

A close-up photograph of a person's hands clasped in prayer, resting on an open Bible. The hands are positioned in the center-right of the frame, with fingers interlaced. The Bible is open to a page with text, and the wooden cover of the book is visible at the bottom. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

Believing Prayer  
Our Connection to Life in the Spirit  
COURSE WORKBOOK

Also used for  
*Retreat/Small Group Leader Guide*

# BELIEVING PRAYER

## OUR CONNECTION TO LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

Retreat Leader Guide

# WORKBOOK

RICHARD T. CASE





## Dedication/Acknowledgements

I wish to dedicate this course to and thank first all my wife, Linda, who is a true prayer warrior and a wonderful example of experiencing and then sharing the wonder of God's supernatural works through believing prayer. She knows the difference between wishes/telling God what we want Him to do and learning to hear His voice/His promises that are fulfilled as we are led to belief (faith). It is such an important truth to receive about the joy and life of prayer that is so misunderstood in the Christian life. We pray this way together and are living out the grand life that God has prepared for us. Secondly, we wish to honor our leaders who also have learned this for their personal lives (why we being in community together is so thrilling as we share the supernatural things that God does in all of our lives); and then have been giving it away through our retreats and discipling. We have a heart for all to experience this and personally see the beauty of life with God through personal, believing prayer:

### **These leaders are:**

Jake & Mary Beckel

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Heath & Rebecca Cardie

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David & Melissa Dunkel

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# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?



**“People typically think of prayer as a one-way conversation asking God to do a bunch of things that we need done.”**

Welcome to our course: *Believing Prayer—Our Connection to Life in the Spirit*. It's going to be a very exciting course as we learn to understand what prayer really is, which is quite different than most believers have been taught. People typically think of prayer as a one-way conversation asking God to do a bunch of things that we need done. Actually, it's relationship, it's dialogue. It's conversation that He's going to have with you and you're going to have with Him, which will also include other people. We will learn to understand that prayer is the beautiful opportunity to hear God's will. As we continue to walk with Him in this life of prayer, we will get to see His will fulfilled. Throughout this course, we also will be spending time in verses that will reveal to us the truth of prayer.

The first question we look at is: Why are most prayers by believers a series of wishes? *God, would You? Why don't You? Please would You take care of this for me, and I will work on having the faith to trust You?* We know He can do anything, so when we're having a problem, we want Him to solve it—and we want Him to solve it right now. We are even so bold as to tell Him how to solve it.

While we are good at asking God to fulfill our wish lists, interestingly enough, we do not believe that it will actually happen. We have been taught that He's going to respond to you with *yes*, *no*, or *maybe*, but we rarely get the *yes*. Instead we get the *no* or the *maybe*—which is really a *no*—as we wait to see what happens. We rarely see what we wish for. It's kind of like a vending machine. We put our quarters in, hoping to get a certain result, but when the results aren't what we wanted, we figure that it must not have been God's will.

Since we do not really understand and practice *believing prayer* as taught by Scripture, this course is going to reveal surprising and powerful truths so that all our prayers are answered with *yes*.

# LESSON 1:

## WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

**What are the reasons that we do not see answers to prayer but rather continue to experience difficulties in life? Why is this so important to learn as we work together to understand how to experience answers to prayer?**

**Read James 4:2-3:**

<sup>2</sup>You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup>You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

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You do not have because you do not what? Ask. You don't even bother. You believe that it is unlikely to happen anyway, so you might as well try to figure this out on your own and do not even consider asking. Or, when you do ask, you ask amiss. What does that mean? You're not asking in the way that's going to have God answer yes to your request. Usually, you're asking amiss because all you're giving God is your wish list. *Would You? Could You? Will You? Here's what I want you to do. I hope you do it. Let me know when you do.* He said that's amiss. You're missing the way that prayer really works, and you are also missing the opportunity to have vibrant prayer really work.



# LESSON 1:

## WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

**Why did Jesus tell His disciples that up until the time before He was going to the cross, they actually had not been praying? As He is now departing, in what way did He tell them to pray? What does that mean as we tie these together? Why is this so important to understand how we are to pray?**

### **Read John 16:24–33:**

<sup>24</sup> Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

#### **I Have Overcome the World**

<sup>25</sup> "I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. <sup>26</sup> In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; <sup>27</sup> for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>28</sup> I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father."

<sup>29</sup> His disciples said, "Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech! <sup>30</sup> Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God." <sup>31</sup> Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? <sup>32</sup> Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. <sup>33</sup> I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

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# LESSON 1:

## WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

He says that when we're living in the world under the control of the enemy, we are going to have what? Trouble. But don't fret, because He has already overcome it. Regarding prayer, we need His overcoming. In the world we're going to have difficulty, we're going to have hard circumstances, we're going to have tough decisions, we're going to have issues. The world is a difficult place to live, and we're in that world.

