** *Pray God’s will after seeking, investigating and asking exactly what it is.*
3. **Provide your prayer the proper fuel.** *Understand answered prayer is not automatic, you have a role and in this step it’s to believe.*
4. **Provide your prayer the proper protection.** *Learn to drop your sin like a hot potato. Confess your sin, repent and then believe God when He says He’ll forgive you. That’s how you protect your prayers.*
5. **Provide your prayer the proper ability to overcome.** *Don’t give in and don’t you dare give up by throwing in the towel! Apply persistence to overcome resistance!*

Now, let’s move on to our final chapter and learn how to apply it.

PART III

Getting started!

8

THE WALK THROUGH

Well, hopefully you're starting to discover that worrying less is simply a bi-product of praying more, and that's exactly how we begin to see God showing up in our lives more often than not. Yes, the secret sauce to seeing God show up in your life is dependence upon Him for everything. Granted, it's not natural, but it's always powerful because God *promises* to be good towards those who depend on Him.

And promises from God are different, because He never breaks any of them:

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

(Numbers 23:19 King James Version)

Has He spoken and will not make it good? The answer is *no*, God will always make good on whatever He has spoken or promised. Therefore, if you have a promise from God, you really

have something that's unbreakable and that's great news when God becomes your Father!

OK, so let's take a little walk through and see just how do we put this all together. Well, after we've come to know God as our Father through Jesus Christ, we begin to depend on Him as a Father through the means of prayer. We actually up our game by taking prayer more serious than we have in the past, by simply starting to pray about everything.

And as you already know, God is not bothered in the least bit when we do. Actually He's more bothered when we don't.

Yes, we go throughout our day by praying about all sorts of cool things, like golf swings, milkshakes, parking spots and so on. Not only will this build that all important track record with God, but it'll build a very special bond between us and Him. A bond, by the way, that we can't get anywhere else except through a lifestyle that prays about everything. Yes, we start worrying less by praying more!

Think of it like this: picture yourself learning how to drive a race car around a track. It'll take practice, it'll take some time, but after a few times around you'll get more comfortable and you'll learn more and more about you as a driver and your car. Before you know it you're zipping around that track!

That's what we intend to do now by taking our new prayer life around the track a few times. We start slow and move faster as we get more comfortable talking with God. And after some time, we begin to learn some neat things about ourselves, God, and prayer. Along the way, we even start to collect our very own cool stories about God showing up in our personal lives in answers to our prayers! And I have to tell you, after that happens, you'll probably never look back!

You see there is a time when we move into more of a power stance in prayer. Of course, we continue our powerful habit of praying about everything everyday of our lives, even till our last day on earth. However, now we begin to see God really does answer prayer, we have some neat stories to fall back on and now we're stronger than when we first started.

Now, we begin to look around and see some things that we would love to see changed. However, prior to this new prayer life, everything we've tried before hasn't really worked. These are things that are clearly God's will, yet seem to have no hope because they refuse to change.

Take saving money as an example. No matter what we've tried in the past with saving money, it has seemed to fail. But, let's try it again. Only this time we are going to apply those five powerful prayer keys that we've just learned to the problem.

Of course, this could be any prayer request, but for the sake of this exercise we're going to stick with the money saving example. Now, let's start by writing down and dating our money saving prayer request. We already know God is pleased with this request because He's pleased when we depend on Him. So at the top we have our request with the date. It could say something like:

"Lord, please help me to save money. How do I do it, Lord? Everything I've tried hasn't worked. Father thank you in advance for helping me. In Jesus name, amen."

That's a great start from the heart! You've just told God how you feel about your problem, asked Him to help you with it, asked Him for advice about it and powerfully thanked Him in advance by faith! That's good stuff, now under the request try to write the following questions:

Question one, "Am I properly connected?" Write *yes* or, if you're not sure, write *I'm not sure*.

If not go back and prayerfully read the chapter on how to provide your prayer with the proper connection, meaning ask God to speak directly to your heart while reading it. Ask Him questions and pray your way through that chapter. It's absolutely critical that you're connected properly if you desire a prayer life that is able to get results.

Question two, "Am I praying God's will?" Write *yes* or again, if you're not sure, write *I'm not sure*.

