

# The Position of Power

by Jim Cymbala

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*Jim Cymbala emphasizes the transformative power of prayer in connecting with God and achieving spiritual victory.*

**Duration:** 35:32

**Scripture:** Psalm 50:15, Matthew 5:44, Luke 6:27, Romans 12:14, James 5:13

**Topics:** "Power"

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## Description

In this sermon, Pastor Jim Simba emphasizes the importance of prayer in our lives. He acknowledges that Satan tries to distract and cut us off from our supply line, which is prayer. He encourages the congregation to pray and seek God's help, as prayer has the power to change lives in just 60 seconds. Pastor Simba also highlights the need for a spirit of prayer in the church and urges everyone to prioritize prayer over busyness and distractions. He shares personal experiences of how prayer has brought breakthroughs and encouragement in his own life.

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## Transcript

I want you to just look at two verses, one from the Old Testament, one from the New. Always remember, no teaching, no command, no promise, no anything, no biographical truth can be gleaned from the Old Testament unless you find it confirmed in the New Testament. The covenant of Moses is much different than the covenant of grace through Jesus Christ in many, many, many ways.

For example, enemies were slaughtered in the Old Testament. We do not do that today. And if that Old Testament spirit gets in you, you can have what a lot of Christians have is a bitter spirit, the enemy, you know, we're gonna defeat those people who don't believe in God, we're gonna get them.

And that's not the spirit of Christianity. What are we supposed to do to our enemies? Love them and bless them and pray for them. Rightly dividing the word of truth is a very serious thing.

Nothing unless it's reaffirmed in the New Testament is applicable to us, because we're not under the law of Moses, we're under the law of Christ. In Psalm 50 we read, call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver you and you will honor me. Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver you and you will honor me.

And then just a little sentence from the book of James is any one of you in trouble, he should pray. Is anybody here in the building in trouble, he should pray. When I first went into the ministry, I got ahold of a book that greatly affected me.

It was paperback, I bought it used. Because I would visit used theological bookstores a lot because never having gone to seminary, gone to college to play basketball and gotten a degree, I wasn't classically prepared for the ministry, but here I was in the ministry. So books became my instructors, they still are.

And I would pray a lot and say, God, lead me to the books that will help me. I had grown up in and around church, but I wasn't a very strong Christian in high school and college. But in college I started to read and God began to deal with my heart, never dreaming I would end up in the ministry.

Well, right early on, I got ahold of this book called *The Kneeling Christian*. And it was falling apart even when I got it. By the time I got through with it, it was really falling apart.

The picture on the cover was of a man at a chair and the posture was simply, that's all the cover. I remember, I haven't seen the book, I don't know what happened to it, but the man was like this, just kneeling. He was kneeling at a chair and he was praying.

It's called *The Kneeling Christian*. And what it brought out was this, is that the most powerful person in the world, it's not the president or the queen of England or Mr. Putin in Russia, but the most powerful person in the world is the person who prays. Because in the mystery of prayer, you become linked up with Almighty God.

Luther, Martin Luther the Reformer said, prayer is omnipotent. We think that God is omnipotent. He said because prayer links you up with God, prayer becomes omnipotent.

You know what omnipotent means, right? All power. Prayer hooks you up, prayer in my life, prayer in your life hooks us up with an Almighty God. Now the subject of prayer, I'm calling the position of power.

The position of power, which is whether you kneel, whether you walk, whether you sit, whether you stand, whether you're in a train, whether you're in the shower, the thing about prayer, which in the Old Testament was most linked to the temple or the tabernacle before it, in the New Testament is linked to nothing, no place. On the day of Pentecost, they were praying and they were all sitting when the Spirit came. Peter goes up waiting in Acts 10 for lunch to be served, he goes up on the roof to pray, we don't know his posture, but the Spirit comes and visits him and he has a vision.

You can pray writing on something, just prayer has no posture, but it's the pouring out of our souls to God, usually helped and should be helped by the Holy Spirit, always helped by the Holy Spirit, because in the natural, we don't pray. To the natural person, we don't pray, but prayer, when it's done right, is something that's so marvelous, there's nothing else in the Bible that comes close to it. There's no practice that's commanded in Scripture that has as many promises connected to it than prayer.