What do we need? We need for Him to resolve it. This happens through prayer. He says, *Up until now, you haven't asked anything in My name.* They haven't had to. Why not? Because He was physically with them all the time. They just asked Him directly. The gospels show that most of the time there was dialogue between Jesus and His disciples—*How come? What about this? How does this work? Oh, He's not happy with us. We forgot the bread after the feeding of the 5,000.* Jesus says, *Why are you reasoning in your own mind? Your hearts are hard because you're trying to figure this out. Why don't you keep asking Me? Keep talking to Me?*

It was dialogue. He tells His disciples that He is leaving because He is going to His death and is going to be resurrected. He also has already told them in John 13, 14, 15, and 16 who will be coming. He says, *The Holy Spirit will be in you.* In essence, what they have been doing, they will continue to do. They will ask Him, and they'll dialogue just like they've been doing, but it's going to be a little bit different. He will no longer be there physically. Instead, He is what? There spiritually, with the same access, the same ability to hear His answers as He continues to speak, to dialogue with them—*You are My sheep, and you hear My voice.*

So, it's not going to change per se—the results will be the same—rather it's going to change in how they do it and how they are process together with Him within their hearts to hear and follow His will. They are going to join Him as they hear His voice speak. It's really a privilege, it's a gift He has given to have fellowship with Him.

Prayer is different than what we think—it is the beautiful connection to the life of Christ through the Holy Spirit.

# LESSON 1:

## WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

**As Jesus invited His disciples to join Him as He first called them, what statement did He make and what did He request of them for their decision to follow Him? What does that mean, and why is this so important for us to understand for how we are to follow through prayer?**

### **Read Mark 1:14–20:**

#### Jesus Begins His Ministry

<sup>14</sup> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand;<sup>[a]</sup> repent and believe in the gospel.”

#### Jesus Calls the First Disciples

<sup>16</sup> Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. <sup>17</sup> And Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>18</sup> And immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>19</sup> And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. <sup>20</sup> And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.

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The Kingdom of God is here. Why? Jesus is the King, He's bringing the Kingdom, and He says, *Join Me in that Kingdom. Come and follow Me.* If you're going to follow Him, where must you be? With Him in the Kingdom—understanding, listening to His truth and His instruction, His will for what He is going to do in our personal lives. The essence of prayer is the opportunity to be with Him—it's relationship, which is what He told His disciples. *The Kingdom is here—come and follow Me.*

# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

From the following two sets of verses, what is important for us to be able to be in a place where we can experience intimate prayer with God? On what basis do we have this privilege? How are we to come to Him in prayer? What does that look like for us?

## Read John 15:1–5:

I Am the True Vine

**15** "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup> Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

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Apart from Him, we can't even pray, which is how we typically approach God and prayer now. We are not in dialogue with Him. We are asking Him to do what we would like Him to do for our plan. Apart from Him, we're doing nothing. We are essentially dead branches separate from the vine. We shouldn't expect Him to answer our prayers when we are not connected to the life—the vine. Why? Because it's about relationship.

# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

## Read Hebrews 10:19–22:

### The Full Assurance of Faith

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, brothers,<sup>[a]</sup> since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, <sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup> let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

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He says, *I give you a wonderful privilege. You can come into the throne room any time with boldness, and dialogue with Me about your life and issues of life. When you come, come with a true heart. A sincere heart.*

In the Greek, the word *heart* means authentic heart. *What's going on with you? Come on in. Let's talk about it.* It's not saying a perfect heart. You speak to Him about all that is going on inside of you—*I'm struggling with this God. This is confusing to me. I'm lacking faith in this.* He says, He already knows that. He is not asking you to be perfect—to first fix all your issues and then come and ask Him to say yes to your wish list. Instead, He says to come to Him, reveal your authentic heart—which He already knows—and then dialogue regarding what He has to speak and fulfill for you.

Why should you do this? Because He has wisdom. He has answers. He has everything you will need. What do you need? You need wisdom, solutions, and resolution to the issues of those things that you consider prayer. *Why don't you come in? Let's talk about it. What's on your mind? What are you thinking about? What's going on?* The privilege you have is to come in. It is not something you earned, instead it is because of Him. He created the opportunity for you to come in. He died at the cross, was resurrected, and now, all you have to do is come in with what? A willingness to hear what the King has to say. That's why you're in the

# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

Kingdom and why you have a heart to see what He has to say—as opposed to it not mattering since nothing will happen anyway. Come with Him and enter into this beautiful prayer life of dialogue—which truly is a real privilege.

**As we boldly come to Him in prayer, for what are we coming? How does that compare to giving God our wish list? Why is this so important to understand regarding the essence of all prayer?**

## Read Ephesians 5:15–21:

<sup>15</sup> Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup> And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

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He says to be wise and discover what? What His will is. Our purpose in dialoguing with God is to discover His will. We know something about His will (review our course on the Covenant), which is that He is going to answer us with Covenant life—*I'm going to bless you to make you a blessing. I will resolve your issues. I've overcome it. I know you have adversity. Let Me get it resolved. I'll get you out of trouble. All your trouble.*

Our role is to ask, *What do You have to say about this?* What is your will? He says as you come into this life of prayer, by being filled with the Spirit, come with praise, thanksgiving, and worship. With your problem or issue, He is not saying that you should ignore the problem, but He says to come to Him with praise, worship,

# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

and thanksgiving. Why? He's already overcome. He has the solution. You know He has a solution. He says that coming to Him with praise, worship, and thanksgiving demonstrates that you believe that because you can praise, worship and give thanks to God in the middle of the trouble. You don't yet have the answer, but you know you're going to receive it.