And if you said you're not sure, that's OK. I've prayed many times and wasn't exactly sure what the Lord's will was. However, do you remember what to do when that happens? Remember

to pray that investigative type prayer, right? Ask God to reveal His will to you and then stay on that path everyday like a tiger until God's will is revealed. Remember God has no desire to hide His will from us (See Ephesians 5:17). However, as I said before it's been my experience that God requires diligence in this area. Therefore, it's critical to pursue discovering His will with passion, humility and persistence.

Here is an example you could use, *"Lord, what is Your will in this area of my life? If You were me, how would You pray about this? What do You want me to learn from this and what do You want to see done here? Father, I am relying on You to show me what to do. Thank You Lord, in Jesus name, amen."*

The bottom line is if you are praying to know God's will in any given situation, then you have a promise, which is sort of an insurance policy that will protect and guide you (See Proverbs 3:5-6).

Now, let's continue with this example of saving money. Is it or is it not God's will for us to save money? Well, if we search the scriptures we can see that it is in fact His will. For example, one verse says:

***There is desirable treasure,
And oil in the dwelling of the wise,
But a foolish man squanders it.
(Proverbs 21:20 NKJV)***

Through this verse the Lord is letting us know that it's foolish not to save and to spend all we have. That's actually great news because that means when we pray about saving money, God will support us! Are you starting to see how this works? God will back you up when you start to pray about saving money because of 1 John 5:14, the promise of God hearing us when we pray anything according to His will.

Now, remember that doesn't mean it will automatically happen, because answers to prayer are not automatic. Nor does it mean in this example that God is going to make you a millionaire. However, it does mean that God will support and back you up so you can start to save money. Yes, you now have a warrant to save

money! Whoever thought you could get a warrant to save money; pretty cool, right?

OK, let's continue to walk through this prayer plan to save money by asking this **third question**, which we'll need to write down. "Am I believing?" Again write *yes* or *no*.

If not, what are we to do? Remember we can ask God to help us overcome any doubt. Doubt is destructive and needs to be dealt with rather quickly. You move through this step by asking the Lord to help you believe and overcome any unbelief. The Lord will surely help you and in time you'll be able to write *yes* after that important third question.

The fourth question is, "Am I protecting my prayer?" Write *yes* or *no*.

If you're not sure, do you remember what to do? Simply pray asking the Lord to do an inspection of our hearts, meaning we want to know if there anything that we're doing to hinder our prayer request. God is love, and what's so amazing about Him is that He's unlike anyone you'll ever meet. When He points out something, He'll always do so ever so kindly, like a gentleman. Remember the Lord desires that it goes well with you (Deuteronomy 5:29).

In this example, let's say we've prayed and God pointed out that we're using a credit card too much or spending too much on lunch (by the way I've done both). In a real prayer scenario, I don't know what it could be for you, it's different for everybody, but the Lord knows. However, I do know that because you're asking Him about it, He'll help you every step of the way. Basically, we need to get into a position where we are not working against the Lord, but cooperating with Him instead.

And I've done that as well, worked against the Lord. As a matter of fact, I remember one time I saw a guy running along the side of the road with no shirt on. This brother was ripped and he was fit! As I drove by I said to the Lord, "Lord, someday you're going to help me look that way!" And as I kept driving I heard in my heart, "Obedience is going to help you look that way!"

Now, I really didn't want to hear that, but it's what I needed to

hear because I wasn't cooperating with the Lord at that time. I was eating stuff I shouldn't have been and not really working out too often, so I knew what He meant.

Just remember to pray and receive that oil change we talked about. However, word of caution here, don't always expect something to be wrong or out of place. As a matter of fact most of the time there will be nothing hindering your prayer.

Now, if the Lord points something out what are we to do? We simply square it all away by using that wonderful hot potato method we've talked about (1 John 1:9). And we also believe that God will never break a promise, especially this one:

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

(Hebrews 8:12 KJV)

After we've repented and confessed our hindrance to God, He promises to remember it no more! Even the best of friends might bring up something from our past, that's why you're always in good company when you're with your Heavenly Father!

OK, on to our final question to write down, **question five**, "Am I being persistent?"

