

Prayer

by Corrie Ten Boom

Corrie Ten Boom emphasizes the transformative power of prayer and intercession in the lives of individuals and communities.

Duration: 44:05

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Isaiah 59:16, John 14:13-14, Romans 8:27, Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, 2 Timothy 2:1, Hebrews 4:16, James 5:16

Topics: "Intercessory Prayer", "Faithfulness In Prayer"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance and power of intercessory prayer, highlighting stories of answered prayers, the impact of praying for others, and the significance of praying in Jesus' name. It encourages believers to be faithful intercessors, sharing examples of how prayer can lead to miracles and blessings, even in challenging circumstances.

Transcript

The weary ones had rest, the sick had joy that day, and wondered how. The ploughmen, singing at his work, had prayed, God, help them now. Alone in foreign fields, they wondered how their words had power.

At home, some Christians, two or three perhaps, had prayed an hour. So we are often wondering why. Because we do not see a friend at home on bended knee.

I will speak a little bit about prayer in the session. We have a word of prayer together. Father, in Jesus' name, will you show us a little bit the importance and the joy that we may pray for each other? Thank you, Lord.

Amen. In the book, the Bible, it is written that we have to pray for each other. In the book of 2 Timothy, we pray that intercessions, first supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings should be made on behalf of all men, for kings and rulers in possessions of responsibility.

We do not always realize how important intercession is. Do you know that in the book of Isaiah, Isaiah 59, is written, God wondered because there was no intercessor. Once I was in Sacramento, and I heard of a group of Christians under the leadership of Robert Ellingwood, who prayed every day for one person, everyone for another person in the government.

They did it very faithfully. They prayed every day, and even once a week they fasted. Miracles happened among the government people there.

Are you praying for people in government, for people who have such a terrific responsibility? In 2 Chronicles 7, 14, we read that God says, If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and heal their land. What a terrific responsibility we have for our land, for our country. In Sodom and Gomorrah, if there had been ten righteous people, the town should not have been destroyed.

I remember that when I was in a concentration camp, and we were pushed together in a room with 700 people. The room was built for 200. Some people started to fight.

Other people joined them, and at last it was a chaos. We heard swearing and beating, and Betsy, my sister, said, Corrie, let's pray. That is dangerous.

And she prayed, and she prayed, and she prayed, and never forget it. And when she prayed, it was as if a storm laid down. We heard less swearing and beating.

At last it was absolutely quiet. And then Betsy said, Thank you, Lord. Amen.

Do you see what happened? There was a room of 700 prisoners in danger. And there was one woman who prayed. And that woman, my sister, was used by God to save the situation of that whole room.

I believe we must understand that we can be used by God to save the situation in the world. And very much about our intercession, it's possible that you think, no, I can't do that. I know a woman, I know a man who are real intercessors, but I don't know how to pray for other people.

And I must tell you a story of a little boy. Someone said to him, Boy, you must pray. But he had never prayed in his life.

He was in Africa, and he went home, and he was sitting in the corner of the cabin. And suddenly his mother heard him saying, A, B, C, D, E, F. His mother said, What are you doing? He said, Mom, they have said I must pray, but I have never prayed before. And now I've said, Lord, I will give you the whole alphabet, will you make a good prayer of it? Isn't that good? That boy had understood a very important word from Romans 8, Romans 8, verse 27.

We read, We do not know how to pray worthily as sons of God, but his Spirit within us is actively praying for us, and those agonizing longings which never find words. And God, who knows the heart's secrets, understands, of course, the Spirit's intention as he prays for those who love God. It is the Holy Spirit who will teach us how to make a prayer, even when we have only the alphabet.

Sometimes God's meals meal very slowly, but they meal very secure. I remember that my sister was a teacher, and when she came home, she often said, Oh, Mom, let's pray for my boys and girls in the class, and then we prayed for them. She had always the first class, so the boys and girls of six, seven years old.

I don't know if I had much faith in that time, but I'm so glad that God does not ask us to have a great faith. When people say to me, You must have a great faith, I always say, No, my faith is not great, but I have faith in a great God. And the Bible says, Let us look unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith.