Prayer has the most promises connected to it of anything we find in the Bible. Prayer is just, it's unique. Someone once said that the world can be divided between two kinds of people, there are people who pray and people who don't pray, that's how the world can be divided.

Maybe that's the way God sees the world, there are people who pray and people who don't pray. I would say this, among the Christian church, among Christians of all stripes, you can divide people by people who

pray, who practice prayer, who call on God, who spend time with God, talk to Him, listen to Him, and then people who are busy going to church and busy making a living and busy raising their children, but who find very little time, if at all, to actually practice prayer, to go someplace and be alone to talk with the Lord. Now, this, of course, has repercussions, because prayer is so awesome, and because it has more promises connected to it than anything else.

When we do what God tells us, notice God is the one telling us to pray, He's the one who invented this, we didn't, call upon me, and I will answer you and I'll deliver you, and then you'll honor me. I want my name to be honored among my people, I want things to be done, but for you to have those things done, you've got to call out to me and spend time with me. And again, the worst thing that can be written on anyone's tombstone at the end of their life is they had not because they asked not.

This thing of prayer is really amazing. It has all these promises connected to it, and it really defines everything that's important in the Bible, in a way. I'd like to present this to you in a way maybe you've never heard.

The Bible says at the very beginning in Genesis that Enoch walked with God, and Enoch was not because God took him. How do you walk with God? You pray. How else would you walk with God? People who walk with God pray.

Their life becomes a prayer. They start to obey that New Testament injunction, pray without ceasing. They maintain a spirit of prayer, they're always looking up and keep that channel so they can continually talk to God.

They can't talk to God every second of every day. They have other things to do, but they walk with God. The Bible says this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.

The Bible says without faith it's what? Impossible to please God. How do you know who has faith and who doesn't have faith? Very simply, who prays. It's impossible to have real faith in God and not pray because that God, if you have faith in him, says I will supply all of your needs, I am Jehovah Jireh, but here's the only way it will happen.

You ask, I'll give, you receive, and then you honor me. Faith without works is dead, the Bible says, and probably the first work of faith is prayer. Not going to church, not singing a praise and worship song, but James says it's the prayer of faith that will raise up the sick person.

Faith always has to express itself in prayer. For Jesus, who was full of faith and who was God in human form, would be found over and over again praying so much and seeing such results in his life that disciples never asked him once, teach us to preach or teach us to teach, but what did they ask him? Lord, teach us to what? Because they couldn't get over about what happened when he got through spending time with his father. Now, prayer, real prayer, the pouring out of your heart, not praying with your mind, but casting all your cares upon God, that kind of visceral, primitive preaching is not liked in a lot of Christian churches today.

It's too messy, it's too emotional sometimes. Like Paul says in one place, I travail like a mother giving birth till Christ be formed in you. A lot of churches don't want to hear somebody travailing like a mother giving birth, but that's the religion of the Bible.

That's not American Christianity that you grew up in or that I grew up in. That's not our model. How you grew up is irrelevant.

How I grew up is totally irrelevant. The Bible is our only guide for faith and doctrine, and it talks about David saying, I water my bed with tears, my pillow with tears at night as I think about you and I call on you. Prayer is very much an honor to God, and it is honored by God.

Prayer honors God because it gives a template to the world of here's my situation, and then I prayed, and then this is what God does. There's something about coming to God and just saying Abba Father, which is the foundation of prayer. When Jesus taught them to pray, what was the first thing he said to pray? Our Father which art in heaven.

Just something about coming to God and saying, God, you are my father. No matter what kind of human father I had or didn't have, what kind of mother I have or friends or spouse, whatever that is, God, you are my father, and I am looking to you. You are my support.

You are my supply. That honors God just like when our children and grandchildren run to us and say, Papa or Daddy, please help me. You're the only one who can do this.

That gives a joy to a parent more than any present that someone's gonna put under a tree. What parents wanna hear is that their children love them and express their need of them. So prayer honors God, but God honors prayer.

