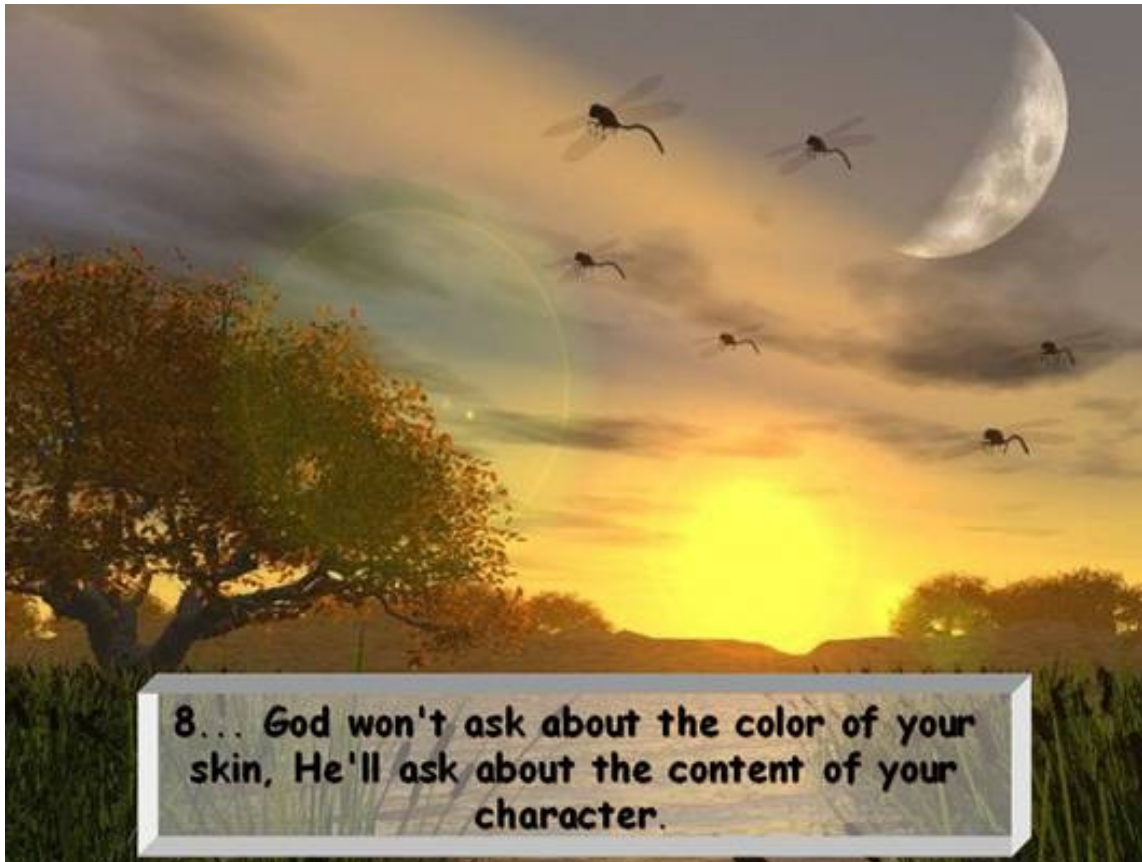


# Pray without Ceasing

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3  
4

## Graham F. Watts, Sr.

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9

**VISION:** To hear the midnight cry, “The bridegroom comes, go out to meet Him” (Matthew 25:6) and become like Him when I see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).

10 **MISSION:** Purify myself even as Christ is pure (1 John 3:3) to be glad, to rejoice, give honor to Christ  
11 and be ready for the marriage of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7).

12  
13 **VALUES:** Follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Revelation 14:4), be without fault before God  
14 (Revelation 14:5), be perfect even as my Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48), wear the Lamb’s  
15 fine, clean and white linen (Revelation 19:8) do righteously (1 John 3:10) and walk humbly with God  
16 (Micah 6:8).

17  
18 **OVERALL AIM:** Studies presented here unveil Bible knowledge to inquiring minds to prompt the  
19 following inquiries: “Are our feet on the rock of ages? Are we one with Christ as He is one with the  
20 Father” (John 10:30 in Evangelism, {Ev} 199.1)? Am I crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20)?