It's not, *Well, I praise God. Yes, I have a problem, so this will be interesting. I wonder, how You are going to resolve this one? I praise You that You will provide the answer.* He doesn't say praise *for* the problem. He never said that. He says praise *in* the problem. Who are you praising? The Father. Why? Because you are going to get resolution for which you can be thankful. And when it happens, what does He want you to do? Celebrate it. Be grateful. Be so excited that you cannot help but share what God did for you—glorify Him. The next time you have trouble—which you're going to have—you go into it knowing that it is going to be resolved and that you are going to give Him praise, worship, and thanksgiving through it.

**Practically, what does it mean to pray without ceasing? Why is this so important to understand for how we are to pray?**

## Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16–21:

<sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Do not despise prophecies, <sup>21</sup> but test everything; hold fast what is good.

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Rejoice in what? All things, pray without ceasing. Christians try to explain that *praying without ceasing* means to pray as often as you can. But that is not the case. You can pray twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. How? It's relationship, it's dialogue. It's not, *I pray, I ask, and I hope it happens. See you later.* No, it's constant relationship.

# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

Linda and I have been married going on 52 years now. We are in relationship. Am I always in Linda's presence? No. Do I just give her my wish list and say, *See you later, hope you do what I need?* No. Rather, I'm connected, we have a wonderful relationship. We are in conversation. We are in dialogue as we're processing things. I'm talking to her, and she's talking to me. She can call me on the phone and say, *Hey, I just had this thought I'd like to discuss with you.* It is without ceasing. I'm in relationship, and the communication is always available.

He says, *Don't quench the spirit.* Who do you have inside you? The Holy Spirit—but He says that you can quench it. When you think of the word quenching, what does it mean? Putting it out. Making it diminish as if there is nothing there. You've quenched it, you've stopped it. How do you stop the Spirit? You ignore Him. He's saying, *I have something to say to you, but you won't even consider it. You have stopped pursuing Me and asking Me and listening to Me.*

**What does it mean that we are to worship and pray in Spirit and in truth? How does that apply to how we pray? Why is this so important as we learn to pray?**

## Read John 4:19–26:

<sup>19</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup> Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.” <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. <sup>22</sup> You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” <sup>25</sup> The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things.” <sup>26</sup> Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.”

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# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

To the woman at the well, He says, *I am the Christ. Are you going to worship Me in Spirit and truth through the Holy Spirit by Him revealing truth to you?* Who's going to issue the truth? The Holy Spirit. So, our worship, our prayer is that we've got to be at that place where we aren't trying to figure out our trouble in the flesh, but receiving His answers through the spiritual process of Him leading us to truth, knowing that truth will lead us to the best and none better.

That's what we want. In order to do so, we have to be in dialogue. He said it's a spiritual process, and it's having the heart to go to truth. We will understand His will, which is where authenticity comes in. *God, I'm struggling.* God says, *Yes, I know. Do you want Me to take you to where you can see what I'm about ready to do?* If you have a heart to go to truth, what would you say? *Yes, take my struggling heart and move it to a place of faith.* He says, *I'll do that work, but you've got to stay with me.* How do you stay with Him? By dialoguing with Him, listening to Him, processing with Him, and by letting Him show you the next piece of truth. Then you can take your discouragement and turn it into excitement and hope because He just took you there. It happens in Spirit and truth.

We are given an example when the disciples come to Jesus and ask if He could teach them to pray like John's disciples. They have observed that when John's disciples pray, things happen, and they would like to experience that as well. Now, the funny thing is, they are with Jesus, and they are seeing things happen all the time. But, they didn't connect the dots. They thought maybe there was something else, and they didn't want to miss out.

**The disciples asked Jesus how to pray. From the following verses, what are the key elements of prayer as described by Jesus? What do these mean regarding how we are to pray? What truths can we then understand as to why God promises to reveal His will to us? Why is this so important? Work through these as follows; Luke 11:1–4; 5–8; 9–11; 12–13.**

## **Read Luke 11:1–13:**

The Lord's Prayer

**11** Now Jesus<sup>[a]</sup> was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."<sup>2</sup> And he said to them, "When you pray, say:

"Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

<sup>3</sup> Give us each day our daily bread,<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>4</sup> and forgive us our sins,  
for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.  
And lead us not into temptation.”

<sup>5</sup> And he said to them, “Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves,’ <sup>6</sup> for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; <sup>7</sup> and he will answer from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything?’ <sup>8</sup> I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence<sup>[c]</sup> he will rise and give him whatever he needs. <sup>9</sup> And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. <sup>11</sup> What father among you, if his son asks for<sup>[d]</sup> a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; <sup>12</sup> or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

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Here's the essence of prayer as He answers the disciples' request to learn how to pray. *First of all*, He asks, *who are you speaking to?* God, Your Father, His Father, your personal Dad. You're in the family, and you have a Dad who cares for you. This is not an impersonal God out there, which is how we tend to pray. *Yeah, You're out there, all-powerful God. Would You do this and that for me?* Since the answer is mostly *no*, you conclude that you don't deserve it, or that He's decided not to, or that He must be busy with other things.