Now, when I told you about my sister who was interceding for the children of her class, I had a remarkable experience some time ago. I had a meeting in Holland, and an old gentleman came to me, and he said, I was in a school where a Miss Ten Boom was a teacher. Can it have been you? Have you been a teacher? I said, No, it was my sister.

Oh, he said, When I was a boy of seven years old, I loved your sister. And how is she? And I told that my sister was with the Lord. And after we had talked a little bit about my sister and about when he was a little boy of seven years old, I asked him, I should like to ask you a question about a message that you heard today.

He said, What do you mean? I said, No, we have heard a message that the Lord gave me that we have to be born again to enter the kingdom of God. Are you born again? Are you a child of God? He said, I go every Sunday to the church. I said, That's very good.

That's not sufficient. A mouse born in a biscuit tin is therefore not yet a biscuit. And to be in a church building does not make me a child of God.

It is the Lord himself who says, There must happen something. You must receive Jesus as your Savior. And then he does the miracle in you that you are born into the very family of God.

Then you may say to God, Father, my Father, I talked a little bit more with him and he understood and he accepted it. And then he said his first real yes to Jesus. And that's very important.

Now, do you see the picture? Do you see the pattern? It was about 70 years before that my sister, my mother and I prayed for the children in a class in school. One of the boys of six or seven years old, I met after 70 years and God used me to bring him to a decision for the Lord Jesus. I thought that was very encouraging.

I don't know if you have that, but sometimes I have a little difficulty when I pray for a huge crowd. When I pray for one person, yes. But when I pray for a huge crowd, my faith is very, very weak.

But for the Lord is such a prayer not an important. It was some time ago that I met a lady. She called me over the telephone the first time.

And she told me, tonight I go to a meeting of yours and I must tell you I have been in the same concentration camp as you, Ravensbrück. I said, in what time? She said, in 1944. I said, that was the same time that I was there.

In what barrack did you live? She said, in barrack five. I said, I was in barrack 28. Now you must understand that when you were in different barracks you could never have contact with each other.

So I had never met her and she hadn't met me. But when we stood on roll call in the early morning and there was standing around us 17,000 prisoners, I remember that Betsy and I sometimes said, oh Lord, all these poor prisoners, many will die here or be killed. Lord, we cannot reach them.

We can only reach the people in our barrack. But Lord, you can reach them. Oh, bless them.

One of these 17,000 people I met after 30 years and that was that girl that called me over the phone. I said to her, come tonight to my meeting. She said, all right, I will do it.

But don't think that I believe in God. I said, now just come and I will tell you a little bit of what I have experienced with the Lord. She came and the next day she called me.

She said, I cannot understand what I heard last night, that you told there that you could forgive and love your enemies. I said, yes, but did you listen well? I told that I was not able, but that it was the Lord in me who gave me the love for my enemies. Oh, she said, what must that be a joy? I said, yes, that's it.

Oh, I wished I had that. I said, did you? That's a good first step. I said, really do you want to have that peace and joy that you can forgive your enemies? That is possible.

The only thing what you have to do is that you must ask Jesus to come into your heart and then Jesus does the job. And I told her the way of salvation and she listened and she accepted the Lord Jesus as her Savior. Do you see the picture? Thirty years before, I prayed for a group of 17,000 people.

Thirty years later, one of them I was used to bring to the Lord. I tell you this to encourage you to become a real intercessor. Oh, it is so very important that we are faithful.

And I must say, I have learned to pray when I was in the concentration camp, when I was a prisoner. Yes, I had prayed before. A long time ago when I was a little girl, my mother brought me to the Lord.

And since that time, I have been an intercessor. My mother told me that. I was five years old when she said, Corrie, you must ask Jesus to come into your heart.

And I did. And she told me later, from the same moment on, I was an intercessor. Every prayer that I prayed, I finished with the words, and Lord, will you save all the people in the Smedestraat.

Now, the Smedestraat was a street behind our house where there were many pubs. And you saw always drunken people there. And the five-year-old had a burden for these people.

