

# Essentials of Effective Prayer

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of forgiveness, faith, and prayer in the Christian life. It highlights the power of forgiveness, the connection between faith and forgiveness, and the need to have a heart free from bitterness. The speaker encourages developing a habit of forgiveness, faith in God's ability to turn situations for good, and the practice of thanking God in all circumstances.*

**Duration:** 52:30

**Scripture:** Mark 11:25, Mark 11:22, Matthew 6:14, Genesis 50:20, Philippians 4:6, Jeremiah 29:13

**Topics:** "Forgiveness", "Faith and Prayer"

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## Description

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## Transcript

It's a wonderful thing to kneel down and pray and so when our eyes are closed it's good to try and remember, be conscious of Jesus there in our midst and in the beginning you may not think too often about it but if you keep at it here I've been in huge churches where we kneel down and pray and many times when I couldn't hear others I was comforted by the fact that prayer is not only speaking it is listening as well. Prayer is like making a phone call to God and God's line is always open. The only time he won't listen is if there's sin in your life it says if I regard sin in my heart Psalm 66 verse 18 if I regard sin in my heart the Lord will not hear me or to paraphrase it the Lord will not pick up the phone because there's sin there but if we have confessed sin the Lord will always hear us and sisters you must pray little children can pray and when I couldn't hear people at a distance I was remember that prayer is also listening so I can't hear that other brother or sister praying okay Lord now I can listen what are you trying to say to me when I can hear another brother or sister praying then I can follow along with that prayer and say amen and all the time in a public prayer meeting like this when I cannot hear what someone is saying I can listen that's a very good habit to develop you know when it says that Jesus was would spend long hours in prayer what do you think he was doing he wasn't telling the father so many things what is it the father didn't know the Jesus said the father knows everything before you even tell him so we can get bored trying to pray and pray and say so many things but I found if you develop the habit of listening and listening is not something you can do only when you are on your knees you can be listening when you're working you can be

listening when you're doing something else in the midst of other work when you're driving down the road to have a heart attitude that says Lord I'd like to hear you you know like Samuel prayed like Eli told him speak Lord for your servant is listening I want to encourage you to develop that habit of prayer because it changed my prayer life I'll tell you because I read a word like pray without ceasing in 1 Thessalonians 5 and Jesus said in verse Luke 18 verse 1 we should pray always there's no verse in the Bible which says you must pray for 10 minutes or one hour or two hours it says pray always and pray without ceasing and the I can't be talking to God and telling him all types of things without ceasing but I can be listening without ceasing and you know you develop this habit of listening listening listening listening listening during the day you will even find over a period of time that God speaks to you at night you know you happen to wake up in the middle of the night sometime say Lord I'm listening you've got something to say to me why did you wake me up at this time so it's a very good habit to develop I want to tell you after I've just enjoyed it in fact if you keep listening God can give you words that you can bless other people with words of encouragement and it's a wonderful thing when you can give to someone what I'm not talking about preaching just talking about sharing one word to encourage someone in a phone call or an email or anything it's a wonderful thing to be always listening just a little practical suggestion on prayer so we've spoken a lot in this church about new covenant and the reason we emphasize that so much is because hardly anybody emphasizes it and when we see portions of Scripture which are not being emphasized by others I believe God needs to have some churches emphasizing those things that are left out I look at the whole Bible in picture language I'd say it's like a jigsaw puzzle for the face of Jesus I mean if you have the whole thing there you see the face of Jesus Christ I'm only using an illustration the whole Bible and what people have done is there are some people who got favorite subjects from the Bible and they always pick those favorite subjects it's just like concentrating on a few pieces of that jigsaw puzzle and many pieces are missing so you can't see the face of Jesus clearly at all because there are some pieces of this jigsaw puzzle missing completely so when you read the whole Bible you say hey these are the pieces that's missing and so then God raises up people to emphasize those truths which are not emphasized by others that's how God raised up Martin Luther 500 years ago to preach that salvation is not by giving money in the Roman Catholic Church but by repentance and faith in Jesus Christ so I want to encourage all of you to read the New Testament get into the habit of reading a little bit of the New Testament every day and say Lord I want to know you better I want to learn to love you more and it can make a tremendous difference in your life so what I want to share with you today is the New Covenant prayer with Jesus taught us in Matthew chapter 6 he was telling us how not to pray first of all and then how to pray the first thing he said about we are not to pray Matthew 6 by the way verse 5 he says when you pray don't be like the hypocrites and he's talking particularly about he said they love to stand and pray in the synagogues the street corners to be seen by men or to be heard by men so the first thing the Lord tells us about prayer is don't pray to people to impress people now it's very easy to say that but to actually come to the place where you pray in public anyway to pray to God is quite difficult at least I found it difficult I remember the first time I prayed in public as a young man I was more conscious of the people listening to me I wasn't praying to Jesus at all I mean I knew the words to pray but I was a very conscious a lot of people listening to me and I'd go home and I'd say Lord that I didn't really pray that to you I prayed it and made it impressive for people to listen I would don't want to do it like that and the next time I'd pray in public again it was there again I'd say Lord I'll tell you it took me years not days but years to break free from that and say Lord Jesus I'm gonna pray to you in public as well I want to be free from whether people think it's a good prayer or I'm talking to you and I'm leading everybody in prayer to you I want to encourage you to it will not come overnight it may take you a few years but you start today Lord Jesus help me to be conscious of you when I pray and little by little you know what will happen you'll become more and more