Not only does prayer honor God possibly more than the lifting of the hands and singing choruses like I will bless your name, I will bless your name. I can't prove this, but who knows that angels can do that and angels are doing it right now, but angels can't pray. There's no hint of an angel praying.

Angels can worship. Heaven will be all about worship, but there's something here on earth where God has identified his people as those who call upon his name. In Genesis three at the end, the first people who belong to God were called those who called upon the name of the Lord.

Seth gave birth to Enosh, and then men, for some reason, we don't know why, began to call out to God and say, oh God, have mercy, help me. Help me, God, supply or heal my child. How God honors prayer.

Think of all the Bible verses that are taken up with prayers of great people. Moses' prayers are in the Bible. God just doesn't tell stories and make promises.

Prayers are so beautiful to him that he puts prayers in the Bible. We have prayers of David. Most of the Psalms are prayers of somebody, a lot of them from David.

He's just crying out to God. He's not talking to us, he's talking to God, and God finds that so important. He says, put that in the book.

It'll help other people to pray. And when Christianity becomes over-intellectual and over-mental, and we're just analyzing verses and setting doctoral patterns and systems, it loses its juice, it loses its power. It loses its soul because the Christianity about the Bible is not intellectual only.

It's the heart going up to God and saying, God, have mercy and help me. That's how the church was born. We know it was praying when it was born.

We have the prayers of David. We have the prayers of kings. Look at Solomon's long prayer at the dedication of the temple.

That prayer is a long prayer, and every word is recorded in it because God wants us to be encouraged. Look how men who believed in me prayed. Look how women like Hannah who wanted to have a baby, look how she prayed.

Her prayer is in the Bible. Why would a prayer be in the Bible? Because God wants to encourage us. This is how you get victory.

People who have the victory pray. People who don't have the victory don't pray. It's that simple.

It's that crude. It's that up-in-your-face real. People who pray get victory.

People who pray become more like Christ. People who pray understand their Bible better. People who pray are more loving.

Why? Because there's something about prayer that puts it all together. And after all the armor is mentioned in Ephesians 6 that we all have to wear, and then Paul says, yeah, the helmet of salvation and the belt of truth and all that other stuff, and he says on top of that, pray at all times in the Holy Spirit with all kinds of prayer. Because without prayer, the armor becomes just useless.

Prayer is so precious to God that they're kept in bowls in heaven. None of the choir songs are kept in bowls. And I love the choir songs.

None of our praise and worship is kept in bowls. But prayers are kept in bowls. Some simple person in the mountains of Peru today just lifts up their heart, some new Christian, and says, oh, Dios, ajudanos.

And that's kept forever, forever. Prayers can't die. They're kept in heaven.

When you and I say the simplest prayer, it doesn't evaporate. It's kept. It's so precious to God.

He keeps it in bowls. Is that amazing? And counseling a lot of people over a lot of years and seeing my own mistakes and failures is that when we get away from prayer, we get weak and we get defeated by the enemy, no matter what verses we're quoting. And when we spend time with God and pray as a church or as individual, we became strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

How many can put your hands together and say amen to that? Historically, when you look at the history of the Christian church, prayer has preceded every great awakening in a church, in a land, in a person's life. When people get sick and tired of being sick and tired and they're tired of the way they're living and they say, no, I gotta get to God. God's gotta help me.

God has to help me. And then they begin to cry to God serious. There's a revival.

There's a reviving. There's a renewal that happens in their life. When that spirit of prayer dies and people stop praying because they become proud of what they have or get denominationally or doctrinally oriented and take their eyes off of the Lord and stop being humble and childlike, then the revival lifts and then you gotta wait till some other awakening comes.

That's the history of the Christian church. So let me wrap this all up by thinking of three things before we close. Number one, what does prayer mean to God? What does prayer mean to the devil? And what does prayer mean for us? What does prayer mean to God? Well, it's the sweetest incense that you can offer.

You know, in the tabernacle and later the temple, there was an altar of incense that was really between the holy place and the holy of holies. It was right at that curtain. And nobody went in there to the holy of holies except the high priest once a year.

But the incense were burnt every day and God said it had to be mixed a certain way and it couldn't be used for anything else. God said when I smell that, it'll be a sweet savor in my nostrils. Now God doesn't have nostrils like we do.