And I prayed every day for them. I smile when I think of that I was so young and prayed for other people. God smiled.

But he accepted it. Do you know that later in my life, I have met people who had lived in the Smedestraat? I was in a group of girls in a camp, a kind of girl scout camp. And I had brought them the gospel, and we had a good time together.

And one of them said, Auntie Corrie, he called me Auntie, do you know that I'm a little bit of a neighbor, for I live in the Smedestraat? And another said, I have lived there. A third said, my parents have lived there. And I found that a whole group of 20 girls that were sitting around me had been in the Smedestraat, or their parents.

I said, girls, let me tell you something. When my mother told me that when I was a little girl of five years old, I prayed for the Smedestraat. And now the Lord uses me to bring the gospel to you, girls who have lived, or your parents have lived in that street.

It is so encouraging when you hear that God hears your prayers. I told that I had learned really prayer in the concentration camp, yes, there I learned more of prayer. I learned there that there is nothing too small, too great for God's power, and nothing too small for His love.

I remember that I had a rather small problem. I said, Betsy, I've caught a cold, and I have no handkerchief. What must I do? Betsy said, you must pray.

I laughed. But Betsy did it. She said, Father, in Jesus' name, I pray that you will give Corrie a handkerchief, for she has caught a cold.

Amen. I laughed. But do you know what happened? I heard that they called out my name.

I went to the window, and there stood a friend of mine, a fellow prisoner, who worked in the hospital. I said, are you free? Can you fist me? She said, no, no, I am not free. But I come just to bring you a little present.

I said, how nice of you. And she gave me a little package, and I opened it, and there was a handkerchief in it. I said, how in the world, why in the world do you bring me a handkerchief? Did you know that I had caught a cold? She said, no.

But I found an old sheet, and I was making from that sheet handkerchiefs. And when I was busy to sew it, there was a voice in my heart who said, bring a handkerchief to Corrie ten Boom. Can you understand what a handkerchief can tell you in such a moment? That handkerchief told me that there is a God in heaven who hears it when on a very small planet, the earth, someone prays for an impossible little thing, for a handkerchief.

And that God in heaven tells another child of him on that very same earth, bring a handkerchief to Corrie ten Boom. I call that the foolishness of God. The foolishness of God is the greatest wisdom.

There is nothing too great for his power. Oh, I remember that sometimes my heart was heavy of all the problems and the suffering in and around me. Do you know how that feels when your heart is so heavy? Like a heavy handbag, like this one.

I opened my Bible and I said, oh Lord, what must I do? And I read in the Bible, don't worry about anything whatever. Tell God every detail in earnest and thankful prayer and the peace of God which transcends all human understanding will fill your heart. Cast your burden on the Lord.

I said, Lord, I will do that. Thank you for your answer. And I emptied my heart like I now empty this handbag.

I said, Lord, here are these prisoners around me. Lord, they came this morning, 800 new prisoners. Oh, what a terrible suffering is awaiting them.

Oh, Lord, have mercy upon them. I cannot reach them, but you can. Here they are, Lord.

Help them. Then I brought Betsy. My sister was far too weak and too frail to be a prisoner.

I said, Lord, have mercy upon Betsy. Let soon liberation come. Oh, Lord, I cannot help her sufficiently, but you can.

Lord, fill her heart with your peace. Here is Betsy. I bring her to you.

Here is my queen. My queen was in England. Oh, what terrible was that for her to be away from her country that had to suffer so much.

I said, Lord, will you speak to the queen and will you fill her heart with your joy and give her your courage? Here is my queen, Lord. And then I brought some sins. You will experience it when your heart is heavy that there is often some unrepentant sin.

I had been bitter that morning. People had been cruel to my sister and me, and there was bitterness, almost hatred in my heart. I said, oh, Lord, here is my hatred, my bitterness.

Please, will you forgive me? Forgive me, Lord, and cleanse me. And the joy is that when you bring a sin to the Lord, he forgives and he cleanses you with his blood. I said, Lord, here is that sin.

Will you take it, liberate me from it? So I went on and on to bring all the things that were in my heart to the Lord till my heart was just as empty as this handbag. I had cast all the burdens on the Lord. That was good.