But instead, He said, *No, you're talking to Dad.* And when you talk to Dad, what do you expect? First off, did He hear you? Yes. Are you happy you are with Him and are going to process this? You're talking to Dad, and He says, *Now you, being evil*—meaning living in an evil world with a self-centered heart that doesn't quite

# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

understand all this—*I am not going to make you guess and hope you get it right. I am going to give you the Holy Spirit who will absolutely answer your request as you hear and follow.* They then expect an answer because He is talking and He knows the answer. He is not going to make you guess and hope you get it right.

He gave instructions and told you what to ask for: Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done.

What does it mean that you're praying for the Kingdom? That you want to be in the Kingdom where you will receive His answers and the fulfillment of His will. By definition, you're acknowledging He's the King and you are what? Not the King.

Then He says, *Thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven.* You've got to ask for His will. Where? In the Kingdom, where you've agreed to surrender your will to Him. What if you don't care and have decided to go off and pursue your own will—which is essentially why you pray to God, so He would do your will? He says, *You have it backwards; you know little, and you can't fulfill what I want to do because it's supernatural. Why don't you come and discover My will? You have to be in My Kingdom. Let Me be the King—Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done.*

If there weren't questions, everything would be automatic, which leads us to the belief that everything that happens is God's will. He answers yes, no, or maybe by what happens, so everything that happens must be God's will. But He said, No, you have to ask for it. You have to ask, May I live in the Kingdom where Thy will be done? I'm seeking Your will. I'm looking for Your will. That's what I'm going to do in my dialogue with You, and You will give it to me.

He says, Further, live out today, thy daily bread. Live it out one day at a time. Dad will take care of you. Trust Him. Forget the past and do not dwell on what has happened already—move forward, because the past is something you cannot change, and this includes your poor decisions in the flesh. Do not get ahead of yourself by trying to cross bridges that you have not arrived at yet—most of the time we never even get to that place—rather His will is today, now, step by step—stay in the now, enjoy the walk in the now, and see what happens next. Give us this day, our daily bread—which is Him since He is the bread of life—stay in a place where you are receiving this daily bread of His Word and truth being received and processed. A privilege of today, since He knows what comes next.

Go to forgiveness so that you live in freedom. Why? Because you're going to have lots of people oppose you. You are to learn the beauty and freedom of forgiveness. Stay in the Kingdom knowing He has forgiven you already. He invites you to live with Him in His Kingdom by receiving that forgiveness through repentance, turning from the flesh, and returning to Him because you stand forgiven. Then, you are to forgive others on the same basis—His nature, which is

# LESSON 1:

## WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

why He asks us to live in forgiveness toward all others who have harmed us, hurt us, come against us. This is not saying we have to reconcile—it takes two parties to reconcile just as we have to process truth to reconcile with Him—but rather that our heart lives in His nature and thus we receive His forgiveness toward others, and we live in freedom. Do not harbor grudges, anger, or vengeance—rather work toward resolution, including not being reconciled so you can dust your feet off and move on.

Having forgiveness is an indicator that you are in the Kingdom and why it is so important. In the Kingdom, you are experiencing His nature, and thus you are in the Kingdom because of His forgiveness for you. You remain in the Kingdom as you then have the nature of forgiveness in you for others.

*Lead me not into temptation but make me be delivered from the enemy.* We know that God does not tempt and that temptation comes from our own selfish desires (the flesh)—James 1:12–16. Pray to the Father and ask Him to give you strength to stay with Him in the Kingdom and not exit because you decided you wanted to do or have something without following Him and His will. May you stay strong and always have a heart to stay with Him and not fall to self—the flesh that carries you to sin—not following God. Further, you know the enemy is tricky. Pray to be delivered from it. We are not to pray: *Take me away and make sure I never experience the enemy.* It's not what He says. Instead, He says to pray: *Deliver me from the issues of what the enemy can do so that I can stay with You in the Kingdom where I can have victory.* The key to how we pray is:

1. Pray to God, your Father, your Dad, who is all powerful and can make all things work together for good to deliver to you a life of the Covenant—blessed to be a blessing.
2. Ask for the Kingdom—*May I stay in the Kingdom where the power, authority, and God's will is known and experienced?*
3. Ask For His will to be done—*May I hear, understand, receiving, believe, and then follow His will, which is best and none better—about everything? He is the King, and I am not, He knows and I do not.* Seek His will.

All the other elements—this day, forgiveness, and protection are all about staying in the Kingdom where His will is done. These elements will demonstrate to you whether you are in the Kingdom or not.

# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

He gives us this great story: Suppose you have somebody come knock at your door. He continues knocking so he can request what is needed. You respond by saying that you can't do it. Your kids are in bed already and you can't give him what he is requesting. But that person keeps knocking until you say, *OK, I'm going to give you what you want. Not because you're my neighbor, not because you're my friend, not because you're my child, but because of your persistence.*

It doesn't mean—and this is where people get confused—if you just beat on God's door enough, He'll give you what you want. By definition, what did He just say is the key prayer? What are you seeking? His will. It's not: *I'm just going to hammer You until You give me what I have decided I want.* No, it is being persistent about seeking His will. He says, *Stay with Me, stay with Me, stay with Me until you discover it. That's how I'm going to give it to you. It is not because you're My child, but because you persistently seek My will.*

In the story, if the owner of the house said: *Hey, come back tomorrow, 6:00 in the morning, I'll give you everything you want,* how would we have responded? *Great. Fantastic. Got it. I got the answer.* What did you need? You needed the answer. That is what you're looking for.