21 **PURPOSE/REASON FOR/WHY**

22  
23 The purpose of this study is to educate believers about the elements of effective prayer.  
24

25  
26 **OBJECTIVE/WHAT WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH**

27  
28 At the end of this study, believers are equipped to pray more effectively.  
29

30  
31 **SIGNIFICANCE – SO WHAT**

32  
33 Sometimes the challenges of life appear insurmountable and hope vanquishes. In those times, we have  
34 this assurance—“If [we] draw close to Jesus and seek to adorn [our] profession by a well-ordered life and  
35 godly conversation, [our] feet **WILL** be kept from straying into forbidden paths. If [we] will only watch,  
36 continually watch unto prayer, if [we] will do everything as if [we] were in the immediate presence of  
37 God, [we] will be saved from yielding to temptation and may hope to be kept pure, spotless and undefiled  
38 till the last” (The Adventist Home, {AH} 338.2). Difficulties and hardships do not have to lead us into  
39 despair, hopelessness and depression!

40  
41 **BACKGROUND CONTEXT**

42  
43 Men ought always to prayer and not loose heart (Luke 18:1). However, some problems do cause us to  
44 loose heart, when our iniquities turn away the former and latter rains and the appointed weeks of harvest  
45 (Jeremiah 5:24-25). When iniquity flourishes, “[God] shuts the heavens and there is no rain or ...He  
46 commands the locusts to devour the land or ...He sends pestilence among His people...” (2 Chronicles  
47 7:13). These problems respond only to a divine solution. The conditions of this solution are these: “If  
48 My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, pray, seek My face and turn from their  
49 wicked ways, I will hear, forgive their sins and heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14). “It is a part of God's  
50 plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask”  
51 (The Great Controversy, {GC} 525.2). Not surprisingly, Jesus said, “Ask and it shall be given you, seek  
52 and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7). The prayer of faith is a power for  
53 good! “Is any sick among you? Let [them] call for the elders of the church and let them pray..., anointing  
54 with oil in the name of the Lord and the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall... [restore  
55 and] forgive sins” (James 5:14-15).  
56

57 A problem list appears below! Examine the nature and scope of some problems that prompted fervent  
58 prayers for divine aid.

- 59
- 60 1. “The remnant of the captivity in the province is in great affliction and reproach. The Wall of  
61 Jerusalem is broken down and [fire has consumed] the gates” (Nehemiah 1:3).
- 62
- 63 2. “...The holy seed have mingled instead of separated themselves from people of the lands, doing  
64 according to the abominations of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites,  
65 Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites (Ezra 9:1-2).
- 66
- 67 3. “I have ...built ...a house [for God] to dwell, a settled place for thee to abide in forever” (1 Kings  
68 8:13). “Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot  
69 contain thee; how much less this house that I have built” (1 Kings 8:27)!
- 70
- 71 4. The end of the 70 years of captivity in Babylon was imminent but release appeared distant so  
72 Daniel sprung into action—prayer, supplications, fasting... (Daniel 9:2-3 from Jeremiah 29:10-14  
73 & 25:12-14).
- 74
- 75 5. Hezekiah was a young (25 years) Judean king who kept the commandments of God, prospered,  
76 and did not serve Shalmaneser, king of Assyria (2 Kings 18:1-7). [The despotic monarch had  
77 super nation syndrome so he grew an army to conquer sovereign nations]. In the fourth year of  
78 Hezekiah’s reign, Shalmaneser besieged Judah’s neighbor, Samaria, for three years and at the end  
79 took Israel captive to Assyria (2 Kings 18:9-11). In the 14th year of Hezekiah’s reign, a new  
80 Assyrian king, Sennacherib, besieged Judah’s fenced cities and took them. Hezekiah sent word to  
81 the king of Assyria, saying, “I have offended.” “Return from me [and I will bear whatever you put  
82 on me]” (2 Kings 18:13-14). “The Assyrian king sent a great host [185,000 men (2 Kings 19:35)]  
83 to Jerusalem led by **Tartan, Rabsaris and Rabshakeh**, who met with heads of the Judean  
84 delegation: **Eliakim, Shebna and Joah**. The Rabshakeh said to them, “[Tell] Hezekiah the king  
85 of Assyria says, ‘What confidence is this wherein you trust?’ ‘...I have counsel and strength for  
86 war; now on whom do you trust that you rebel against me” (2 Kings 18:17-20)? “Now..., give  
87 pledges to my lord the king of Assyria and I will deliver to you 2000 horses if you can set riders  
88 on them” (2 Kings 18:23). “...The Lord said to me, ‘Go up against this land and destroy it’” (2  
89 Kings 18:25). “[Hearing these words], Eliakim, Shebna and Joah [asked the] Rabshakeh to speak

