

Prayer: Study #3

I Thessalonians 5:17

What a joy it is to come to you each time and share with you “It’s a Good Life.” “It’s a Good Life” is a program that’s designed to help us stay together in fellowship, Bible study, and prayer. And I pray for each person. Now, I may not know your name, but I pray for this radio program that, as it goes forth, that it will touch the hearts of individuals, that God’s Word will touch your heart. My prayer for you is, if you’ve never trusted Jesus as your Savior, that you would do so this very hour, this very moment. And if you have trusted Him as Savior, I just praise God for that. And today, we want to continue our study in supernatural contact, and that’s prayer. We’re going to look in just a few moments about waiting, or soul surrender.

First, let me invite you to look at our website, www.LRWM.org. On the website, you’ll be able to leave us a prayer request, anything that’s on your heart that you want to share with us. We’ll be glad to pray with you about that thing that is placed there on your heart that you want to pray about, and we’ll pray with you about that subject that’s on your heart. Also, you can write to me, Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731.

Well, today, we want to continue our study on supernatural contact, prayer. Well, we started our study off by giving a definition of prayer. What is prayer? Prayer is to talk to God. Praying is communicating with God. In James chapter 5 and verse 16, it says, *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Effectual prayer is effective prayer that produces results. Fervent prayer is heartfelt; it’s with sincerity and passion. Availing prayer produces results; it accomplishes something.

And we’ve seen how that, when we go to the Lord in prayer that things happen. I’ve seen things in my own life that cannot be explained other than through the power of God. It’s not me that does it, but it’s God in His power that brings things to pass that I can’t explain.

Well, we’ve looked at what prayer is, and, remember, the Bible tells us in I Thessalonians 5:17, *Pray without ceasing.* We’ve also seen in our study that we are to begin our prayer life or our prayer time with the Lord with praise. Now, I’m not trying to lock you into a lockstep thing here about what you have to go through, a regimen in order to pray. I’m giving you examples as to what I believe we need to do when we approach God in prayer to be more effective with Him.

The first thing I believe we need to do is praise Him. We need to go to God, and, once again, He knows who He is, but He wants to know that we know who He is. We need to praise Him for His love, His goodness, His kindness, His longsuffering, His patience, His knowledge, His wisdom, the goodness of God. God never changes. Holiness. On and on the list goes, and we could never praise Him for everything that He needs to be praised for, but we need to praise Him and get close to the Lord. We need to praise the Lord according to the Scriptures.

And then, we’ve also seen how that, when we go to the Lord, the second thing I believe we need to do when we approach God, after we praise Him, we need to ask forgiveness for sin. We need to confess anything that’s there that should not be there. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness* (1 John 1:9). Now, that’s

speaking to Christians now. That's speaking to those people who name the name of God as their Savior. "To confess" means to come clean with God. Remember, Proverbs 28:13 says, *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.* Psalm 139, verses 23 and 24, says *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Sin is the greatest roadblock to prayer. We are to confess sin. We are to agree with God about sin. Psalm 66:18 says, if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. The first prayer that God hears from any human being is "God have mercy upon me, a sinner. God, come into my heart. Jesus, save me. Come into my heart so I can go to Heaven." That's the first prayer that God hears from any individual in this world. Now, that may shock you, but the Bible says that every person who says there is a God, they do not have God as their Father. Most people believe there is a God but most people or a lot of people do not have Jesus living in their heart. We need to come to God in prayer and say, "Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I receive you as my Savior." That's the first prayer that God hears from a human being. And then, as saved people, we need to confess sin that creeps into our lives and agree with God and confess that sin, that it's wrong.

Well, the third thing I believe we need to do is we need to wait. We need to surrender. We need to have soul surrender. In Psalm 37 and verse 7, the Bible tells us that, *Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.* All through the Word of God, we see that we are to wait patiently.

A time of prayer should first consist of praise, according to what we've already seen. A time of prayer should, second, consist of confession, and

then a time of prayer should consist of waiting upon the Lord. In Psalm 27:14, it says, *Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.*

Romans 6:11 says, *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* "Dead unto sin" means that we are not going out to try to sin or do things wrong purposely. We are to reckon ourselves to be crucified with Christ, but there are things that creep into our life that shouldn't be there, and, therefore, we need to confess those sins.

Then, we need to wait upon the Lord. Wait on God. Isaiah 40 in verse 31 says, *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

James 5:7 says, *Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman....* It says, *Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.* We get in so much of a hurry that we pray for patience, and we say, "God, give it to me. Give it to me right now." Well, that's not the way it works. We need to wait patiently on the Lord.

Psalm 37:7, once again, says, *Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way....* Did you ever see somebody that was rich, and you say, "Well, how come I can't have that?" You've got to wait. Wait upon the Lord. Now, you may never be rich in this life, but I guarantee you that, when you see the Lord Jesus Christ, you won't concern yourself with the riches of this world. Once you've trusted Him and asked Him into your heart and you see Him one day, that's better than any riches that this world could ever give.

In Psalm chapter 4 and verse 4, I believe we wait upon the Lord first of all with no talking. Now, of course, we're by ourselves and this would be a time alone. I have a private time with the Lord and there's no talking. Well, it's not too hard to do if I'm by myself, but you know, sometimes we speak out loud to the Lord, but I believe here, we need to be quiet. Psalm 4:4 says, *Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.*

Psalm 46:10 says, *Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.* Now, this is something that I don't have trouble with a lot of times, this second thing under this subject here, waiting on God, is no thinking. In other words, neutrality takes the place of positive thinking. In other words, we try to get the things of the world out of our mind, and we try to just let our minds not go into a sense of sleep. Don't go to sleep when you're doing this, but you need to just let your mind be open to God and let Him speak to you. We're to be quiet in God's presence. We are to listen.

In Mark 4:39, it says, *And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea.... This is Jesus now.... Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.* And you know, just as Jesus spoke to the sea, *Peace, be still,* He speaks to our heart as we wait on Him in prayer. It's as though He says, "Peace, be still."

Now, in I Kings chapter 19 and verse 12, it says, *And after the earthquake.... This is Elijah now.* He's having difficulties here. We understand that Jezebel was chasing him. He was afraid and everything, and God says, "Where are you?" and he answered him and all this stuff, and then finally in verse 12 of I Kings 19, it says, *And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.* And that was the voice of God. God spoke to Elijah in

that still small voice. You may be going through a difficult time. Many people are. You need to be quiet. You need to wait upon the Lord. God will speak to your heart if you'll let Him. You need to bow your heart to the Lord. Be quiet and wait upon the Lord. Soul surrender takes place. We see that we wait and then soul surrender. First Thessalonians 5:23 says, *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* First Peter 5:7 says, *Castings all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

What are we to do? We're to give up. I'm not talking about quitting. I'm talking about giving up trying to do things on our own. John 15:5 says, Jesus speaking. He said, *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.* We need to realize again who God is. We need to realize that God is the one who takes care of us. Psalm 46:10 says, *Be still, and know that I am God....* First Peter chapter 3 and verse 4, *But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God a great price.*

Realize again who you are. We need to realize that, without God, we are nothing. Psalm 86:12 says, "I will praise the Lord." *I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.*

Have you trusted Him? Ask Him to come into your heart today and He'll save you.

It's been good being with you once again, and may I encourage you to look at our website, www.LRWM.org. May the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.