What you are persistently doing/asking is: staying with Him, staying with Him, staying with Him in the throne room with an authentic heart until you know His will about the issues in life. He will give you the answer in His timing, not yours. Why? He is working a whole bunch of other things at the same time for His bigger story—His will and purposes of the Kingdom. There's a timing to it.

He further says: *Ask, seek, and knock.* What are you asking for? Your ask is always the same thing—it is always for His will. That's why you have to back up a step when you have an issue and ask God what He has to speak about this. You're asking for His will. Then you're seeking it. What does that mean? You are looking for input, truth, information, and evidence that leads you to His will. *What's the truth? What's Your answer? What information do I need to get? What due diligence do I need to do? I'm going to look for it. My role is to look for it.* The word *look* literally means to look for it as if it is lost treasure.

If you were told there were five gold bars hidden in your room and you could have them if you found them, what would you do? You would go looking for them. You weren't told where they are, you have to look for them. Out of frustration, you just want them given to you, but you have got to look for them. They're there, and you will have them if you receive them, but you've got to look for them. Then, as you're looking and getting information, you start to understand His will. You start knocking on His door and questioning whether what you found is the specific thing that He's giving you. If so, the door will be open and if not, then you have not yet received His specific will.

# LESSON 1:

## WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

For example, you are offered a new job. And, you believe you have had confirmation from Him that the job was yours and good for you as you sought His will. Keep looking and gathering information. God said, *You came down this path, but as you knock, the answer was "not yet." There is a timing issue. I have something different in store for you. I've taught you some things. Keep going.* It's a process. He's not going to bait and switch you. You have to trust Him. He is guiding you to what? His will. He is not going to make it difficult. He's not going to make it so that you never receive it. His will will not be mediocre. It's always going to be very good, exceptional, spectacular. Absolutely. He is going to deliver you the Covenant. He will resolve your issues. He will show you His heart for you—which is not a single thing.

Linda and I have what we call our clutter list of unresolved issues. At any given time, there are 10 to 15 things on the list. We persist until we get His answer—which we always get—and when it is done, we take it off the list. Hallelujah. But guess what? There's still 10 to 15 things on the list. We talk to Him about the next one and the next one and the next one. It's never without end, and it's always prayer without ceasing. We don't sit down every night and go over the list. We are in relationship with Him. God reveals something and our role is to go seek what He revealed. Oftentimes, Linda has awoken me in the morning to tell me about this great insight she received that might be an answer for one of the items on the list. Together, we take the information and process it. Because we are in unity, there are no egos involved. My way is not superior to her way or vice versa. Rather, we are to find confirmation through our prayer with God. She might have been given some of the truth, but perhaps not all of it, and I might have been given a piece of the puzzle, too. We combine these truths, process the new information, and seek God's counsel. We're in relationship with Him, and He provides answers for all of the issues.

# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

**Why do we lack wisdom all the time, every time about all our circumstances of life? What then are we to do? What does He promise to give us? What must we believe to receive what He promises? Why is this so important as we seek His will through prayer?**

## **Read James 1:2–8:**

### Testing of Your Faith

<sup>2</sup> Count it all joy, my brothers,<sup>[a]</sup> when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup> for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup> And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

<sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;<sup>8</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

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He says that we lack wisdom. When do we lack wisdom? All the time. Because, by definition, we're always seeking His will. We are to ask for His what? His will, which may be different than what you think. We lack wisdom because we are limited in our perspective. God says, *I might be working all kinds of stuff at once, and I'm going to be delivering this supernaturally. I know what's around the corner and what's down the road in the future that you'll never know.* So, why don't we seek His will about everything? Get in the habit, as He says. *Come to me.*

If you lack wisdom, what are you supposed to do? Ask Him for His will—His wisdom, His insight, what He's going to do. Ask Him all of that. He says He will give it to you without finding fault. He is not going to say that you need to be perfect.

# LESSON 1:

## WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

If you asked Him for His will, then you are in His Kingdom. Let Him give you the answer you seek. He says, *I'll give it to you*. He says He will give it *generously*, which in Greek means with great clarity. If you've got a problem, He will give the answer to you with great clarity. You'll understand it and how it applies to you personally.

There is only one condition: You must ask in faith believing that He will give you the answer. You do not at first have to believe what He says. Let Him give you the faith to believe what He just spoke. Stay with Him now that you heard it because He will give you the faith to believe it. From there you will process more because He has more wisdom to give you.

Do you know why you heard Him? Because you expected it. If you ask, you have to believe that you will get an answer. Does He say, *If you've been doing this for five years, if you've been praying correctly, if you're mature, if you're a seminary graduate, if you're the next Billy Graham, then I'll answer your prayer*. No. All you have to do is what? Ask.

If a brand new believer says, *Father, I have a problem. What do You have to say about that?* He will give the answer in a way that can be understood by that new believer.