90 in Syrian [rather than] the Jewish language, [which] the people on the wall [understood]” (2 Kings  
91 18:26). [The request emboldened the Rabshakeh]! *First*, he insulted the Judean delegation,  
92 saying, “My master sent me to... speak these words... to the men [that] sit on the wall that they  
93 may eat their own dung and drink their own piss with you.” *Second*, he replied with a loud voice  
94 in the Jewish language saying, “Hear the words of the great king of Assyria, and let not Hezekiah  
95 deceive you for he shall not be able to deliver you out of [the hand of the King of Assyria].  
96 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord.... Harken not to Hezekiah..., [but] make an  
97 agreement with me by a present and come out to me... until I come and take you away to a land  
98 like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive oil and  
99 honey that you may live and not die. [Moreover], has any of the gods of the nations delivered at  
100 all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?’ Where are the gods of Hamath, Arpad,  
101 Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivah? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among  
102 all the gods... that have delivered their country out of my hand that the Lord should deliver  
103 Jerusalem out of my hand” (2 Kings 18:27-36)? Eliakim, Shebna and Joah [ended the conference  
104 call], tore their clothing [and came] to Hezekiah [with the briefing] (2 Kings 18:37). [After  
105 hearing the report, Hezekiah accurately characterized Judah’s plight as a distressed birth that  
106 warrants caesarian section] (2 Kings 19:3).

- 107
- 108 6. “Hezekiah was sick unto death and the prophet Isaiah... came to him and said, “Thus says the  
109 Lord, ‘Set your house in order, for you will die and not live’” (2 Kings 20:1).
- 110
- 111 7. “[A great multinational force consisting of] Moabites, Ammonites and others came against  
112 Jehoshaphat to battle at Engedi and Jehoshaphat feared, [but] set himself to seek the Lord and  
113 proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah” (2 Chronicles 20:1-3).
- 114
- 115 8. Judah’s 23 years of rebellion against God culminated in punishment by Babylonian exile and  
116 destruction of surrounding nations (Jeremiah 25:1-12). The people of God lost their homeland by  
117 clinging to sin.
- 118

119 These, seemingly, insurmountable problems and the prayers they prompted provided the impetus for the  
120 study question that follows.

121

122 **STUDY QUESTION**

123  
124 What are the characteristics of prayers that attract God’s attention?  
125

126  
127 **ANSWER SOURCE: HOLY BIBLE**

128  
129 Examine Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Jeremiah and Daniel for a Biblical exposition of the  
130 characteristics of prayers that attract God’s attention. The acronym, SPACE HAS ACF identifies  
131 repeating themes in seven leading prayers that might help us remember them.  
132

133

Unordered Elements of Effective Prayer	If My People						
	Nehemiah	Ezra	Daniel	Solomon	Hezekiah	Jehoshaphat	Jeremiah
	(Neh 1:4-11)	Ezr 9:6-15	Dan 9:3-19	1 Kgs 8:23-53	2 Kgs 19:15-19 2 Kgs 20:3	2 Chr 20:3-13 2 Chr 18:31	Jer 32:17-25
1. <b>S</b> pecific requests (cast cares on God)	Neh 1:11		Dan 9:16 & 17	1 Kings 8:25	2 Kings 19:16 & 19 2 Kings 20:3	2 Chr 20:12-13 2 Chr 18:31	
2. <b>P</b> romises (recall God’s faithfulness)	Neh 1:8-10	Ezra 9:12		1 Kings 8:26		2 Chr 20:7-9	Jer 32:19-22
3. <b>A</b> cknowledges divine mercies		Ezra 9:8, 9, 13 & 15	Dan 9:9 & 18				
4. <b>C</b> ontemplative reflection		Ezra 9:14			2 Kings 19:17 & 18	2 Chr 20:10-11	Jer 32:18
5. <b>E</b> xtolment [great praise, acknowledging God’s majesty, dominion & power]	Neh 1:5	Ezra 9:15	Dan 9:4	1 Kings 8:23-24 & 27	2 Kings 19:15	2 Chr 20:5-6	Jer 32:17; (Gen 18:14 quoted)
6. <b>H</b> onors or seeks honor of God			Dan 9:19		2 Kings 19:19		
7. <b>A</b> ssociative Intercession	Neh 1:6	Ezra 9:14		1 Kings 8:28-53*		2 Chr 20:12	
8. <b>S</b> pecific confession	Neh 1:6-7	Ezra 9:6, 7, 10 & 11	Dan 9:5-6, 10-13 & 15				Jer 32:23
9. <b>A</b> cknowledges punishment for past sins		Ezra 9:7&13	Dan 9:7-8 & 14				Jer 32:24
10. <b>C</b> ahoots (obeying God)	Neh 1:11			1 Kings 8:23			Jer 32:25 from vs. 6-9
11. <b>F</b> asting	Neh 1:4		Dan 9:3			2 Chr 20:3	