Again, write *yes* or *no* right beside this final question. And think about it while you're reading and looking over your prayer request. Ask, "Am I like a tiger in my pursuit of this prayer request?" In other words, "Am I crying out day and night like Jesus recommended?" Ask, "Am I really seeking the Lord on this issue or is it more of just a casual request?"

Is this something that I'm kicking the door down in prayer or is this something that I am turning and testing the door handle on, only to discover it's locked with some resistance and then I'm giving up by walking away?

Only you can answer that, but may I remind you of the powerful promise that applies to this step, the one found in Luke 18:8 where Jesus states how God Himself will avenge His own children who cry out day and night, and avenge them quickly!

OK, so here we are. We've written and dated our request. We've written down each and every step with a *yes* or *no* answer.

If the answer was a *no*, we took some time until we worked through each one of those *no*'s until they became a *yes* for each step.

Now, if we've done that, then it won't be long before we start to see our request go from a page of paper to a reality in our lives!

I'd like to call this prayer worksheet our *prayer warrant*! I've even taken the time to make one up for you so you'll be able to use it anytime you want. It's free and you can download a copy by clicking the link that says, "Prayer Warrant!"

I would recommend printing more than one copy for each of your prayer requests so you have one to carry around and work off of throughout the day. Pull it out, read it, pray over it, and then tuck it away in your pocket. Then later on pull it out again, pray over, remind yourself of the steps and keep working on them! Now, take the other copy and keep it separate. This will be used later to do something very powerful, and that's to *remember well*.

Remember Well

In other words, keep a track record of your answered prayers. This practice is extremely helpful in building your faith in prayer.

Any notebook will do. My wife started such a book, and now we keep some photos of tangible answers to prayer inside. For example, my daughter and I prayed for a bike one time. Not too long after that someone showed up with—yes, you guessed it—a bike!

They said someone else had put it out to the curb on trash day and thought we'd like it for my daughter. It was the perfect size for her and in great shape. Just a powerful little answer to prayer.

Record your answers so you can remember well. Not only will this build your faith, but it's what the Lord wants us to do. Back when He led Joshua and the children of Israel across the Jordan River, He instructed them to go back and pull twelve big stones out of the river and place them on the river bank as a memorial

to what the Lord had done for them. He wanted them to remember well. A small habit that'll change your life forever!

OK, so we've just walked step by step through a prayer project. Now, I'd like to leave you with two final tools that will be sure to bless you and help you get the job done.

The first tool is what I call, ***"The God Taught Me Tool."***

I've used this several times and again I even used it to learn how to golf! Yes, I refused to go and get a golf lesson and instead trusted God as my Father to teach me how to hit a golf ball. In doing so, I broke into this whole new area about God that I didn't realize was there, and that was the fact that He was willing to teach me about golf as well as so many other practical things. My point for reminding you of that story is so you can do the same thing, only better and not just with golf but every area of your life!

Yes, you can ask God to teach you all sorts of things, cooking, finance, marriage, business and so on. However, what if you took this to another level and began a journey of asking God to teach you the five keys and other powerful prayer principals taught in this book?

In other words, if God taught me how to hit a golf ball, then why in the world wouldn't He teach you how to pray, how to enjoy Him as a Father, how to pray down His will from heaven to earth, how to believe, how to please Him, how to persist in prayer and so on? The list goes on and yes, He absolutely would teach you those things and that's because we have yet another unbreakable promise found in Psalm 32:8 that says:

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."

(Psalm 32:8 KJV)

In other words, "I will guide you with My eye upon you." Man, I love that! So for example, what if you started to ask God to teach you how to pray and not just pray, but pray with power? What do you think would happen over time? You would, after some time, begin to pray with power!

Here's the crazy thing about this, if you ask God to teach

you something, you'll be able to say later, "*God Taught Me!*" God taught me this, God taught me that and on and on. Your friends might even ask later, "How did you learn that?" And of course you'll be able to say, "God Taught Me!"

Sure, you might get that old deer in the head lights look like I did, but who cares because not only is this cool, but it's one of the most powerful ways to defeat worry! To be honest, you don't have to worry anymore, you really don't. I mean just think of the possibilities with this powerful tool called, "*God Taught Me.*" For starters, you can use it anytime you want and on anything you want! It is a tool that will improve so many areas of your life and at the same time able to build a special relationship with the Lord in the process!