When my two grandsons were younger, the older one a teenager and the younger one in grade school, they would ask me the same question. When I gave an answer, the teenager understood it without question, but the younger one didn't have a clue what my answer meant. Should I tell him that he better grow up or get smarter or wait three years? No. Instead, I explain it in a different way, a way that will make sense to him. I can communicate in a different way so that he can understand it right where he is at. It is my responsibility to transfer my communication to him in a way that he will understand. My grandsons asked their question believing that they would get an answer, which they did, in a way that each of them would understand. When you ask God a question, believe that you will get an answer. You've got to get that settled.



# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

**When we are heavily burdened with life issues, what are we to do? What does He promise then for us if we do? What does this mean for our prayer life? Why is this so important to move from burden to peace?**

**Read Matthew 11:28–30:**

<sup>28</sup> Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

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You've got a problem that is burdening you. This problem could even be heavy laden. What are you to do? *Come to Me. As you come to Me, immediately I will give you a sense of release.* The word *rest* means a sense of release. You are not coming to Him and saying: *God, I have a problem. Go fix it. Here's my wish list for You.* Does that give you release? No. You are still wondering if He is going to say *yes, no, or maybe.*

He said: *When you come to Me, your sense of release will come because you gave the problem to Me expecting Me to answer or solve the problem specifically for you.* Why? Because you're with Him who can fulfill it. He said that immediately gives you an expectation of hope, a release. You know that He is going to get this problem resolved. Then, He says to take His yoke—where you're yoked together, you can't go anywhere else. You're still learning to stay in step with Him who's leading you. He says, *Come and you will learn My answers and how to follow My will to receive My resolutions.* Why? Dialoguing, staying in prayer, learning His answers that will give rest to your soul.

# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

There are two words here for rest, and they are different.

1. He's going to resolve it. It is not yet fully resolved—there still are issues; things to understand and follow; but I have hope—my rest is release and hope.
2. If you stay with Him and let Him teach you the fulfillment of the answer, then you get complete rest—it's settled, and you're in complete inner soul, peace/favor, resolution.

He said it takes both. *Come to Me. Stay with Me until this resolved.* When you learn that, the next time it will be easier for you to do what? Come to Me and be at rest. It will be interesting to see how God works this out so just stay with Him until it is. And further He says, *Cast your burden upon Me because I care for you, and I can give you the answers.*

**What are we to do with our fears? What does He promise when we do? Why is this so important for moving from fear to peace?**

### Read 1 John 4:12–19:

<sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

<sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup> Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup> So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. <sup>17</sup> By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. <sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. <sup>19</sup> We love because he first loved us.

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# LESSON 1: WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

You're abiding, you're in relationship. You're experiencing the very life of God. You haven't seen God because He is Spirit. However, we are the physical representation of the invisible God. God in us, as we're abiding, living His life through us. We are in relationship, we're experiencing Him, and we understand that He loves us. Love, He says, casts out what? Fear. Because of the trouble we have, what do we fear? The potential negative outcome. The outcome could be bad, and we are afraid of that. But He says, *If you come with Me, My love is going to cast that out.* Why would love cast out fear? Because we know that everything He wants to do for us will be good because He loves us. He is going to resolve it. But in order for Him to resolve it, we've got to be where? We have to be with Him, letting Him dialogue with us so that we discover His will, which is going to be good. Therefore, when we come to Him with the problems in which we're afraid of the outcome, He will cast out our fear, because we will know and experience that He is going to resolve it.

**To stay in a spiritual relationship with God, being with Him in His Kingdom, what is important for us when we understand we have fallen away? Why have we fallen away? What is then His promise when we return to Him in His Kingdom? Why is this so important for our experience of prayer?**

**Read 1 John 1:8–10:**

<sup>8</sup> If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. <sup>10</sup> If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

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# LESSON 1:

## WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

In order to be with Him, it is important to confess your sin. What is your sin? It's not what you think. It isn't the thing you shouldn't be doing. The sin is being in the flesh. You've decided that you are going to go and do what you please. You've decided you are not going to ask God for His will—rather you are going to take care of matters yourself. *God, would you bless my plan? I'm going to execute it. I'm worried. I'm fearful. Uh oh, I'm in trouble. I give up. I quit.*

He says that you've got to confess that, which also implies that if you're confessing it, what are you doing in the confession? You're coming back to Him and His presence. It's called repentance—turning around, coming back. He says your prayer life is really simple: When you recognize that you've gone off on your own, when you are in a place where you're not going to hear Him at all, the remedy is to do what? Come on back. Don't go and try to fix anything, because that makes things even worse. Just come back. Repent. *I'm sorry. I'm coming back into Your fellowship and into Your Kingdom. You be the King. I'll seek Your will.*

God will welcome you back every time. He doesn't say, *You fool, you know that you're going to get punished for this. You had better go fix this and you better make it right.* Instead, He says: *I love you—welcome back. Hallelujah. Forget the things that lay behind, and move forward into high calling of Christ Jesus. Let's go forward because of the gospel. I'll deliver it.* When will He deliver it? Now. Now that you have come back. Even if you made a mess of things, He knows this and will fix it. Even if you have been away from Him for a long time and have some serious problems, He knows this. *Come on back. Let Me fix it all.*

When you learn and realize that God will fix all of your issues if you are with Him, what will you do when you have an issue? Go to Him. That's where the answers are going to be. You will then understand that this all happens in the Kingdom. As you learn this, where will you stay? With Him, seeking His will over yours. What does the Kingdom look like? It's nothing but joy. You can hardly wait to see what He's going to do next.

