

Prayer is a Matter of Life or Death

by Edgar Reich

This sermon emphasizes the power of prayer as a matter of life or death, showcasing various examples of answered prayers from the Bible and personal experiences. It highlights the need for higher help from God, the importance of praying in Jesus' name, and the significance of faith, repentance, and persistence in prayer. The sermon also provides seven principles for effective prayer, urging believers to trust in God's promises and seek His will.

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Scripture: John 14:13, Acts 12:1, Psalms 105:1, Matthew 6:9, Hebrews 11:6, 1 John 5:14, 2 Chronicles 7:14

Topics: "Power of Prayer", "Faith and Persistence"

Description

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Transcript

those prayers and all the ones that were given over the last 24 hours. Tonight's message is, Prayer is a Matter of Life or Death. So Heavenly Father, I just thank you, Lord, that you have given us that message.

And now I pray that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart would be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer. In Jesus' name, Amen. When prayer is a matter of life or death, we need higher help.

And that higher help is promised to us in John chapter 14, verses 13 and 14. And there it says, And whatever you ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in my name, I will do it.

Praise God. Now, before we give some examples of answered prayers from our own lives, I'd like to just reflect on scripture. And, you know, in the Old Testament, Moses prayed and God divided the Red Sea.

That was life or death for the Israelites. Joshua prayed during a battle and the sun stood still. That was life and death, beloved.

And God did it. Is he able to do the same today? Or are these just historical stories for us to think about? Elijah prayed and fire came down from heaven. He was an ordinary man, scripture says.

Is that possible today? Here's an example from the New Testament, from Acts chapter 12, verse 1. And in the New Testament, the early disciples were under the gun right from the beginning after following Jesus. They were already persecuted. And in Acts chapter 12, verse 1, it says now, By the way, this was the son of King Herod who tried to kill Jesus as a baby.

So this time Herod, the king stretched out his hand to Harris, son of the church. Then he killed James, the apostle, which was the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also.

Now it was during the days of unleavened bread. And after they had arrested him, they put him in prison and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him intending to bring him before the people after Passover. And since Herod had killed James, it is likely that he also intended to kill Peter.

In verse 5 of Acts 12, it says, Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. You see, the church prayed a prayer of life or death for Peter. In the meantime, Peter was in prison bound with iron chains between two soldiers.

There was no chance for him to get out. But we read in Acts 12 that God intervened and sent an angel who set Peter free. Peter knocked on the door where the church was praying after he was set free.

And there was a young little girl by the name of Rhoda. And she was so excited when she saw Peter, she forgot to open up the door. She ran back to tell the people, it's Peter, it's Peter.

But there was unbelief, beloved. And unbelief often robs us of miracles. But in this case, Peter was free outside the door.

And after the door was open and they saw Peter in person, they saw and believed it was a great miracle from God. God had answered the prayer of the church of life or death. And the question is, does God still answer prayers of life and death today? And the answer is absolutely yes.

Praise God. God is able. God is still the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Now Psalm 105 instructs us to share God's wondrous works. And there it says, make known his deeds among the people's talk of all his wondrous works. So here's a true story in our time from a reputable missionary from South America.

It was a missionary lady. She was called in a village, to a village on the Amazon River. She was in a little boat going up river and did not notice that a large anaconda was swimming next to her boat.

The large snake jumped partially out of the water and put a coil around the missionary's sister and started to squeeze her to death. The missionary's breath disappeared and all she could do was send a prayer to heaven, help me Lord, help me Lord. Then to the surprise of everyone, the anaconda opened up her coil, let go, and disappeared in the water.

The missionary was not hurt badly and was determined to continue her journey and to speak about Jesus, the son of God, to the natives. She arrived in the village and was invited to speak in a large hut. While she was speaking, a commotion started at the door.

Various men looked through the door, shaking their heads in disbelief. After the missionary spoke, she asked about the man at the door. She was told that the man were the medicine men and other men in the village who worshiped the great anaconda as their God.

They had previously prayed and opposed people who came to their village to talk about God and those died. And now they could not understand. The anaconda had killed those trying to come.

What was it about this woman that came which had greater powers than the anaconda? The man did not realize that there was a true God far greater than the devil who was using the anaconda to mislead the people. God and his son Jesus had answered a prayer of life or death for a missionary and set her free from the anaconda. Now I have experienced a similar happening where Satan used an animal.