That was all a picture and a type. We don't burn incense. That day is long gone.

But we have access into the holy of holies, every one of us, 24 seven. Through Jesus Christ, you can get God's ear like right now. You can talk, how many are happy? We can talk to God like right now.

We don't have to go through a whole series. We don't have to go to the church building. You don't have to talk to a priest.

You can talk to God right now. And that incense, that incense of prayer seems to be in the Bible the sweetest thing, as I said, is kept in bowls. Prayers never die.

You know, I just feel impressed to repeat this. Couple weeks ago, my assistant Faola said to me, there's somebody up on the floor who security just brought up. They didn't call.

They don't, person doesn't have an appointment, but they wanna see you. I said, that's unusual. They always call up because I could be doing anything.

No, but she had gone out and saw the gentleman and she let me know just somehow non-verbally. I just got the sense she felt you should see this person. So I said, bring him in.

And in walked this middle-aged, well, well-dressed British gentleman, lived south of London with a high position in Mercedes-Benz. And when I asked him what brought him there, he said, well, with that nice British accent, he said, my mom was a Christian. She was in the Anglican Church and then she really had an experience with Jesus.

And she was special and she began to pray for me. But here I am at this age, I've never been able to put it all together. I can't, I don't know why I am not serving the Lord, why I'm not a Christian.

But I read a book you wrote and it touched me. And I just said to my chauffeur, I'm on my way to Kennedy, don't go straight to Kennedy, go to downtown Brooklyn. And he told me, pastor, you don't wanna go to downtown Brooklyn, which I took as an insult.

How many say amen? What does the chauffeur driver say? I never know. So he said, I told him, no, just go. And I came to the church and the guy just walked me up here to the fifth floor.

And as he was telling me his story, I felt the Lord speak to me and say, he's only here for one reason. His mother's prayers are still before me. She's died.

But when you die, your prayers don't die. No, no, no, no. Prayers never die.

Come on, can we say amen to that? Prayers never die. To God, when we come and say, Abba, Father, I can't make it without you, that's the sweetest incense you can offer. And who knows that it's better than saying, I will bless your name.

I know that's what we're gonna sing in heaven, but now, as a parent, what do you wanna hear someone say? You're the greatest, Dad, or, Dad, I'm in trouble. I need your help. You wanna hear, I can help him.

Just to hear, I can't make it, I need you, that means more to God. When you and I say that to God in prayer, it must mean a lot to him because why would he keep telling us to pray? Not only that we need it, but that it's such a joy to him. When we say, I have no other plan, but God, you are it.

You are the bottom line. I can't make it without you. That brings joy to God's heart.

To Satan, it's a terror. When people pray, it's a terror to Satan. When people get serious and start to pour out their heart to God, Satan is terrorized because he knows that now God is coming on the scene.

You and me, we're chump change to him. He can knock us out every day, twice on Sunday. Am I right or wrong? But when you pray and now help starts coming from heaven, oh no, that's another whole thing.

When we have planning meetings, when we have strategy sessions, Satan, he don't like that, but that's like, yeah. But when a church gathers to pray, why do you think there's praise and worship everywhere in America, but you can't find 10 churches hardly that have a strong prayer meeting? Why do you think that would be? Why wouldn't Satan fight prayer and worship like he would prayer? Because he's smart. He doesn't like praise and worship.

He doesn't like sermons. He doesn't like Christian books. He doesn't like anything.

But prayer, prayer means he's doomed. Prayer means it's over. God's riding into the scene now because here's what happens when you pray.

This is what undermines Satan. When you and I get desperate and we really pray, we go to the throne of grace and the first thing we receive is mercy. You and I cannot pray without being convicted of any sin in our life.

You can't. No, no, no, no. When you get along with God, am I right or wrong, ladies and gentlemen? Sin comes up like real up in your grill close to you and you deal with it because you know you can't go on until he's washed away your sins.

That is 90% of the battle won against Satan. Satan deals in temptation and sin and when he can plan sin in our lives and we don't confess it, he's got us compromised. But when you and I pray, this is why Satan blocks prayer and why the flesh doesn't wanna pray when things aren't right because you know the minute you get along with God, boom, God's gonna put his finger on the thing and he's gonna say, that's got to go.