I know that because I'll never forget those times on the golf driving range when it was just me and the Lord, hitting one ball after another and asking Him questions about my golf swing, and asking Him for feedback when I would hit a bad shot. That's the stuff strong bonds are made of, spending time together, talking and allowing the Lord to teach me.

I hope you take advantage of that amazing tool. If you do, the only thing God is going to ask you to do is believe. Yes, believe that He'll teach you and He will (See James 1:6-7). Combine that with being persistent (Luke 18:1-8) and God will take care of the rest!

Your Hybrid

Now, I want to move on to our final tool by asking you a question: Have you ever driven a hybrid vehicle? A hybrid usually has two motors under the hood, creating a car that is half electric and half gasoline. And depending on which one you activate, you will get different results.

For example, if you choose to take your time and drive in a casual manner, then you're more than likely going to be operating on electric most of the time. However, when you need some power to pass a car or pull out into traffic, you'll push on the gas

pedal and the gas motor will kick in providing you with plenty of power to get the job done.

Your final tool is sort of like that and it's the Holy Spirit:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; ...”

(Acts 1:8 NIV)

As you've already read, pleasing the Lord is the single most powerful thing anyone of us could ever do. The reason is that a lifestyle that pleases the Lord brings His favor, which doesn't come upon everyone. Remember if God's favor is upon you, there is a reason for it and the reason is that you are striving to please the Lord more often than not.

So where do we get that power from? Are we to hunker down by sheer will power and say, *“I'll never do that again, I promise!”* I've done that hundreds of times and it really doesn't work too well. The reason it doesn't work too well is that I can't improve on my old sinful nature that I inherited from Adam and Eve. My old nature is pretty much done with, and the Bible says it won't even step foot into heaven (Romans 3:20).

So now what? Well, thankfully the power to live a life pleasing to the Lord is supposed to be the job of the Holy Spirit and not ours.

Think of it as having two motors now, you've accepted Christ as your Savior and you still have your old nature, plus you have the Holy Spirit whom the Bible teaches exclusively resides in the hearts of believers in Christ (Romans 8:9).

The only problem with these two motors is that they are at odds with each other. Just try and picture the electric motor and the gas motor fighting for the driver's attention while under the hood. The electric motor wants to lead the driver all around town and so does the gas motor. Yes, they both want to lead the driver, but only one can be in the lead.

I actually own a hybrid car and I can drive it around taking it easy enough to run on electric for a long time or I can run my vehicle like there is not even an electric motor under the hood. It's really up to me, because it's my choice. Sometimes I even for-

get that I have that choice and run it hard using the gas motor and a lot more gas! Yes, it's true you can have a hybrid and still get terrible gas mileage depending on how you choose to operate it.

The thing is, if I choose to run on the power of the Holy Spirit then my life is going to look a whole lot different than if I choose to run off the power of my old sinful nature:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

(Galatians 5:22-23 NIV)

Pretty cool, right? Notice the verse says, "The fruit of the Spirit..." Not our fruit, rather His fruit. It's His job to produce that beautiful fruit or, in other words, that beautiful life through us. Our job is to either say *yes* to the Holy Spirit or *no*. Now, if we say *yes* to Him then we have to learn to say *no* to that other motor, the old sinful nature. Yes, believe it or not it's that simple.

If you have the Holy Spirit under your hood, inside of you, then you really could walk by a plate of cookies and activate His power by simply saying *no* and you would be successful at not overeating. It's the same with our thoughts and other areas of our life, basically the Holy Spirit gives us the power to say *no* to things that might hinder our walk with the Lord, which will aid in protecting our prayer lives.

Of course, that's not all the Holy Spirit does, but for the purposes of power in prayer that's what we are honing in on. When we learn to rely on the Holy Spirit's power instead of our own, then the Holy Spirit goes to work and produces all kinds of good fruit, which by the way is pleasing to the Lord. That of course, attracts the favor of God, which provides tremendous power upon your prayer life! Do you see the progression here?

You say *no* to what the Bible calls the flesh and *yes* to your new powerful motor the Holy Spirit, and that equals things that are pleasing to God, which equals favor, which equals power in prayer!