conscious of the presence of the Lord all the time in your life and that'll make a tremendous difference in your life that you're conscious of the Lord's presence and in his presence is fullness of joy your life will be so cheerful and joyful and all that depression and heaviness that can come through circumstances will disappear and your life will be like a smooth sailing on a calm sea so here's something that we can train ourselves develop so he said don't a hypocrite is one who's trying to impress people so don't pray like that it's the first thing he said you're not to pray and this is people who do that it says in verse 5 and they got their reward their reward was they wanted to impress everybody with their prayer everybody was impressed sure they got their reward that's not why we pray I'm not saying this to condemn anyone we all are like that in the beginning but if you battle it dear brothers and sisters you can come to a place as I said after a while where you're more conscious of Jesus than about people and gradually it moves on to our singing so often when we sing we are more conscious of the song and the tune and everybody's singing together we're not conscious that I'm praying to Jesus in that song as well Lord I'm saying something to you it completely changes our life when we practice this more and more that I'm praying to the Lord Jesus ask the Holy Spirit to help us so that's a good lesson for all of us to learn in praying and singing to develop the consciousness of Jesus being there and I'm talking to him and praying to him and so in that connection he said pray to your father who's in secret and your father and season secret verse 6 will reward you Matthew 6 verse 6 when it says go to your inner room and close your door I look at it not just a physical door that's also there but in a room like this when I shut my eyes I'm closing the door and then I'm praying to the father in secret because I've shut the door and I don't want to be conscious of other people here with me in the room close the door and I pray to the father and a wonderful thing when I'm really praying to him it says your father will see in secret and he'll reward you openly I want to encourage you to take that little phrase your father will see in secret and reward you openly so the other thing he said about not to pray is one was this you know pray in presence of the Lord secondly Matthew 6 and verse 7 when you're praying don't use meaningless repetition there are some churches where they say hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah it's like to me it's a meaningless repetition I believe in saying hallelujah but if you read in Revelation in chapter 19 they always say hallelujah because first time the word hallelujah comes in the New Testament by the way in case you didn't know is in Revelation 19 turn there turn with me for a moment there because hallelujah is a very common phrase used by Christians and they'd be surprised to know that's never used in the New Testament except in Revelation 19 and I want to say hallelujah but I want to say it the way it's written in the Bible you know when we align our thinking not according to what is Christian tradition or a Pentecostal tradition but according to the Bible then it's good to say the way the Bible says it turn with me to Revelation in chapter 19 so this is the first time by the way in the entire New Testament that the word hallelujah comes doesn't come at all before this and he says here in the very first words the last part hallelujah why because salvation and glory and power belong to our God and because his judgments are true and righteous and he's judged this Babylonian corrupt Christianity which he calls a harlot here and he's avenged the blood of his servants and then a second time hallelujah again a reason because the smoke of this corrupt Babylonian Christianity is judged as rising up forever and the from the throne the others also say verse four amen hallelujah and then again we find in verse six a great multitude towards you and saying hallelujah because the Lord our God the Almighty is reigning so notice there that it's not an empty hallelujah hallelujah means yah is the short for Jehovah j-h is short for j-e-h-o-v-h Jehovah or Yahweh so hallel is praise hallelujah is Hebrew for praise the Lord so you might if you say praise the Lord in English that's the same as hallelujah so why am I praising the Lord yeah something wonderful has happened God has sovereignly overruled some situation there can be all types of things so what the Lord said in Matthew turning back to Matthew 6 is don't say something meaningless in prayer there are many Christians who develop a habit of saying something and they're not thinking of what