Oh, but praise God when he takes care of it. How blessed is the man whom the Lord forgives all his iniquities. Can we say amen to that? How blessed, how happy.

Also at the throne of grace, Hebrews tells us, we also receive grace. What does grace mean in that context? It means this. Not only does mercy come and our hearts are cleansed, that makes us stronger to begin with, but now help is coming from heaven.

Heaven's coming to earth. When you pray, heaven comes to earth. Did you know that when you pray, God begins to show you what the devil's doing that you didn't even know he was doing? But people who don't pray don't know that.

The devil's beating them up one side, down the other. They don't even know his strategy, but when you get along with God, you say, no, you just read the scripture. No, unless you pray, the scriptures are closed to you.

Luther said, Saint Martin Luther said, whoever prays well, studies well. Because when you pray, there's enlightenment. You open the word of God, and the truth is just jumping out at you.

And when you don't pray, it's just your little mind, my little finite mind, trying to understand incomprehensible truths. And sure, if you're a preacher, come on, pastors that are here, you just put one of us in a corner for a little while. We can get three points and a conclusion out of any portion of scripture, but a real sermon, something from God, no, no.

You can't do that unless you pray. Do you understand what Satan is doing? You see yourself the way you really are. Because we're all liars.

We all lie to ourselves, but you get along with God, he shows you what's up real quick, and what Satan's doing. Oh, it's so good to pray. How many have ever had prayer, good prayer that helped your life immensely? Just hold up your hand.

I'm not asking how many times you did. I'm not, who am I to judge you? I'm just telling you, there's nothing like spending time with God. Finally, what does prayer mean to Satan? It's his terror, it's his doom.

To God, it's a sweet incense. How about, how about to us? To us, it's victory. When you pray, you win.

When you don't, you lose. That's it. Oh, Pastor Simba, that's simplistic.

Come on, I'm, you know, no, just show me in the Bible. No, men ought always to pray and not give up. Pray, ask and you shall receive.

Seek and you'll find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you. Jesus said, just never quit.

You gotta keep praying. The early church, it says, continued in prayer, because I have found in my life, you can have a good time of prayer one day, but the very next day, you need it more because there's just a lot of junk coming at you. Come on, do I get a witness here? You can't just say, oh, I had a good time on Sunday, and now, you know, I'll visit the church next Sunday or even Tuesday night.

No, no, we need it. Pray without ceasing. What does prayer mean to us? It means children come back to the Lord.

It means you don't know what to do, and when you pray, you know what to do. It means wisdom, it means grace, it means patience. When you pray, you get love for people who are obnoxious.

Am I right or wrong? But without prayer, you can be quoting verses all you want, but unless you get in the presence of God in prayer and call on the Lord and let him, you can get crusty, you get cynical, you get negative. You know why Christians are negative? You meet a negative Christian, they don't pray. You cannot pray and be negative, because when you pray, you realize how great God is, and you get a spirit of faith, come on, and you get hope and you get rejoicing.

I have found in my own life that when I pray, I have an energy to do what God's called me to do. When I don't pray, it's a burden, it's a burden. When I don't pray, preaching a sermon becomes a labor, and when I do pray, it's like just an overflow of my heart.

When you pray, you don't have fear. When you pray, you don't have fear of anyone. But when you don't pray, you're afraid of every mosquito that flies by your little house, am I right? How great is God that he's the one who says, please pray, please bring your trouble to me.

Is anyone in trouble today? Let them pray. Don't depend on FEMA. Don't depend on the Brooklyn Tabernacle.

God could use anything to help you, but it has to come from God. If anyone has you in trouble, let them pray. Is that our reaction? Or do we worry, do we call people? I'm talking to the people behind me and the people in front of me.

We live in a very prayerless day. Churches have music, churches have everything. They put on shows, they have PowerPoints, they have everything, but I'm telling you, ask Chaplain Rents, he's been around.