I was praying on the ocean in Mexico and standing very still. I was asked by missionaries to see a demon-possessed man and to pray for him and I was praying. A bulldog ran by.

I was standing very still. I did not intimidate him. He came and he attacked me viciously but could not bite through my pants.

There was blood on my pants but I don't know if it was mine. When I inspected the pants later there were no holes and I felt no pain in my thigh and my stomach where the dog had bitten me. God protected me and later two demons had to flee from a demon-possessed man in Jesus' name.

Now beloved don't look at me that I did anything special. It was all God and he will do the same for you. God is mighty.

God is able to do wonderful things. I'm just an ordinary man. I'm an unprofitable servant doing my duty and I still fall short so often beloved but God answered a prayer for me of life or death for a demon-possessed man.

Praise God. Thank you Lord. Now here's a true story from China from reputable sources.

During the great revival in China they often had difficulty baptizing all the new believers. The true bible and gospel of Jesus Christ was forbidden in China and they could not do the baptisms publicly. They found a small lake surrounded by mountains that only had one way in and out.

They planned the baptisms there in the baptized. They were secretly they went secretly in the middle of the night and baptized all. When they came back out from the lake through the one exit they found many weapons on the ground.

They found guns. They found machine guns and they could not understand what had happened. A police officer who had become a Christian was able to find out.

He said to his fellow Christians you were betrayed by an informer. The government wanted to put you all in prison and interrogate you. Many police with guns and machine guns were sent to capture you when you would come out of the exit from the lake.

But then mighty mighty beings appeared like great angels with flaming swords. They opposed the police and the officers started running terrified dropping their weapons. They were running for their lives.

You see God answers prayers of life or death. Here's another reputable story from a missionary in Africa. The missionary and his family had traveled to a village in the middle of Africa.

The natives had not heard about the son of God. The missionary family faced much rejection and they were only allowed to live in one hut outside the village. One night they heard much commotion and shouting in the village.

They saw firebrands in the distance and the fire and shouting started to come closer. The missionary knew it might cost their lives. They started praying to the one and only true God in Jesus name.

The natives arrived and made a big circle around the hut. The missionaries could see their torches and their spears. Then the shouting increased and all the natives started running together towards the missionary hut.

The missionary and his family were ready to die. To their surprise they saw through the windows that the attackers stopped a few meters from the hut. The circle was much smaller now and all had stopped but the natives weren't able to break through.

They saw their weapons. They saw their spears. Why? It seemed like they were hitting an invisible wall just a few meters before the hut.

The attackers retreated and tried again and again and again. They could not break through. Finally they gave up.

God helped the missionaries and after a year or two all in the village had become Christians following Christ. The missionary invited the chief of the village to come for tea to their hut and he said to the chief, I meant to ask you chief for a long time. Do you remember when you came to our hut to kill us and our family? Oh yes, said the chief.

I also wanted to ask you. And the missionary said well tell me what stopped you? Why didn't you kill us? And the chief replied did you not see the mighty warrior angels with swords of fire who stood in the circle around your hut and stopped us many times? Where did you get those angels from? God had answered the prayer of life or death. Now God in Psalm 105 instructs us to share God's wondrous works and make known his deeds among the people and that includes personal miracles that God does for us because we can use those in a witness with others.

So you probably have experienced God's gracious hand in your life and you have many miracle stories to share. Praise God. You should share with others what God and his son Jesus has done for you through prayers.

If I may I'll just share a few more true answers to prayer. In 1945 a great city in Germany was totally annihilated at the end of the second world war. The city was called Dresden and 200,000 people died in bombs and the firestorm.

It happened on February 13 and 14 1945. My mother and two children and a relative were in the city of Dresden on that day. My father had been shot by the Russians and we were fleeing from the Russians.

We had arrived in Dresden that day. My mother was hoping she would find some milk, perhaps a little food for the children because we seemed to be dying. A relative with a wooden leg demanded that we leave the

city immediately.

He did not know why but he insisted. The soldiers took his horses but then he went and he stole his own horses and we were able to leave. A great armada of airplanes with bombs was on the way and a firestorm and bombs killed 200,000 men women and children.

We were then outside the city. God had mercy on us. You see we lived because someone was interceding for us with a prayer of life or death.

Someone was interceding for us. I started to work at the age of 14. I had no schooling but I had a chance later on to go to Canada but I didn't want to leave my mother but she now got a pension from the German government.