We are to fully understand John 10:10 that says He came to give us a superabundant life. We are always in a place where we are being asked, *Do you believe that He came to give you an abundant life?* It is easy for us to say we believe the word of God, but it is also typical for us to say that we are not experiencing. He is asking us to discover that this is true; and it's true for each of us. We are to repent, come back to Him and His Kingdom, and walk into His will where He will deliver not only His will, but also His resolution and His beautiful Covenant life to and for us. Others will observe this in us and have a desire to learn this as well. Our prayer life is to be experiencing Him, living out His abundant life, and then understanding how to give it away.

# LESSON 1:

## WHAT IS BELIEVING PRAYER?

As we complete Lesson 1, we understand three vital points about prayer:

1. Prayer is not a wish list.
2. We do not receive because we don't ask—especially when we've already gotten discouraged about it.
3. We ask, but we ask amiss, thinking everything is God's will.

*God says, No, it's relationship. It's abiding, it's being with Me every hour of every day. In dialogue, I will communicate to you My will because it's going to be best and none better. I've got answers. I've got resolutions. Come to Me, and I'll give you rest. Stay with Me, and I'll resolve your issues.*

It's such a beautiful thing as we understand the difference between the typical way that we pray and what He's saying. *Enjoy this opportunity that I'm giving you to be in relationship with Me where I will resolve things through My conversations with you.*



# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.



**“Prayer is not about  
our wish list.”**

As we continue with this course, *Believing Prayer—Our Connection to Life in the Spirit*, we've understood a few things. Prayer is not about our wish list. It is not giving up on asking Him because we are frustrated. And it is not asking amiss (James 4:1–4) where we basically are asking Him to do what we want Him to do—which is to fulfill our will. Instead, God says, *No, prayer is this beautiful relationship with Me as you abide with Me, as you come to My Kingdom and pray: Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done. May I live in that Kingdom and enjoy the life of the King and the benevolence of the King.* He will deliver good to us, and as we seek and ask for His will, with persistence, we know that we will receive it. Then, as we believe it, we know it will happen. This is a great privilege and is a source of joy for Him. It is also our joy because we get to be with Him and we're hearing Him all the time. We're receiving wisdom, we're seeing things be resolved, and it's an exciting life. Life is intended to be a great adventure in a very difficult place, which is why we seek answers. His joy is being with us. He said that His joy may be complete in us as we are one with Him in the Father. He wants to experience that with us. We are the visible expression of the invisible God.

**As we pray, where are we to pray? Why is this so important, and why does God desire we pray this way?**

### **Read Matthew 6:6–8:**

<sup>6</sup> But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>7</sup> “And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. <sup>8</sup> Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS.

### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

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When you pray—Our Father who art in heaven, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done—He says you are to pray where? In secret. Your prayers are personal. You are to go into your closet and shut the door to get rid of all the distractions. Who will be in your prayer closet with you? God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. How do you know He is in there with you? Because He is in you. You took Him in, and you are now in dialogue, having a personal relationship with Him. Talking to Him in secret implies He's got things to reveal that you don't yet know. The word *secret* means it's hidden. Why is it hidden?

It's personal to you, and you can't know and understand things that only He does. You are not to just try to figure this out on your own, because then you are never going to receive the secret of the solution. When somebody says to you, *Let me tell you a secret.* What do you do? You lean in and listen. *What do you know that I don't know. I want to know.* It's our nature. It's interesting. What is it? You can hardly wait to learn something that you don't already know. Why do you listen? They know something you don't. You love getting secrets. God says, *Why don't you approach prayer that way? I have a secret to tell you.* Why don't you lean in? You love to hear secrets. Who's giving you that secret? God—the One who knows the secret. And who's listening? You—the one who does not know. Often when we hear these secrets, we have no idea what He just said. *What? How do I live this out? How is this going to work?*

A perfect example is when Gabriel appears to Mary and says, *You're going to be the mother of the Son of God.* In disbelief, Mary says, *What? No way. Remember I'm not married. Not consummated yet. That's going to be problematic for me. So, could you tell me about the secret? What's going to happen with that? How is that going to work?* So, she leaned in even more. *I just got told a secret, and I have to know more about this.*



# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS.

### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

It's not, *OK, got it, that's fantastic. Thank you for telling me.* It's intended for you to do what? Understand it; receive it; believe it. *Now that you've just been told this, do you believe it?* Our first reaction might be, *Not really. I don't get this at all. It seems contradictory. You're asking me to do this, but I thought I was supposed to do something else. Or, I wanted to do it the other way. It doesn't make sense to me. How does that work? What do You mean? What are You doing?* Secret prayer is beautiful—it's a revelation of secrets all the time.

**As we seek God in prayer, what are we to do? What does He then promise?  
What does this mean to Him answering our prayers?**

**Read Jeremiah 33:3:**

<sup>3</sup> Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.