Then I said, Amen. That was prayer. That was good.

But what I did after my Amen was not good. Do you know what I did after my Amen? I put all my burdens again into my heart. And if you believe it or not, my heart was heavier after my prayer than before.

But that was not praying. Praying means cast your burden on the Lord and leave it there. Did you understand the message of that little hanky? There's nothing too small for God's love.

I once saw a little girl and I cried. That broken doll, very old, dirty doll. But then I saw her father coming and he said, Come along, come to daddy, I will help you.

And that man took that dirty, old, valueless doll and he repaired it. I laughed. How could a grown-up man take such a valueless doll so serious? Two men did.

Do you know why? Because he saw that doll through the eyes of the little one. Because he loved the little one. And so God sees your problems through your eyes because he loves you.

And there's nothing too small for his love. Just tell it him. Have you ever had that you were frightened because of your own prayer? I remember that I was in Russia and I was in a room in a hotel.

And the woman who cleaned my room, I gave a tract, a tract about the way of salvation. The woman looked at it, there were two women in the room, and she said something in Russian I couldn't understand, but she gave me back the tract. She would not read it or have it.

I was sorry. I went with Connie, who was my helper in that time, to the dining room, and I had to go in an elevator. We were only two in the elevator.

And I was still thinking of that woman. You feel always a little bit disappointed when you will do something kind and disrefused. So I prayed.

I said, Oh, Lord, I cannot reach that woman, but will you reach her? Bring her in contact with one of your children who knows her language. Lord, I cannot help her, but I claim that woman for eternity. What did I do? I'd never done that before.

I'd never claimed a soul for eternity before. And I said, Lord, was it good? May I do that? And the same moment, I heard myself praying another prayer. Lord, I claim whole Russia for you.

Now I trembled. What did I do? Why did God give me that prayer? Suddenly I understood it. In the Bible it's written, The earth is the Lord's, the world and all who live there.

And it's also Russia. It was an answer from God to give me such a prayer. For I had not thought about it.

When we went back to our room, that morning there was no breakfast available. So we went to our room and we had some old buns. And we took a little bit Nescafe.

And we had a very peaceful breakfast together. But suddenly we heard knocking at the door. We opened the door.

There was a woman who had refused my tract. And she started to tell me something in a Russian language I didn't understand, one word. But then she pointed to my bed.

I said, Komi, you have a tract. And Komi took a tract and gave it to her. But it was a different one than the first one.

And then she looked. No. She would have the tract of the way of salvation.

It was, of course, in the Russian language. I gave her that tract. And I can tell you I was so happy.

That woman left the room with a face beaming of joy. And I, too, my face beamed of joy. For that was an answer from God.

It was as if God said, that first prayer I have already answered. That second prayer I will answer. Oh, what a joy that we may claim the salvation of a person and of a nation.

Let the Lord do the miracle in you, that he gives you real faithful and believing and trusting prayers. It was a moment later that again came a knock at the door. And there was the woman again.

Now she had a big white fresh bread. And she put it on the table. She had seen that we had been chewing these old buns.

And that was her sacrifice to show her thankfulness. We would pay her, but no, no, that was her blessing to us. Oh, I'm so glad when I think of that experience.

Of course, sometimes there is that question, does God always answer our prayer? And then I say, yes. But sometimes God gives the no answer. And that is not a mistake, for God does not make mistakes.

But that's because God knows all. I remember a little story of Emma Carmichael. That woman that has worked so beautifully in India to save the girls, the temple girls, who were educated to be prostitutes.

She told that once she was a little girl and she had brown eyes. And she had heard that God answered prayers. So one evening she said, now God, I pray in Jesus' name that you give me blue eyes.

She went to bed and she was so happy. Oh, now she should have blue eyes. She was so happy.

And she could hardly sleep that night. But in the morning she awoke and she thought, now I will have blue eyes. And she went to the mirror and she looked.

She had brown eyes still. She went to her mother and she said, God doesn't answer prayers. I have prayed for blue eyes and my eyes are brown again.