Ask him as he travels around the country how many times you find a place where people are gonna come and pray, because our faith is more intellectual than really rock-bottom soul foundation, because when you believe, how many believe that God is alive? Lift your hand up. How many believe God wants to help us because he loves us? Lift up your hand. How many believe he's just, his ear is open to our cry, right? See, and that's why the devil will block every attempt at prayer.

He'll fight me on this sermon. But oh, every time I've had breakthroughs with God in prayer, my life changes. I've had, encouragement comes when you pray.

I've had times in my life when I wanted to lay it all down. I wanted to quit. Just couldn't take it.

From pain, from discouragement, from tiredness, from whatever. Haven't you ever been in that place? I said, haven't anybody ever been in that place? Ah, but when you pray, suddenly you can take on the world. You can jump over a wall.

You can do anything. Why? Because, oh, just to be in God's presence. Let's bow our heads.

God, before we talk about what might be happening right now in this building, we wanna ask you, Lord, would you make us, please, men and women of prayer? Would you grant us the spirit of prayer as a church? Start with me. Would you make me a man of prayer? So that people will remember me, or people will think of me and say, not the best preacher, not the best leader. I don't care about that so much, Lord, but they'll say, but he prayed for us.

Lord, our schedules are so busy. We're texting all of North America sometimes, and we have no time to talk to you. And yet, the texting won't help us.

You will help us. But Satan confuses, distracts. He does everything he can so that we'll be cut off from our supply line.

You are our supply. Prayer is the line. People here today, Lord, listening to me, their lives could change in 60 seconds if they just pray.

That burden they're carrying, it's depressing them. That pastor who's visiting, oppressed in his mind by financial needs and trouble in the church. And Lord, unless he finds something from heaven, unless heaven comes down into his soul, he's not gonna make it.

Not gonna make it. I'm not gonna make it, Lord, without your help. I, Jim Simba, I will not make it without your help.

Will not do it, I will not. But with you, I can do all things. Everything you call me to do.

Help us to not live in a spiritual fantasy, talking about stuff and never doing it, living on Christian slogans, and never really having a secret life with you. Please, Lord, from the top of the balcony and across the street and the overflow rooms to the choir behind me, stir up a spirit of prayer. Stir up a spirit of prayer.

We set no goals. We don't say this is how we'll do it. You will lead every one of us.

But God, we've got to talk to you every day. We gotta bring our problems. Otherwise, I'm gonna carry my problems and those problems will kill me.

They will kill me. They'll eat me up for lunch. But when we give them to you, oh, oh, what blessed, sweet assurance there is when we pray.

Anybody up in the balcony or downstairs, say, Pastor, that was for everyone, starting with you, Pastor. But today, I'm in trouble. I'm in trouble in my heart.

I'm in trouble in my mind. I'm in trouble in finances. I'm in trouble in my family.

I'm in trouble. Obviously, Christians can be in trouble or James would not write. Is anybody in trouble? Let them pray.

If you're up in the balcony or downstairs, you just get up out of your seat right now and you come here and stand. The Bible says, is anybody in trouble? Let them pray. Now, do what the Bible says.

Come up here and pray. Tell God about it. The depression will get worse until you pray.

If you're behind me, you're in any kind of trouble, let Him pray. That's what the Bible says. Just let Him pray.

Just talk to God now, everybody. If you're in trouble, tell Him. Tell Him what it is.

Tell Him where you need Him. Tell Him what you can't take anymore. Just quietly speak to God from your heart so He won't distract anyone else.

Hold us close to you, Lord. Hold us close to you today. Keep our minds clean and our hearts pure, Lord.

Thank you for your word to us today, Lord. Thank you for visitors. Thank you for regular attendees.

Thank you for the choir. Thank you for your word. Thank you for the Holy Spirit.

Thank you most of all for Jesus Christ. Thank you for the privilege of prayer. Thank you for the throne of grace.

Thank you for mercy and grace to help us in our time of need. Thank you that your ear is always open to our cry. Thank you for being such a loving Father.

Abba Father, we love you, Abba Father. Help us now to love one another and encourage each other, we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

All the ladies, turn around and hug about five ladies. All the men, hug about five men. No handshakes.

Come on, let's hug one another. Say something good to someone.

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