they're saying it's just as a ritual they say it what we say must be from the heart I mean it I mean praise the Lord because he's done something here praise the Lord because God is on the throne praise the Lord that he's triumphed over the devil in this situation or something like that it's very good and it's not just in prayer time you know many times when I'm alone I say well praise the Lord for what you did here Lord is wonderful to see or when he saved you from some accident spontaneous Lord praise you I praise the Lord for what you've done so don't use meaningless repetition it's not just in the word hallelujah there are other things that we can we think that God will hear us if I say that 20 times that's what he says here in he Matthew 6 verse 7 the non-christians they think the Gentiles they think they'll be heard for their many words if they pray a long prayer God will hear it it's a lot of rubbish I mean God is a father he's not waiting for a big lecture from you prayer is listening and then speaking to God and I'll tell you in my in my prayers I listen a lot more than I speak and I'll tell you the reason supposing I'm sitting here talking to a man who is a ten times more godly than me I won't talk so much I'll tell you honestly I'll say hey I got a lot to listen from you brother I'd like to hear you I may say a few things and if I got one hour I may speak to him for five minutes and listen for 55 minutes I mean if I'm speaking on a telephone for example and you see me speaking for 55 minutes and listening for five minutes you'd be absolutely sure that the person at the other end of the phone is a young brother on the other hand if you see me on a phone listening for 55 minutes and speaking for five minutes you know that the person on the other end is a more godly man than me so imagine if you're speaking to God should you be listening more or speaking more you can answer that definitely you should be listening much more but so many people it's sitting in the presence of the most of a godly person let's say a human being first of all and you talk talk talk and say okay bye you don't even give a chance to talk that's how a lot of people pray to God they're given their big shopping list to God this is what I want there's all these things okay in Jesus name Amen and that's why our prayer life is so shallow our relationship with God is so shallow it's like a husband and wife who hardly ever talked to each other if a wife you also cheat tells her husband is okay when you come back from work here's a list of 25 things that you must buy for me when you come back and that's all there is every day a lot of Christian people prayers like that there's no expression of don't you think your wife should express her affection to her husband and say how much she loves him and that's how that's how I want it that's how I do that frequently to Jesus God already knows my shopping list you know I don't have to make a list on that but what he wants to hear from me is that I really love him that he means more to me than everything else in the world I often think of that story where you know the ten lepers they were healed you know that story they cried with a loud voice Lord heal us and Jesus said go and show yourself to the priest and on the way before they reach the priest on the way they were healed and one man you know the story it's in Luke 17 one man came back and with a loud voice he fell at Jesus feet and said thank you Lord okay maybe I should show that to you so because there's something very interesting there that happens at that time which you may not have noticed turn with me to Luke's gospel in chapter 17 and verse 11 see this is I'm talking about prayer these lepers were praying as he entered a village verse 12 Luke 17 verse 12 ten lepers who stood at a distance met him and they raised their voices notice the phrase they raised their voices and said Jesus master have mercy on us and when he saw them he said go show yourself to the priest as they were going they were cleansed and one of them when he saw that he had been healed he said I have to go back and tell the Lord let me assume that they had already walked about half a mile half a mile means what 10-15 minutes they'd already been walking or let's say one mile they'd walked 20 minutes and they must have thought now who's gonna go back and another walk another while back go and thank Jesus forget it but one man said no I'm gonna walk that one mile back and thank the one who I've been a leper all my life and hear this person heal me you mean I won't go and say thank you to him he left the other nine and started walking back and it's amazing how he went back and again he fell on his