134 \*Daniel (Dan 6:10) knelt and prayed, facing Jerusalem as Solomon described in 1 Kings 8:35.

135 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS: Problems that prompt prayers of faith fulfill 1 Peter 5:7—“Casting  
136 all your care upon Him, for He cares for you—” and recognizes that nothing is too hard for God who  
137 created heaven and earth (Jeremiah 32:17 & Genesis 18:14). Good problems will cause us to claim the  
138 promises: “...The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer” (2 Samuel 22:2, NIV); “[God is] with us  
139 ...to help us and to fight our battles...” (2 Chronicles 32:8); “I am the Lord your God who takes hold of  
140 your right hand and says to you, ‘Do not fear, I will help you’” (Isaiah 41:13, NIV); “I have engraved you  
141 on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me” (Isaiah 49:16, NIV) and “**In every difficulty,**  
142 **[God] has His way prepared to bring relief**... (Desire of Ages, 330.1). Examine the evidence in  
143 **Nehemiah 2:1-6, Ezra 10:1-5, 1 Kings 8:10-11, Daniel 9:20-27, 2 Kings 19:20 & 32-35; 2 Kings 20:4-**  
144 **6, 2 Chronicles 20:14-18, Jeremiah 29:1-14 AND 32:26-27, 36-44.** Perplexities vanish from those who  
145 make the service and honor of God supreme (Desire of Ages, 330.1). Clearly, the effectual, fervent  
146 prayers of the righteous avails much (James 5:16). Hence, God who in times past “...poured out a spirit of  
147 grace and supplications on the house of David” (Zechariah 12:10) now commands all to “pray without  
148 ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Why? “**...Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's**  
149 **storehouse, where are treasured [limitless] resources of Omnipotence**” (Steps to Christ, {SC} 94.2).  
150  
151 It is the role of “Difficulties [to] bring us into the audience chamber of the Most High [that] we may seek  
152 counsel [from Him] who is infinite in wisdom” (COL 172.1). “It was in hours of solitary prayer that  
153 Jesus, in His earth-life, received wisdom and power [from God]” (Child Guidance, {CG} 525.2). Reflect  
154 on these promises and exemplary prayers and evaluate your prayers to identify opportunities for learning  
155 how to pray more effectively because “**unless divine power is brought into the experience of the**  
156 **people of God, false theories and ideas will take minds captive. Christ and His righteousness will be**  
157 **dropped out of the experience of many** and **their faith will be without power or life**” (Gospel  
158 Workers, {GW} 161.3). “Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power [that] is  
159 necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its

160 train, is lacking, though offered in... [abundance] (The Acts of the Apostles, {AA} 50.1). The seriousness  
161 of prayer and its relationship to power that should accompany faith should help us all understand why  
162 Luke asked the question, "...When the Son of man comes, shall he find faith on the earth" (Luke 18:8)?

163

## 164 **ANSWER SOURCES: SACRED WRITINGS**

165  
166 We are pursuing answers to the question, "What are the characteristics of prayers that attract God's  
167 attention?"

168

169 1. "Those who at Pentecost were endued with power from on high were not thereby freed from further  
170 temptation and trial. As they witnessed for truth and righteousness the enemy of all truth, who sought  
171 to rob them of their Christian experience, repeatedly assailed them. They were compelled to strive  
172 with all their God-given powers to reach the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.  
173 [Therefore], **daily they prayed for fresh supplies of grace, that they might reach higher and still**  
174 **higher toward perfection**" (The Acts of the Apostles, {AA} 49.3).

