

THE GLORY OF ENCOUNTERING GOD - A CALL TO PRAYER

TRANSMISSION CHURCH

—*BRIAN BEESON*

Session 1: A Call to Prayer

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The goal of this conference is to help you grow in a life of prayer, to pray more effectively both individually and corporately. We will:
 - 1. Provide Biblical foundations of prayer
 - 2. Stir hunger for a life of prayer
 - 3. Give practical tools for prayer
 - 4. Discuss the significance of the global prayer and worship movement expanding across the earth
- B. Stated simply, prayer is “talking with God,” taking *many forms*, but *all prayer* is essentially a *two-way conversation* with the Lord that has life-changing results.
- C. We talk to the uncreated God of the universe—He listens attentively and with great affection. He responds by revealing His heart. He gives us direction, blessing our circumstances, transforming our emotions, touching our loved ones, reviving the church, saving the lost, releasing justice, impacting society, and more.
- D. It is a great privilege to talk with God—that He is not only attentive but finds us interesting! It’s worth our attention to grow in prayer.
- E. Isaiah prophesied that the Lord would make His servants joyful in prayer. He referred to a new paradigm for prayer—prayer characterized by joy—“*enjoyable prayer*.” Many of God’s people will be surprised by joy in communicating with Him. Enjoyable prayer is prayer that refreshes our heart! If it is not enjoyable, we will pray only intermittently—or not at all.

⁷Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer... (Isa. 56:7)

II. ALL BELIEVERS ARE CALLED TO GROW IN PRAYER

- A. The Lord calls *every believer to a life of prayer*, both the new believer and the seasoned saint. Prayer is not an optional activity as it is essential for our spiritual well-being. Jesus spoke of the times “When you pray,” assuming it was a part of the believer’s life (Mat. 6:5–7).

⁶ But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. (Mat. 6:6)
- B. Being a person of prayer is *the most important calling* in one’s life. Growing in prayer is a higher calling than being a spouse, a parent, a pastor, a preacher, or a leader in the marketplace, we will all become far better spouses, parents, and leaders as we take time to grow in prayer.
- C. *Allow God to live in you*. Prayer involves connecting with the Spirit who energizes us to love God. Our love for God causes us to overflow with love for others. Jesus made an absolute statement about our inability to walk in

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the fullness of our destiny in God without growing in prayer (Jn. 15:5). He said that unless we abide in Him, we can do nothing related to bearing fruit or maturing spiritually.

5I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. (Jn. 15:5)

- D. ***We grow in prayer by praying.*** Do not wait for a special spiritual experience to begin to grow in prayer. We grow in prayer by actually praying. Beginners in prayer mature by praying more.
- E. Our prayer life can progress from *duty to discipline to delight* (Author: Larry Lea).
1. ***In duty phase*** we often feel dryness, boredom or lack of inner and outer results. But we continue because we want to grow in our love for God and His Word. We may feel like nothing is happening, but God is transforming us.
 2. ***In the discipline phase*** we have a set routine or schedule that we stick with 90% of the time. We have made prayer a regular part of our lives.
 3. ***In the delight phase*** we enjoy our times with God. We enjoy talking and listening to Him. We have developed a history of encountering God, building-up our spirit, seeing inner and outer results as we release the Kingdom by partnering with the things on God's heart. We discover how enjoyable God is.

III. PRAYER IS A PLACE OF ENCOUNTER

- A. ***Prayer is about encounter.*** Prayer is not first about enduring boredom or going through a list of requests. From the beginning, God has desired unhindered *face-to-face* communion with His people (Gen. 1–3; Rev. 21:3; 22:4).
- B. ***Prayer allows us to grow in relationship with God.*** It is the means by which we most feel His presence and receive love from Him as we gain understanding of what He is like. In prayer we *position ourselves* to receive fresh insight into His heart as new desires are formed in our hearts.
- C. It's about talking to Him, listening and responding. At a restaurant, one can be starving and only read the menu but never actually eat the food! ***It's possible to be in church and dying of starvation!***
- D. The call to prayer is a call to participate in the love that has forever burned in God's heart. From eternity past the Father has loved the Son with all His heart, and the Son has loved the Father with the same intensity. The primary factor in the Father's relationships, both within the Godhead and with His people, is *wholehearted love*. ***The Lord invites us to share His wholehearted love through learning to pray.***
- E. This love is *the foundational reality* of God's kingdom. It is this very reality that we participate in as we grow in prayer—that is, participating in the family dynamics of the Godhead. We do this by receiving God's love and responding in His love to the Lord and to people

IV. PRAYER IS A WAY TO RECEIVE BLESSING FOR OURSELVES AND FOR OTHERS

- A. We also pray so that things will change and God’s blessings will be released in us and through us. There is a point to our prayers. Effective prayer accomplishes much and leads to real results that release blessing.

¹⁶The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. (Jas. 5:16, NAS)

- B. Some think of prayer solely as communion with God, while others think of it *only* as the way to obtain more blessing in their circumstances. We do not need to choose one over the other; we can expect results from our prayers *as* we grow in communion with God.

V. PRINCIPLES TO EMPOWER OUR PRAYER LIFE

- A. Our prayers are effective because of the authority we have in Jesus, which is based on His finished work on the cross. Therefore, our prayers are effective even when they are short, weak, and poorly worded. We may feel like they aren’t accomplishing anything, but they move angels and they move God’s heart.

- B. Short prayers. thirty-second prayers are valuable and effective. They matter and can connect our hearts with God while releasing His blessing to us. Do not put off praying until you have a full hour to pray. While you are rushing to an appointment, waiting at a stoplight, or standing in line at a store, you can offer a ninety-second prayer that will make a difference in your life and the lives of others.

- C. Seemingly “weak” prayers. Some assume that because they do not feel anything when they pray, God must not feel anything. The truth is that we offer our prayers in human weakness, but *they ascend to God in power because of the sufficiency of Jesus’ blood and because they are in agreement with God’s heart.*

¹⁴Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. (1 Jn 5:14)

1. You are growing in your prayer life even if it doesn’t feel good.
2. “Weak” prayer is prayer that seems dry or distracted. When we realize we can’t even pray well—that is “weak” prayer. These types of prayers may not move our heart but they move God’s.
3. Do not *measure your prayers* by how you feel when you pray them but *by the extent to which they are in agreement with God’s will and Word.*

- D. Poorly worded prayers. The Lord values our prayers even when we do not say them in the “right” way. We come boldly to the “throne of grace” (Heb. 4:16) not the “throne of literary accuracy.” The Lord hears the groan of the prisoner (Ps. 79:11; 102:20) as well as the eloquence of biblical scholars and powerful preachers.

- E. While Cornelius was praying, an angel appeared to him with a message from God, telling him his giving and prayers would be remembered forever (Acts 10:3–4).

³...he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, “Cornelius!” ⁴And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, “What is it, lord?” So he said to him, “Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.” (Acts 10:3–4)