face with a loud voice again verse 15 he prayed with a loud voice and we read in verse 13 and he thanked God with a loud voice as we read in verse 15 that's wonderful when I can pray fervently and thank God fervently when the prayer is answered as well very often we forget it and that man was a Samaritan the other nine were Jews and one was a Samaritan Samaritan is like the low-class you know people who are despised and that is the man who thought of thanking God and the point I wanted you to notice is this when Jesus saw this he said in verse 17 weren't there ten people cleansed where are the nine so my question is this does did Jesus expect the other nine also to come and say thank you I mean we teach our children to say thank you when they're three years old it's just it is the right thing to do when you get something and particularly if it's something like cleansing from leprosy that's not like a little gift that changes your whole life and Jesus is where are the nine it's not because Jesus is waiting there to get thanks he's not a selfish person saying hey I'm waiting for everybody to come and say thank you to me rubbish Jesus was the humblest man that walked on the earth and humble people don't go around expecting thank you from others then I ask myself you know for example I do something for people I've done lots of things for people for Christians in the last 50 years of my life and I can tell you most of them are not thankful in fact many of them bite the hand that has fed them for many years I've had that experience numerous times biting the hand that fed you but I say that's okay I don't I serve the Lord not people but why did Jesus expect these nine lepers to come not for his sake that's the point I want you to see for their sake when I am thankful it makes me a better person it's not that Jesus gets something when I say thank you to him so when the Lord tells us to be thankful it is for us we go more outside ourself when we pray asking for something we're centered in ourself I want something I want something I want something but when we say thank you I'm not gonna get any more by saying thank you I'm thinking outside of myself I need to give God glory it's a wonderful habit to develop to say thank you Lord for what you've done for me in fact every day it says in everything give thanks just to just for the fact that we're alive in the morning when so many hundreds of thousands of people in the world have died thank you Lord thank you Lord for small mercies and so it was Jesus wanted those nine people to be changed that's why he wanted them to thank and now you see what happened read carefully when we give thanks it says in verse 18 we give glory one way of giving glory to God is just by saying thank you thank you Lord for what you did there thank you for this so thank you we can keep on thanking him for anything thank you for a safe journey or thank you for anything that is one way to give glory to God the other thing I want you to see is Jesus said to this one Samaritan who came stand up your faith margin of my Bible says has saved you that's the correct translation your faith has saved you what did the other nine get healing what did this guy get healing plus salvation your faith has saved you so he got something more than the other nine just because he came and said thank you and I've learned that that people who learn to give thanks to God always end up getting something more than those who just pray it's really true and very often we miss the best part of our fellowship with God when we don't thank him for what he's done I really believe you know NASB says your faith has made you well but in the margin of my Bible says literally what Jesus said was he your faith has saved you I don't know why they didn't put it in the main text but your faith has saved you salvation you got salvation whereas the others only got healing that's a great example of what a warning of what we can miss when we don't thank God and think of the our past life and the numerous situations in our life where we got something and we didn't thank him we missed something there so if he that's another habit to change Lord I want to develop the habit of thanking you for little things big things it'll make a tremendous difference in our life it'll make our life more cheerful make us more cheerful in our relationships with other people I want to show you one example of that in Philippians in chapter 4 Philippians chapter 4 almost impossible commands Philippians 4 6 be anxious for nothing that means have zero anxiety in your life we should have a concern for things but there's a difference between having