175

176 2. "When left alone, Jesus went up into a mountain apart to pray (Luke 6:12). **For hours, He continued**  
177 **pleading with God, not for Himself but for men**.... Without the Holy Spirit to enlighten the mind  
178 and enlarge the comprehension the faith of the disciples would fail. It was painful to Jesus that the  
179 [disciples] conceptions of His kingdom were, to so great a degree, limited to worldly aggrandizement  
180 and honor (Acts 1:6). For them the burden was heavy upon His heart and He poured out His  
181 supplications with bitter agony and tears (The Desire of Ages, {DA} 379.1). "Christ was continually  
182 receiving from the Father that He might communicate to us. ...He lived, thought and prayed [for  
183 others]. From hours spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven  
184 to [humanity]. Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the early hours of the new day  
185 the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers and His soul and His lips were anointed with grace that  
186 He might impart to others" (Christ's Object Lessons, {COL} 139.1).

187

188 3. Christians must be like Christ. They should have the same spirit, exert the same influence, and have  
189 the same moral excellence that He possessed. The idolatrous and corrupt in heart must repent and turn  
190 to God. Those who are proud and self-righteous must abase self and become penitent, meek, and  
191 lowly in heart. The worldly-minded must have the tendrils of the heart removed from the rubbish of  
192 the world, around which they are clinging and entwined about God; they must become spiritually

193 minded. The dishonest and untruthful must become just and true. The ambitious and covetous must be  
 194 hid in Jesus and seek His glory, not their own. They must despise their own holiness and lay up their  
 195 treasure above. **The prayer less must feel the need of both secret and family prayer and must**  
 196 **make their supplications to God with great earnestness** (Reflecting Christ, {RC} 110.2).

197  
 198 4. “I asked the angel why there was no more faith and power in Israel. He said, ‘You let go of the arm of  
 199 the Lord too soon. Press your petitions to the throne, and hold on by strong faith. The promises are  
 200 sure. **Believe you receive the things you ask for, and you shall have them.** ...Elijah... was subject  
 201 to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly. His faith endured the trial. Seven times, he prayed  
 202 before the Lord, and at last the cloud was seen (Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G.  
 203 White, {CET} 127.2, Early Writings, {EW} 73.2). “I saw that we had doubted the sure promises and  
 204 wounded the Savior by our lack of faith” (CET 127.3).

205  
 206 5. “We should not become discouraged and give way to doubt, and think that our prayers are not noticed.  
 207 We should **rely more securely upon Christ and leave our case with God to answer our prayers in**  
 208 **His own way.** God has not promised to bestow His blessings through the channels we have marked  
 209 out. The plans of God are always the best, although we may not always discern them. Perfection of  
 210 Christian character can be obtained only through labor, conflict, and self-denial. We do not always  
 211 count upon this, and do not consider the painful and often protracted process of purifying necessary  
 212 for us in order that we may be conformed to the image of Christ. God frequently answers our prayers  
 213 in a way we least expect. He brings us into positions that are the most trying, to reveal what is in our  
 214 hearts. To further the development of Christian graces He will place us in circumstances that will  
 215 demand increased exertion on our part to keep our faith in lively exercise (Our High Calling, {OHC}  
 216 313.3).

217  
 218 **SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS:** When we become intercessors for the benefit of others, when we  
 219 make supplications to God with great earnestness, when we have faith to believe we receive the things we  
 220 ask for, God will hear and answer our prayers. “If ever there is a time when [people] feel their need of  
 221 prayer, it is when strength fails and life itself seems slipping from their grasp. ...**When human strength**  
 222 **fails, [people] feel their need of divine help [and] never does our merciful God turn from the soul**  
 223 **that in sincerity seeks Him for help**” (Ministry of Healing, {MH} 225). “If you abide in me and my  
 224 words abide in you, you can ask what you want and it will be done” (John 15:7). “Whatever we ask we  
 225 receive because we keep His commandments and do things that please Him” (1 John 3:22). Reflect on

226 these assurances and evaluate your own prayers to identify opportunities for praying more intelligently,  
 227 faithfully and effectively.

228

229 **DISCUSSION: WHAT DO THESE THINGS MEAN?**

230

231 Whatever the situation, we can hope in God! “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common  
 232 to man: but God [is] faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with  
 233 the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13). “When  
 234 perplexities arise, as they are sure to do, draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Then, when the  
 235 enemy comes in like a flood, *the Spirit of the Lord* will lift up a standard for you. *Decide that there is a*  
 236 *great work to be done and that no man's influence or opposition shall divert you from the plain path of*  
 237 *duty*. Then you can say with Nehemiah, ‘The hand of my God is good upon me’” (Nehemiah 2:18 in This  
 238 Day with God, {TDG} 284.2).