She was taken care of. So then she wrote afterwards how lonely she was and how desperate she was and how much help she needed and so we started to pray in Canada and we prayed that a home nurse would arise and take care of our mother and here's the story. It's unbelievable really.

My mother woke up at 2 a.m. in the middle of the night. She remembered that she had met a home nurse by the name of Ilse two years earlier but didn't know how to find her. At exactly the same time that home nurse by the name of Ilse woke up at 2 a.m. in the morning.

She dreamt that she had met a woman several years earlier and she could not remember her name but then her first name came to her and the first name was Tabea. She was told to find that person and to take care of Tabea. All she knew was the first name.

It was the name of my mother. Ilse did not know what to do. She had no surname and she did not know in which city my mother was in.

Ilse was living in Dusseldorf at that time point and she took the phone book with 600,000 names in it. She just leafed through the many pages towards the end. Her eyes fell on the first name of a person and it said Tabea.

She called that number at 2 30 a.m. in the morning. In great joy my mother took a taxi at 3 a.m. in the morning and Ilse took care of my mother from then on until Ilse died and my sister took over. You see that's a true story of God's mighty power.

That's a true story of God's intervention. God answered a prayer involving a great need and loneliness. Here's another amazing true story.

Two young girls started to pray for their father at the ages of 11 years old and 13 years old. They would not give up praying for their father who had left them. They started praying in 1986 and they prayed for 18 years that God would have mercy on their father.

Their father got saved in 2004 at the age of 62. This was the mercy of God. The father that had left his children and the man God saved was me in 2004.

God answered a prayer of life or death for a wayward father after his daughters prayed for 18 years. You see I would be in hell today. I would be headed for hell.

I would be lost forever but God had mercy. Daughters prayed. You know I'm just an ordinary man and I'm just saved by the mercy of God and yet God also answers prayers if we truly pray and reach out to him.

I'm going to share in the end seven principles for answered prayers. I also got a very black and festering skin cancer on the right hand side of my face. After prayer the cancer fell off.

The Lord allowed me to minister in Africa to children on a great garbage hill to the Maasai tribe near Mount Kilimanjaro. A poison thorn went through my foot hundreds of miles from a hospital. No helicopter.

Cattle died from that poison. Was I headed for death? We prayed. I took the poison thorn on the thick end and I pulled it out in one shot and there was great pain and then several miracles happened.

The first miracle was that no blood came out of either hole. The second miracle was that both holes closed up right then and there. You couldn't even see where that thick thorn had entered.

The third miracle was I didn't die and there was no infection. Praise God. Two years ago I had heart problems.

The cardiologist said my heart should have exploded and the cardiologist wanted to do an operation right away but I asked God. I prayed and then I came to Queensway Baptist to this church and I asked the elders to anoint me with oil and to pray over me in accordance with scripture. It was a prayer of life or death and now God has given me two more years and maybe a little more.

They're three great enemies to prayer and we just have a few here tonight. I know we have three prayer meetings every week and I wonder where all the believing people are to be honest with you. I wonder where they are because without prayer we are helpless.

Prayer is life or death. There are churches in America that have stopped the prayer meeting. God has left that church.

You have no prayer meeting. You have no connection to higher hell, to a merciful and mighty God. Three great enemies of prayer are number one the devil.

He wants no one to be saved. He wants all God's creation to be controlled by him. He wants to deceive, kill, and destroy mankind.

That includes you and me. He's an unseen being. We need higher hell.

How can you deal with that alone? You cannot. You're simply misled and you struggle in your life and you can't manage. The second one is the world.

The world philosophers deceive us and tempt us and tell us you are God. Well, I didn't find that to be true, beloved. That's a great deception, a great lie.

And then we believe that there will be no God that will bring us into judgment. If we believe that and follow that, we are helpless like tiny babies, confused, deceived. We need a higher God.

We need a son, Jesus Christ. And prayer is life or death. Then there's the old self that does not want to pray.

And Pastor Roy wrote a beautiful oxygen for the soul and he called the self another snake. And I agree with that, Pastor. It is the deception in the old flesh.

We are born again, but there's also the old flesh that remains with us and that deceives us. And that old flesh says, why pray? What's the point of praying? Our daily life needs God in Christ. Our marriage needs God in Christ.

Our work life needs God in Christ. Our purposes in life need God in Christ. Our destiny for eternity need God in Christ.

It is life or death, beloved. And then Jesus taught us prayer in the Bible. You know the Lord's Prayer.