a concern and anxiety for example if your child did not come back from school at the proper time they were supposed to come back here most parents go and pick up their children in India children come back on their own they ride a bicycle or something like that and if they're supposed to come back at 330 and they don't come back by 330 they don't come back by 430 should you be concerned of course should you be anxious no because the Bible says don't be anxious I mean if you're not concerned you're not a good father or mother you should be concerned hey what happened but to be anxious to be in a panic and to imagine that the worst possible things happen no now how to get rid of it how to get rid of this anxiety which will naturally come into our hearts in some situation here's the answer where Philippians 4:6 be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication means specific request and with thanksgiving notice that phrase with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God so even in a situation that can cause panic the Lord says no don't get anxious now take that request to God maybe you're not facing it right now maybe this is the word that will help you three months from now but keep it in mind make your requests known to God with specific requests this is Lord this is what I'm concerned about this is the thing that's worrying me now I want to make it known to you and when I'm saying thank you I'm saying Lord I believe my request has come to you the file is on your table I've with my request written on it I want you to answer me thanksgiving is the thing by which I say I believe you've heard me it's very important when I pray to God to add thank you and when you do that you made your request name to God it says the peace of God which surpasses all understanding and comprehension will guard your heart and your mind in Christ Jesus I'm not saying that every single problem in our life will be solved we live in a world which is under the curse and because this world is under the curse there are sicknesses babies die there are all types of problems on this earth people go through losing a job financial difficulties but in the midst of it all if I follow this principle our Heavenly Father will do something for us which other people in the world cannot face see problems come to all of us because they're all children of Adam we are made of dust and the world is under a curse and we as long as you live in this world we face a lot of these problems I'm not saying that we won't face them but it's wonderful to have God as our father that we can take these things to him and say thank you father that you heard me and my it says my mind and my heart will be protected in the Psalms I want to turn with you to Psalm 34 and Psalm 34 and verse 19 Psalm 34 and verse 19 says the afflictions of righteous people are many but the Lord delivers him out of them all in some way or the other it's a great verse for me many are the afflictions of the righteous but the Lord delivers him out of all of them in some wonderful way that's what I see in all the miracles that Jesus servant is sick five miles away or ten miles away you know the centurion told the Lord that Lord Lazarus is sick and he's dead now he's dead for four days Lord there are 5,000 men and 5,000 others men women and children 10,000 people there's not enough food everything was a prayer what shall we do Jesus solved the problem they cried out they believed he'd do it they did it now I'll tell you the cases where there were a few cases where he didn't do it turn with me to Matthew chapter 13 hometown that is Nazareth that's where he grew up they knew they had treated him just like any other man for 30 years he came to his hometown in Matthew 13:54 they're wondering how did he get miraculous powers all these miraculous they are here maybe his other children and his sisters I don't know how many but at least two they are here with us where did this man get all this power and they took offense at him they couldn't respect him because of their unbelief this isn't the saddest words in the Gospels question did they need a miracle did many of them need miracles yes did Jesus have the power second question did Jesus have the power to do those miracles yes after six where it's written like this verse 5 mark 6 you know verse 1 it says he came to there in Matthew 13 it says he did not do it just you they got healed but he couldn't do many miracles for them and he wondered at their unbelief it's a very important thing in the New Testament that you can't get something unless you have faith for it without faith it is impossible to please God see that verse in

Hebrews 11 don't have faith it's not you can't please God you read the Bible every day you can't please God because you don't have faith it is impossible whatever else you may do you come to the meeting and you are regular in the church services but you don't have faith it is in part failure of faith and the devil said no you won't die they doubted God they didn't believe very very important without faith it is impossible to please us and further in that verse because when you come to God so the first thing he says believe that there's a God up there in heaven and secondly believe that he's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him you must believe that if I seek him with all my heart I will find him he will answer me very often we don't get an answer because of we don't really seek him wholeheartedly turn with me to Jeremiah 29 this is one mark of faith one mark of faith is this you know he read it in Hebrews 11 Jeremiah 29 and verse 13 the Lord says verse 12 first you will call upon me you will pray to me and I will listen to you listen you will call upon me verse 12 you pray to me I will listen to you Jeremiah 29 12 and you will seek me but you will find me only when you search for me with all your heart not otherwise if you don't search for me with all your heart you're not gonna find me you know brothers and sisters how much we have missed by not seeking God with all our heart I've used this illustration supposing you're walking in the dark on a grassy field and you drop a 10 cent coin it's all dark how long will you be searching for it I don't think we'll search for very long I can't imagine any of you wasting more than 15 minutes 15 minutes a long time looking for a 10 cent coin in the grass you say forget it but if you had picked up a hundred thousand dollars from somewhere in cash maybe from the bank or something and you went to different places before you went back home doing different things and when you get back home you find hey that's missing you accidentally left it in one of these five or ten places you visited between the bank and your home how long will you search for that 15 minutes you would search day and night for it make a phone call go here go there go there search every place where you went to and I say many people treat God like a 10 cent coin they seek for something they didn't get it oh well I don't have time to pursue that anymore we'll see tomorrow you wouldn't do that if it was a hundred thousand dollars that you misplaced somewhere you see God says you seek me and find me when I'm the most valuable thing in your life you make God the most valuable person in your life and he'll turn up for you every time you need him that's the secret make him the most valuable person in your life every time you need him he'll turn up there but you treat him casually oh well I couldn't find him doesn't matter God says okay that is unbelief so without faith it is impossible to please him so these are some things that we must bear in mind when we think of how not to pray don't pray with unbelief I want to say one more thing Jesus said in Matthew 6 and verse 14 if you forgive others for their transgressions your heavenly father will forgive you and if you don't forgive others your father will not forgive you very important when I'm praying I must make sure I've forgiven others Jesus repeated that turn with me it's a little more clear in Mark chapter 11 amazing how Jesus taught his disciples some secrets of prayer the reason why many people don't get answers to that prayer Mark and chapter 11 and verse 22 have faith in God there are people who ask this question a little a little earlier verse 13 Matthew 11 13 mark 11 13 sorry mark 11 13 you know the story Jesus saw a fig tree and he went looking for fruit it was not the season for fruit and he cursed it verse 14 may no one ever eat fruit from you again and people ask me what did Jesus get upset because he didn't find any fruit on the tree can you imagine you and I wouldn't get upset when you know it's not the season for fruit says there is not the season for figs so obviously there won't be any figs there the only leaves why did he curse it Jesus never got upset because he didn't get food he could fast for 40 days it's not gonna be bothered about a few figs you see the reason the next day it says that is one day on the next later on in the evening it says here when evening came verse 19 they went to the city and as they were passing by in the morning the next day they saw saw the fig tree which was cursed the previous day withered up from the roots and Peter said rabbi the fig tree which you cursed yesterday is withered up and Jesus as it were to say now I'll tell