239

240 **CONCLUSIONS: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

241

242 “You have not because you ask not! You ask and receive not because you ask amiss that you may  
 243 consume it upon your lusts” (James 4:2-3). “The Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither  
 244 his ear heavy that it cannot hear” (Isaiah 59:1), “but [our] iniquities have separated... [us] and [our] God,  
 245 and [our] sins have hid his face from [us] that He will not hear” (Isaiah 59:2). However “If [God’s]  
 246 people, which are called by [His] name, shall humble themselves, pray, seek [His] face and **turn from**  
 247 **their wicked ways**; then will [God] hear from heaven, forgive [our] sin and heal [our] land” (2 Chronicles  
 248 7:14). **We must sanctify the Lord God in our hearts [to] ...be men and women of faith, prayer, and**  
 249 **power. ...Faithfully sentinel [the heart] else, pride and rebellion will bear rule within.** Evils without  
 250 will awaken evils within and the soul will wander in its own homemade fog, all the time charging upon  
 251 someone else the result of its own unchristian course of action” (The Voice in Speech and Song, {VSS}  
 252 302.2), as Korah, Dathan and Abiram (Numbers 16). [When we guard the heart and sanctify the Lord  
 253 God in our heart, then] the prayers of the saints [will] ascend before God from the angel’s hand (Rev 8:4).  
 254 The angel who stands beside the golden altar, before the throne with a golden censer receives incense and  
 255 offers it with the prayers of all [the] saints upon the golden altar... (Rev 8:3). And as the smoke of the  
 256 incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand (Rev  
 257 8: 4); as the four-living creatures and the 24 elders fall down before the Lamb with [the] golden bowls full  
 258 of the prayers of the saints (Rev 5:8), God supplies the needs of His children.

259

260 “The sincere, humble prayer of the true worshiper ascends to heaven and Jesus mingles with our lowly  
 261 petitions the holy incense of His own merit. Through His righteousness, we are accepted. Christ makes  
 262 our prayers wholly efficacious through the savor of His righteousness. ...**Let us pray and grasp the rich**  
 263 **promises of God and then praise God that in proportion to our earnest, humble supplications [God**  
 264 **will appoint] the Holy Spirit to meet our needs**” (That I May Know Him, Chap. 264-Fervent, Effectual  
 265 Prayer). “Offer unto God thanksgiving and pay [your] vows unto the most High (Psalms 50:14) and call  
 266 upon [God] in the day of trouble [and He] will deliver [you] and [you will] glorify [God]” (Psalms 50:15).  
 267 “But to claim that prayer will always be answered in the very way and for the particular thing that we  
 268 desire, is presumption” (Steps to Christ, {SC} 96.2). “God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold  
 269 any good thing from his saints that walk uprightly. Man is erring, and although his petitions... [ascend]  
 270 from an honest heart, he does not always ask for the things that are good for him or that will glorify God.  
 271 When this is so, our wise and good Father hears our prayers, and will answer; sometimes immediately,  
 272 but gives us the things that are for our best good and his own glory” (Spiritual Gifts, Volume 4, {4bSG}  
 273 7.4).

274

## 275 **CALL TO ACTION: WHAT SHALL WE DO?**

276  
 277 “**True faith lays hold of and claims the promised blessing before it is realized and felt.** ...When thick  
 278 clouds of darkness seem to hover over the mind, then is the time to let living faith pierce the darkness, and  
 279 scatter the clouds. **True faith rests on the promises contained in the word of God and only those who**  
 280 **obey the Word, can claim the glorious promises contained in it**” (Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 2, {2SG}  
 281 291.2); promises such as “Ask and it shall be given to you...” (Matt 7:7). “...Ask **ANYTHING** in [Jesus]  
 282 name [and He] will do it” (John 14:14) and “**WHAT THINGS... [YOU] DESIRE, WHEN [YOU]**  
 283 **PRAY, BELIEVE THAT YOU RECEIVE** them and you shall have them” (Mark 11:24). “Be earnest;  
 284 be resolute. Present the promise of God, and then believe without a doubt. Do not wait to feel special  
 285 emotions before you think the Lord answers. Do not mark out some particular way that the Lord must  
 286 work for you before you believe you receive the things you ask of Him. Trust His word, and leave the  
 287 whole matter in the hands of the Lord ...and the answer will come at the very time and in the very way  
 288 your heavenly Father sees is for your good; and then live out your prayers. Walk humbly and keep  
 289 moving forward” (God’s Amazing Grace, {AG} 289.5).