And I'm only mentioning it because it's really the number one recommendation that I have is to follow the outline of the Lord's Prayer. And I give you three Ps to remember the Lord's Prayer by. Number one is praise.

Number two is purity. And number three are petitions when we ask for things. I add a fourth one, which is to ask him what would please you, Lord.

Because you see, God has feelings. God gives us so much love. Why should I not do what the Bible says? Because even Jesus says, if you love me, keep my commandments.

So, here are the seven principles for answered prayer. And the first principle is to apply the principle of the Lord's Prayer. Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. That stands for praise.

Give us this day our daily bread. That stands for a petition. And then in verse 12 of Matthew 6, it says, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Newer translations may use the word sin. And forgive us our sins as we forgive those that sin against us. And that's purification.

You've got to be pure when you pray to see many more prayer answers. You've got to examine yourself. And then verse 13, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

That's another petition. And this is a petition for higher help because we are wrestling against a devil that wants to kill us all. A devil who wants to destroy our marriages.

A devil who wants to destroy our health. And a devil that wants to kill us for eternity. And then the end verse is, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.

And that is praise again. So here are the seven principles to have your prayers answered. And that's, I will close with that.

Number one, you need to become a child of God and trust in his son Jesus. The Bible says, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved and then follow him. Beloved, this is life or death.

If you don't do that, scripture tells us that we will be under a judgment, a great right thrown judgment. And if your name is not found in the book of life, there's only the lake of fire. So if you're on the Zoom call tonight and you're not right with God, I ask you to bow your knees to the Father and to the Son, the Lord

Jesus Christ.

Give your life to him and say, you'll follow him. And ask him to help you start reading the Bible and start to pray. Praise God.

You can do it. Number two, pray in accordance with the outline of the Lord's prayer. Number one, praise.

Number two, purity. Number three, petitions. Number three, our focus must be on the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

He told us to pray in his name. Our entire righteousness is only found in him and he is the only ground to claim any blessings from God the Father. And that is where I said in the opening verse in John chapter 14 verses 13 and 14, whatever you ask in my name that I will do that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If you ask anything in my name, I will do it. Number four, ask for cleansing from any known sin and repent. Beloved, this is life or death, okay? We're so misled these days where the average Christian is told you can do what you like, God really won't hold you responsible.

But in Psalm 66 verse 18, God said, if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear. And in Isaiah 59 verses one and two, it says, behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he will not, so that he will not, what? So often you're left with many unanswered prayers because you're not living the life that God wants you to live.

He'll help you to do it. He'll help you, he'll be with you. Number five, we must pray in faith.

We must believe and trust God that he will be with us and do what his word says. The Bible says a number of times that God cannot lie, so his promises are true, but his promises are true within the context of the things that I'm explaining to you. It's not a blank card, okay? Hebrews 11 verse six, but without faith, it is impossible to please him for he who comes to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

Number six, we must pray in accordance with God's will. Our motives must be godly. We must not ask to fulfill our lusts.

And in first John 5, 14, it says, now this is the confidence that we have in him that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears. Number seven, we must pray with persistence and patience. Please remember that my goddess would not give up for 18 years.

Don't give up praying. Don't cease prayer. Pray without ceasing.

It's life or death. Prayer is life or death. Because we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but principalities and powers of the dark, which we cannot see, prayer is life or death.

We can only live life properly with a higher help from our Lord Jesus Christ and the Father. Prayer is life or death in these end times and what is coming towards us. Let us pray.

Father, thank you so much for the mighty examples of prayer answers that you have given even in our times. Thank you for the 24 hours of prayer today. Thank you for the reminder that prayer is life or death, as we have the opposition of the world, our own flesh, and the terrible opposition from the devil, the latter

one we cannot see, Lord.

So, Lord, we need your higher help to sustain us in this life. Help us to pray in Jesus' name. Help us to ask for cleansing anew.

Help us to believe your promises. Help us to pray in accordance with your will and help us to patiently wait for answers to prayer. And then, Lord, you said, and you told us to pray, you said, when I shut up heaven and there's no rain, or I command the locusts to devour the land, and that means we wouldn't have enough food, or if God sends pestilence such as COVID even among your people, then God, you told your people who are called by your name, they must humble themselves and pray and seek your face and turn from wicked ways.

Then you will hear from heaven and will forgive our sins and heal our land. Lord, we need to pray this, and it is life or death. Help us to do this, Lord, and heal our land.

And I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen and amen.

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