you why I did it to teach you to have faith have faith in God that's why he cursed the fig tree to teach them to have faith that means you he cursed the fig tree and they looked at it nothing happened still there and the next day it had gone and Jesus was saying when you pray when you don't just get discouraged because you didn't see the answer immediately it'll come have faith in God that's what he wanted to teach them in that when you stand against the situation when you bind Satan's activity in a particular situation and you don't see anything happening immediately have faith in God you'll see a few days later the problem is solved that's faith I've seen it happen so many times but if you don't have faith nothing will happen he could not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief and he said even if it's not just a fig tree verse 23 if it's this mountain you can speak to this mountain that's hindering me from moving on towards God in some way I need to go there is a mountain in the way then I say to this mountain be taken up and cast into the sea I don't doubt in my heart it's not enough to say that I don't doubt in my heart it will happen it's a mountain you got to see what mountain it is it is a mountain that's hindering me from doing the will of God a mountain that's hindering me from going where God wants me to go from doing what God's wants me to do I have to tell that mountain get out of my way in Jesus name you know it's not a physical mountain some obstacle that's preventing you from doing the will of God in your life whatever it is it will be granted so I say to you verse 24 all things for which you pray and ask believe you see the fig tree not withered up yet don't don't give up you haven't seen it withered up wait you come back another day you'll see it's withered up believe that you receive them it'll be granted you but I want to give you a warning the Lord says here is what can hinder your faith forgive others verse 25 you see how the connection between forgiveness and faith he's telling them to have faith and then he says make sure that you're forgiven people otherwise you won't have faith if you have anything against anyone so that your father who's in heaven will also forgive you but if you don't forgive your father will not forgive your transgressions it's a very important thing when you pray to make sure you have no bitterness in your heart against a human being it doesn't come automatically it says we must forgive from the heart and that's not mentioned here but in another passage in Matthew chapter 18 he spoke about forgiving people from the heart Matthew 18 and verse 35 you know he speaks about a man who was forgiven ten million dollars and he couldn't forgive another fellow say slave ten dollars he caught him by the throat and put him in jail and when the king heard it's okay then I'm not going to forgive you your ten million pay up then Jesus said in Matthew 18 35 the last verse my heavenly father will do the same to you if you don't forgive your brother from your heart when we forgive we can forgive with our lips that's good but we must forgive from the heart I'm not saying you had to go up to that person and tell him you're forgiven him no if you have done harm to him then you have to go and speak to him and say please forgive me but if he has done harm to you you don't have to tell him that you're forgiven him when Jesus was crucified he only spoke to his father father forgive them for they don't know what they're doing he didn't go to those Pharisees and say hey fellas I've forgiven you no but I have to forgive them from my heart sincerely the worst sin that anybody could do to another in this world is a crucifixion of Jesus Christ and even for that he forgave them so which sin is there in your life which you cannot forgive the greatest sin ever committed was forgiven why can't we forgive and I really believe that very often we can't have faith because you haven't forgiven somebody you got a grudge against someone you're upset with someone because he didn't do what you wanted him to do or he did something you didn't expect him to do and you keep that thing in your heart you know it's amazing how people can have things in their heart against their own parents for years even after the parents have died they treated me like this my dad treated me like this my mom treated me like agreed agreed agreed but what are you gonna get by keeping a bitterness in your heart that harm they did to you is already done don't do more harm to yourself by an unforgiving spirit it's pretty stupid and that's what happens to some people learn the power of forgiveness tremendous power there's no verse like this in the