290

291 Press your petitions to God in prayer! “...**WHATEVER** things you ask in prayer, believing you will  
 292 receive” (Matt 21:22). These words are precious for the servants of God. God has pledged, “**If you abide**

293 **in Me and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you"** (John  
 294 15:7). **"WHATSOEVER we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments and do**  
 295 **those things that are pleasing in His sight"** (1 John 3:22). Notwithstanding these promises, some  
 296 "...have not, because [they] ask not," while others "...ask, [but do not] receive... because [they ask either  
 297 for the wrong things or for right things for wrong reasons]" (James 4:2-3). We should ask "...for the  
 298 pardon of sin, the Holy Spirit, a Christ like temper [and] wisdom and strength to do His work" (The Acts  
 299 of the Apostles, {AA} 564.1). We should ask for power to "...live [and] walk in the Spirit" (Galatians  
 300 5:25), "...to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo heavy burdens, to [free] the oppressed..., to break  
 301 every yoke, to share [our] bread with the hungry, [to house] the poor [and to clothe] the naked" (Isaiah  
 302 58:6-7). Plead with God for the "...Holy Ghost and power [so that we will go] about doing well and  
 303 healing all that were oppressed of the devil" (Acts 10:38). Ask for "...the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy,  
 304 peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness [and] temperance..." (Galatians 5:22-23). Ask  
 305 for "[purging]" (Psalms 51:7), "...a clean heart..., a right spirit..." (Psalms 51:10) and "...wisdom and  
 306 knowledge... [to] go out and come in before [God's] people..." (2 Chronicles 1:10). These things are  
 307 among the items on the "...whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in My name..." (John 15:16 & 16:23).

308  
 309 **"It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which he would not**  
 310 **bestow did we not thus ask** (The Great Controversy, {GC}, p. 525). "Present yourselves humbly and  
 311 often at the throne of grace and tell Jesus your every want. Do not think anything is too small for Him to  
 312 notice. The Lord loves to have you seek Him and tell Him your trials as a child would talk with his parent.  
 313 When you pray, believe Jesus hears you, and will do the things you ask of Him. Show that you have  
 314 perfect trust in Jesus, and ever seek to do those things that you know will please Him, and you will have  
 315 peace in Christ" (Sons and Daughter of God, {SD} 317.4). "Neither wicked men nor devils can hinder  
 316 the work of God or shut out His presence from his people. **If [God's people] will, with subdued,**  
 317 **contrite hearts, confess and put away their sins (i.e., repent), and in faith claim his promises, every**  
 318 **temptation, every opposing influence, whether open or secret, may be successfully resisted, "not by**  
 319 **might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts"** (Zech. 4:6 in GC p. 529). **"The eyes of**  
 320 **the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers"** (1 Pet. 3:12). Beloved, let  
 321 us **PRAY ALWAYS** (Luke 18:1; 21:36, 1 Thessalonians 5:17 & 2 Thessalonians 1:11). Let us also  
 322 exercise faith like Jeremiah, who "with the eye of faith, saw the exiles returning at the end of the [70]  
 323 years of [Babylonian] affliction and reoccupying the land of their fathers. [Therefore, Jeremiah acted his  
 324 faith and] ...purchased the Anathoth estate... to inspire hope [when] the outlook for Judah was  
 325 discouraging" (Jeremiah 32:6-9 in Prophets and Kings, {PK} 469.1 & 3).

326

327 It is prayer time! “There is need today of such a revival of true heart religion as was experienced by  
 328 ancient Israel. **Repentance is the first step... [for] all who would return to God. No one can do this**  
 329 **work for another. We must individually humble our souls before God and put away our idols.**  
 330 **When we have done all that we can do, the Lord will manifest to us His**  
 331 **salvation** (Conflict and Courage, {CC} 145.3). **Prayer is heaven's ordained means of success in**  
 332 **the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character. THE DIVINE INFLUENCES**  
 333 **THAT COME IN ANSWER TO THE PRAYER OF FAITH WILL ACCOMPLISH IN THE SOUL**  
 334 **OF THE SUPPLIANT ALL FOR WHICH S/HE PLEADS”** (The Acts of the Apostles, {AA} 564.1).

