

# prayer & fasting

## *Reasons We Should Pray (Part Two)*

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*Objective Sentence and Aim: Everyone should pray because the basic essentials of spiritual life are provided through the avenue of prayer.*

**Introduction:** Nancy and I were invited to a Pastor's conference in West Frankfort, Ill. I hosted one of the Pastor's workshops and was terrified, being a new Pastor I didn't feel qualified to address this group of seasoned leaders. As I began to prepare my message I went to the prayer room and cried out to God, "Lord, give me something to say." In the process of time He spoke to my heart with these words, "Whatever is kept alive by prayer will never die." That was the message. Later in the conference I was sitting in a class when the Lord gave me a prophecy, "I have come to you to smooth out your rough places." That was comforting. Then He said, "I have come to you to rough up you smooth places." That was not comforting. The rest of the message went as follows, "I have come to smooth out your rough places, lest you become discouraged and give up. I have come to rough up your smooth places so you don't become complacent and let up."

- #1. **Prayer keeps us from falling in temptation** (Matt. 26:41 *Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak.* )
  - A. **E. M. Bounds:** *Prayer honors God; it dishonors self. It is man's plea of weakness, ignorance, need—a plea that heaven cannot disregard. God delights to have us pray. Prayer is not the opposite of work; it does not paralyze activity. Rather, prayer itself is the greatest work; it works mightily. It springs activity, stimulates desire and effort. Prayer is not an opiate, but a tonic; it does not lull to sleep, but arouses anew for action. The lazy man does not, cannot pray, for prayer demands energy.*
1. **Prayer enables the Spirit to flow into our weakness** (Ro. 8:26 *The Spirit helps us*)
  - a. **David O. McKay:** The greatest battles of life are fought out daily in the silent chambers of the soul.
  - b. **Pro. 15:8** The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord but the prayer of the upright is His delight.
  - c. **Mark 11:23-24** Great things happen when men and mountains meet.
  - d. **Jer. 33:3** Call to me (Jeremiah was shut up in the prison ... God had hidden his face from the city of Jerusalem and it was going to fall ... God says (v6-17) I will bring health and healing to Israel.
  - e. **Luke 18:1** Always pray and never give up. **A.W. Tozer:** The neglected heart will soon be overrun with worldly thoughts; the neglected life will soon become a moral chaos.

- f. *Samuel M. Zwemer*: Prayer is self-discipline. The effort to realize the presence and power of God stretches the tendons and ligaments of the soul and hardens its muscles. To pray is to grow in grace. Character grows in the secret place of prayer.
- g. *Isaiah 26:3* You will keep him in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!
- h. *Mother Teresa*: The most important thing that a human being can do is pray, because we have been made for God and our hearts are restless until we rest with Him. And it's in prayer that we come into contact with God.
- i. *1 Pet. 4:7* The end of all things is at hand. Therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.
- j. *Evan Roberts*: *Prayer is the secret of power.* *Acts 1:8* The followers of Christ were seeking God in prayer when they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues.

2. **The worst sin is prayerlessness** (*P. T. Forsyth*) (*Matt. 26:41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak.*)

- a. *Eph. 6:18* Pray in the Spirit at all times and on ever occasion; stay alert and persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.
- b. *Pastor Dan*: Christ's disciples, while in the garden with Jesus, slept through a moment that decided the destiny of the world. If we sleep and do not pray then we will miss the defining moments, those divine appointments that will decide the destiny of our lives and the lives of those we have the ability to influence.
- c. *Jude 20* Beloved, building up yourselves
- d. *1 Cor. 14:2, 4* He who speaks in an unknown tongues speaks not unto men but unto God ... but he who speaks in a tongue edifies himself.
- e. *1 Thess. 5:16-18* Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks ...
- f. *C.H. Spurgeon*: Neglected prayer is the birth-place of all evil.
- g. *Author Unknown*: The great battles that decide our destiny are won or lost in prayer. Won if we are faithful and lost if we are not.
- h. *Ephesians 6:10-12; 1 Peter 5:8*
- i. *Samuel Logan Brengle*: The great battles, the battles that decide our destiny and the destiny of generations yet unborn, are not fought on public platforms, but in lonely hours of the night and in moments of agony.
- j. *Scroggie*: Without time for prayer, nothing can be accomplished.
- k. *Ellis Roberts Oral Roberts dad*: In every human being there is a God-shaped blank that only God can fill.

**Closing and Invitation:** Story of how God met my need and gave me this prayer as the interpretation to a message in tongues, "To be led by Your Spirit is what I pray; to be led by Your Spirit every moment of everyday; to be led by Your Spirit in all I do and say; to be led by your Spirit is what I pray.