Old Testament which says if you don't forgive God won't forgive you but there is in the New Testament and it's linked with faith as we saw in Mark chapter 11 you cannot have faith if you can't forgive somebody and maybe that's the reason why some of us have not got some things God wanted to give us you remember what I told you in Nazareth they needed a miracle number one Jesus could do that miracle for them but he did not do it because of unbelief you go one step back why did they have unbelief maybe they didn't forgive somebody so be very careful to always keep your heart completely clear having forgiven everybody you feel this guy let me down ok you think that God can't make something good out of that we read that the ten brothers of Joseph were so angry with him they sold him as a slave but then Joseph is taken as a slave to Egypt and God makes it all work out for good and he becomes a ruler in Egypt and when those brothers come to him you know the story you know what Joseph says to them in Genesis 50 verse 20 that is the Romans 8 28 of the Old Testament by the way the Romans 8 28 of the Old Testament is Genesis 50 verse 20 he tells the brother you wanted to do evil to me but God turned it for good that's a great verse you wanted to do evil to me but God turned it for good as long as you live in this world you're going to have people trying to do evil to you deliberately sometimes accidentally sometimes but it doesn't matter whether they did it deliberately or accidentally I can say like Joseph you plan to do evil to me or you accidentally hurt me God's gonna make it work for my good believe me it's true if you can forgive people God can do miracles for you I've experienced it number of times I told you I mentioned it once before here how a doctor you know made a mistake and I had a severe nerve pain down my hand because of that and I was very bitter against him this is when I was just before my marriage more than 50 years ago I didn't have any victory over sin I was born again but I didn't know anything more than that I was very angry with that doctor the Lord said forgive him and I forgave him I got healed it's a fact I never had that problem afterwards whereas before that a neurosurgeon had said I would have to live with that for the rest of my life there's tremendous power in forgiveness forgive others and something you should do right now if you can think of someone right now whom you haven't forgiven forgive from your heart that's another thing the Lord taught me I remember when someone did something evil to me and I said Lord I forgive him but then some time later I heard something bad happened to him and I felt a little happy the Lord said you haven't forgiven him from your heart if you'd forgiven him from your heart you would not be happy when something bad happened to him tell me is God happy when something bad happens to someone who's happy when something bad happens to the devil and at that moment I was in fellowship with the devil without knowing it yeah something bad happened to that person and maybe the devil caused it and I'm happy I'm in fellowship with the devil I say no I want to be in fellowship with God and I never want to be happy when something evil happens to somebody else and I don't want to wish anything evil happening to others if you wish evil for someone who hurt you or let you down you're not in fellowship with Christ at that moment God will not hear your prayer you haven't forgiven so be very careful in such situations and I believe that those of us sitting here in your present situation also you need to be very very careful that you have a spirit of forgiveness towards anybody you feel let you down and never never never wish any evil for anyone wish the best so I have the habit now if somebody's done some harm to me that I pray that God bless him mightily and that he'll prosper and all types of good things Lord bless his family bless his children just to make sure I'm safe from my heart just to make sure that I've forgiven him for my heart I tell you it has made my life so peaceful and so full of joy if you take heed to a few things that we heard today your life will be different let's bow before God just a few moments while I heads about in prayer please think is there anybody you have not forgiven is there anybody to whom you wish some judgment will come on them some revenge some calamity please in your own interest forgive that person say Lord I release that person I forgive I don't want to think about it I pray that you will bless that person who did some evil to me maybe 20 years ago or whenever Lord Jesus thank you for opening my eyes today to see this pray that

prayer thank you for bringing me to a higher level of the Christian life today I want to walk here I never want to sink again to that low level I was in I want to walk with you Lord help us Lord each one of us to glorify you in our lives by walking as you want us to walk trusting you you can do miracles for us and even in our church here Lord I pray that you will do a miracle for us that's what we pray we don't have anything against any human being we love you and we want to reach out to this city to bring people who are needy in this city who need salvation we want them to hear the gospel and be converted and to become part of your body Lord make us your witnesses in this city we pray fill us with the Holy Spirit so that we can be witnesses in this city we pray in Jesus name Amen

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