So the Holy Spirit is a gift that God actually promised He'd

send to us (John 14) and, of course, at this point we may not have a clue who the Holy Spirit is or even heard of Him. That's OK, you already know that if you ask God to teach you anything, you're going to be able to say later, "*God Taught Me!*"

Why not try using the God Taught Me Tool by asking a few questions about the Holy Spirit? You can surely do that and I can tell you with full confidence that if you do, God will teach you everything you need to know and also build a great bond between you and Him in the process.

If you need more help

Obviously, I couldn't cover everything there is to know about prayer in this little book. I wanted it to be a quick read for you so you could get started enjoying God as a Father. However, I believe if you apply these principles we've discussed, you'll see God show up in your everyday life!

Sure, there are still many important things that you and I need to learn. You may even have some other questions that may arise from reading this book or just questions in general. So, I'd love to be able to help and coach you in anyway I can. If you're interested in continuing this conversation about prayer, I've made a free video available just for you.

You can view it at www.WorryLessPrayMore.com. It's called the Worry Less Pray More Video. It's free and you can watch any-time you want. We also have some others resources available that are designed to help you grow even stronger in your prayer life.

Well, until I write another little book on prayer, I would just like to say thank you and that I'm truly excited for you as you begin this journey of enjoying God as a Father. But I'm sure God is even more excited!

My prayer is that you start to see God show up in places you least expect, by worrying less and praying more!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Chris Einwechter is a pastor, a gifted speaker, author, and a retired twenty-six-year veteran from the New Jersey State Police. He is best known for seeing God show up in places you'd least expect from an answer to prayer!

Chris has been married to his wife Laura for twenty-five years, and they have two beautiful daughters and one cute pug together. However, it wasn't always that way for Chris. Sadly, his mom died when he was only ten-years old, which caused Chris to be removed from his dad's custody.

Throughout his teen years, Chris lived in several different homes, some good and some bad. He quit high school for a while when in the tenth grade. Chris has faced many challenges growing up.

Things are different now, and he firmly believes that prayer is more than just a word. Now Chris knows that prayer is a gift from God, a tool that anyone can use to see amazing things happen!

Chris has seen amazing results in prayer from praying about tracking down murder suspects or arresting fugitives to even praying about his golf swing, milkshakes, and other such practical things that most folks wouldn't dare to pray for.

Now Chris enjoys teaching others how simple it is to see God show up in amazing ways through prayer!

Chris's blog and contact can be found at www.GodTaughtMe.com

DEDICATION

There would be absolutely nothing possible in my life if it were not for the help, direction, and faithfulness of my Heavenly Father! Lord, You've taught me so much, and I am so grateful that you allow me to call You Father!

To my wife Laura, this would not be possible without your support, love, and guidance! You are my special blessing from above and the greatest wife a man could ever ask for!

To Shelby and Lauren, this would not be possible without you either! Your encouragement, hugs, kisses, and love have allowed me to push through! You've prayed for me so many times, and I will always cherish you in my heart!

To Pastors Tim Chambers, Steve Christiansen, Bill Warner, and Dan McAnney, thank you for always encouraging me to do what the Lord has called me to do! I will be forever grateful!

To my dad Russell Einwechter, Mike Morgenweck, Pat Einwechter, and Guy Richards, thanks for believing in me and demonstrating how to walk with the Lord!

Finally, I would like to thank Russell Weems, Rosemary Cowley, and Kathy Richards for all their hard work in editing this project! May God richly reward both of you for helping me finally get this book done, I am so grateful!

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

We're here to help you thrive!

Please visit our website at GodTaughtMe.com to see how we can help.

There you'll be able to leave a prayer request, obtain resources, and get encouraged!

You're also welcome to join us at one of our free conferences!

To find out where we'll be next, go to:

[Sign me up!](#)

If you've been blessed by this Ebook, please pass it on to a friend!

You can also support our ministry by purchasing a paperback version. Your purchase will go directly back into our ministry and enable us to help others thrive. You can also consider making a tax deductible donation of any amount to God Taught Me Ministries, a 501(c)(3) tax exempt ministry.

The paperback can be purchased by clicking this link, "[Purchase Book.](#)"

Here's the link to make a secure donation to our ministry, "[Partner with Chris.](#)"

Please let us know if we can help you in anyway.

Thank you and may God bless you!

Sincerely,

The God Taught Me Staff.