335

336 **“Every saint that comes to God with a true heart, in faith, and sends their honest petitions to him,**  
 337 **will have their prayers answered.** Their faith must not let go of the promises of God if they do not see  
 338 or feel the immediate answer of their prayers. Be not afraid to trust God. Rely upon his sure promise,  
 339 "Ask and ye shall receive." God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from his  
 340 saints that walk uprightly. Man is erring, and although his petitions are sent up from an honest heart, he  
 341 does not always ask for the things that are good for himself, or that will glorify God. When this is so, our  
 342 wise and good Father hears our prayers, and will answer; sometimes immediately, but gives us the things  
 343 that are for our best good and his own glory” (Spiritual Gifts Volume 4b, {4bSG} 7.4). **“If the children**  
 344 **of God could see His plan, they would know that He gives them that which is for their best good.**  
 345 Although they may not receive just the things they expected, or asked for, yet their prayers were  
 346 answered. Nothing hurtful was given, but the blessing they most needed, in the place of something they  
 347 had asked for, that would not have been good for them, but to their hurt” (4bSG 8.1).

348

349 “The assurance is broad and unlimited, and He is faithful who has promised. When we do not receive the  
 350 very things we asked for, at the time we ask, we are still to believe that the Lord hears and that He will  
 351 answer our prayers. We are so erring and shortsighted that we sometimes ask for things that would not be  
 352 a blessing to us, and our heavenly Father in love answers our prayers by giving us that which will be for  
 353 our highest good—that which we ourselves would desire if with vision divinely enlightened we could see  
 354 all things as they really are. When our prayers seem not answered ...cling to the promise; for the time of  
 355 answering will surely come, and we shall receive the blessing we need most” (Steps to Christ, {SC} 96.2).  
 356 Take the Word as it reads. Place yourself where the riches of the glory of heaven shall shine... on every  
 357 side of you because you are all light in the Lord” (The Upward Look, {UL} 234.6). Notice what Jesus  
 358 said, **“While you have light, believe in the light that you may be the children of light...”** (John 12:36).

359 Paul echoed a similar theme in Ephesians 5:8—“...**You are light in the Lord, walk as children of light.**”  
360 “Men and women have confederated to oppose... God... and the church is only half awake to the situation.  
361  
362 **There needs to be much more prayer... among professed believers**” (Evangelism, {Ev} 363.1). We  
363 must remember that “while [Daniel] was speaking [in prayer] ...confessing [his] sin and the sins of his  
364 people... that Gabriel... [flew] swiftly [and] touched [him]...” (Daniel 9:20-21). “We are to be established  
365 in the faith, in the light of the truth given us in our early experience. At that time... **WE WOULD**  
366 **SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES WITH MUCH PRAYER AND THE HOLY SPIRIT WOULD**  
367 **BRING THE TRUTH TO OUR MINDS; sometimes whole nights would be devoted to searching the**  
368 **Scriptures and earnestly asking God for guidance**” (Gospel Workers, {GW} 302.2). “Licentiousness  
369 is binding men and women as captives. ...There is danger that even the professed children of God will be  
370 corrupted. **They seem to be infatuated and powerless to resist and overcome upon the point of**  
371 **appetite and passion. In God, there is power; in Him, there is strength. If they will take hold upon...**  
372 **the life giving power of Jesus, [it] will stimulate everyone who has named the name of Christ.**  
373 Dangers and perils surround us; **we are only safe when we feel our weakness and cling with the grasp**  
374 **of faith to our mighty Deliverer.** [God’s power is perfect in our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9)]. **It is a**  
375 **fearful time in which we live. We cannot cease watchfulness and prayer for a moment** (Testimonies  
376 for the Church, Volume Three, {3T} 473.2) for “the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails  
377 much” (James 5:16).

378 **Worksheet for Self-Study to Identify Common Themes across Effective Prayers**

Elements of Effective Prayer	If My People							
	Nehemiah (Nehemiah 1)	Elijah # (1 Kings 18: 30-38)	Ezra (Ezra 9)	Daniel (Daniel 9)	Solomon (1 Kings 8)	Hezekiah (2 Kings 19)	Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20)	Jeremiah (Jeremiah 32)
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								
7.								
8.								
9.								

379 # - Study and digest this brief, yet effective prayer!