And her mother said, girls, once you will understand that. And she said, I have understood it later. Because I had brown eyes later also, I could work as an Indian.

When I went in a temple to save these girls, I put on a sari and I just was like an Indian woman. Had I had blue eyes, I couldn't have done that. Then she saw why God had answered with no.

We don't always see that, but sometimes. When I was in prison and I was sitting in a cell all alone, I was still in Holland, my homeland. And every day I prayed, oh God, let the enemy never bring me to a German concentration camp.

But God gave no answer. And not only that, he brought me there, but also Betsy who had to die there. Do you know that now already I see a little bit of God's side of the embroidery? The book, *The Hiding Place* and *Prisoner and Death*, is used to show many people that when you are a giant of God, when the worst happens, the best remains.

And that is because in these books I tell about the experience of Betsy and me. Because God has allowed that we had to suffer so much, now he gives me a message. And that message will reach many people also when the film, the movie, *The Hiding Place* will be shown to people.

Had God answered my prayer in that cell, we could not have had such a strong message. I see it already. Once, you and I will see it when we are in heaven.

There we see God's side. And I have the idea when we are in heaven we will thank God for every answered and not answered prayer. For then we see that God has guided us.

There's one thing that the Bible tells us that we must pray in Jesus' name. I heard a little illustration about that from William Nagenda. He said, once I was on a trip in another country and my wife, Sala, was writing me a letter.

When she was writing, Christopher, her three years old boy, said, Mom, what are you doing? She said, I am writing Daddy a letter. He said, I will also write Daddy a letter. Of course she said, oh good.

And she gave him a paper and a pencil and he wrote a letter to his Daddy. It was like this. Then Sala took it and she wrote at the side, this is Christopher's letter to his Daddy.

Then she put it in her letter, what she had written to her husband. And when William opened the letter, he found that paper. He looked to throw it away in the wastebasket.

But suddenly he read these words, this is Christopher's letter to his Daddy. Suddenly he was very proud. His friend was with him and he said, do you have a son of three years old? They said, yes.

Did he ever write you a letter? No, of course not. My son has written me a letter. He had never been so happy when these words had not been there.

This is Christopher's letter to his father. You know that your and my prayers are never good enough for a holy God. Even if they are beautiful words.

Or if it is only a cry. It is not good enough for God. But when we pray in Jesus' name, then it is as if the prayer reaches God with the word of Jesus' Father.

This is Corrie's, this is Ellen's, this is John's prayer to their Father. And suddenly God is happy. Because Jesus has said that.

So never forget to pray in Jesus' name. That is power. And don't pray in Christ's name.

Christ is the title. The name that has such a tremendous power is Jesus. Jesus.

And you may pray in Jesus' name. I will finish with a little poem that has helped me so much. That poem showed me what it means to pray.

Better than anything, whatever. Jesus heard when you prayed last night. He talked with God about you.

Jesus was there when you fought your fight. He is going to help you through. Jesus knew when you shed those tears.

So you did not weep alone. For the burden you thought too heavy to bear. He made it his very own.

Jesus himself was touched by that trial you could not understand. Jesus stood by as you almost fell. And lovingly grasped your hand.

Jesus cared when you bear that pain. Indeed, he bore it too. He felt each pain, each ache in your heart because of his love for you.

Jesus was grieved when you doubted his love. But he gave you grace to go on. Jesus rejoiced when you trusted him.

The most trustworthy one. His presence shall ever be with you. No need to be anxious or fret.

Wonderful Lord. He is there all the time. He has never forsaken you yet.

Hallelujah. Amen. Let us pray.

Repeat what I say. Thank you Lord that I may pray for other people. Thank you that I may, that I must be an intercessor.

Thank you that you make me an intercessor. Forgive me that sometimes I was not faithful in this beautiful work you have given us. Forgive me and make me faithful through your Holy Spirit.

Hallelujah. Amen. And now may the love, mercy and power of Jesus Christ be multiplied to you during these days of titanic spiritual warfare.

The Lord wins and is able to hold you up and calls you to triumph in all situations you may face. Hallelujah. Amen.

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