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What are you supposed to do? Call to Him. *What do You have to say to Me? I'll tell you great and mighty things.* The word great means powerful, magnificent secrets. The word mighty actually is secrets that you don't know. Why don't you know them? You don't ask, but what else? You're not going to know this because it's a secret that He's going to tell you. Why would you not know it? It's not natural. You can't figure this out. *Call to Me, and I'll tell you secret things that are mighty and powerful that I know, and I will tell them to you.* All you have to do is what? Ask. What is it that you are asking for? Answers to your questions. *What is Your will about this issue, this decision, this problem in my life. He says, I will tell you, I will tell you great and mighty things that you don't know. I know, but you don't.*

# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS.

### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

As we pray, what role are we to serve for others, and also what are others to serve for us? What is this? How does it work? Why is this so important to our prayer life?

#### Read 1 Corinthians 14:1–3:

Prophecy and Tongues

**14** Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. <sup>2</sup> For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit. <sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation.

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He says to get involved with the prophetic. There are two types:

1. Foretelling, which means understanding what is coming ahead. I need to alert you to something coming ahead so that you pay attention and follow Me into this new place.
2. Forthtelling—telling truth into a particular situation. *Here's a truth about your situation that I'm going to tell you—a secret that you don't know, but I'm going to speak it.* This comes through your spouse, other people who are coming into this situation as you are processing together. You all have a heart to ask Him what His will is. *What is truth here? What secret are You telling us?* He'll use the truth to get you to this secret. He'll get you information about something He wants you to pay attention to.

## LESSON 2: OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

Recently we received a call from a wife who informed us that her husband was just diagnosed with cancer, and the prognosis looked grim. The doctors indicated that it could be terminal. She wanted to know what they should do. Let's all go to God. In circumstances like this, what would we typically do, how would we typically pray? *God, he's got a problem. Please heal him and let us know when You do.* We pray for the healing without actually believing that He will do it. Since He probably won't, we start thinking about what we are going to say to that widow. *I'm sorry for your loss. Life will still be OK. Hope you process your grief.* We're already thinking that way. Healing, yes, but probably not.

God says that the privilege of prayer is to just come and ask Him. *God, what do You have to say about this?* He said, *This person has been disobedient for two years. And he knows it. I've been asking him specifically to do something for the benefit of him in his life, and he's rejected it and keeps rejecting it. This is part of his consequence. If he repents and if he returns and follows what I have to say, I'm going to heal him.*

When asked what God had spoken to the couple as they sought Him, he and his wife said that they have been disobedient. When asked if they were willing to repent and be obedient, they said that they were. We all knew the specific details of the disobedience, but they were willing to repent and let us—our inner circle—hold them accountable to that.

We shared what we heard when we went to God. *When you're obedient, you're going to get healed.* We asked them if they believed that, and they said that they didn't know, but they heard that, too. We then went to God to ask for faith to believe. He just told you a secret. *Here's the issue. Here's why it's happening. And here's the key to success. Are you willing to hear it?* All this is in secret. None of us knew this. He receives and is obedient, and we hold him accountable. Six months later, the doctor, who was dumbfounded—calling it a miracle, verified that the MRI revealed that he'd been completely healed.

God is the God of miracles. He told the couple a secret—the path to the husband's healing. *There's wisdom, there's insight, there's truth because what I care about is your heart, and I want to bless you in all things—but you're preventing that.* Why? Because they had stepped out of the Kingdom; and even though He kept inviting them back, they didn't come. That's the truth. That was the secret. God says, *I'm going to use the prophetic—you be the prophetic and let other people be the prophetic to you to tell you something that I know—that I'm trying to get you a message, because I want to tell you secrets.* It's a beautiful thing.

# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

**What is the role of the Holy Spirit in this aspect of prayer? What does this mean to us, and how are we to respond to what the Spirit is doing? Why?**

**Read Romans 8:26–28:**

<sup>26</sup> Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. <sup>27</sup> And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because<sup>[a]</sup> the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. <sup>28</sup> And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good,<sup>[b]</sup> for those who are called according to his purpose.

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Here, the Spirit defines intercession. He's asking the Father for His will. The Holy Spirit is asking, *Give Me clarity; give Me understanding. What is Your will?* Now that it is understood, the Spirit will assist with the communication until that person has clarity. Intercession is really discovering for somebody else what God has to say. It is His will. We don't intercede by telling God what we want to happen—*God, would you?* Rather, we ask, *What's the best thing we can do to intercede for you? Which is to seek God to help you discover God's will. Father, reveal your will. They're searching for your will.* God might give you a peace that He wants you to share. You might get some insight, some wisdom, some truth.

# LESSON 2: OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

**From the following two sets of verses: As the Spirit is serving to intercede for us, what role are we to also serve? What does this look like? Why is this so important as we serve each other and are recipients of what others do for us?**

**Read Hebrews 7:20–28:**

<sup>20</sup> And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, <sup>21</sup> but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him:

“The Lord has sworn  
and will not change his mind,  
‘You are a priest forever.’”

<sup>22</sup> This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

<sup>23</sup> The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, <sup>24</sup> but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. <sup>25</sup> Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost<sup>[a]</sup> those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

<sup>26</sup> For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. <sup>27</sup> He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. <sup>28</sup> For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

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# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS.

### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

**Read 1 Peter 2:9–10:**

<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

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Remember the word for *mercy* is Covenant loyalty. God is telling us that we are to receive the Covenant, which He is loyal to deliver to us. We are a royal priesthood. You, personally, are a priest. He said Jesus was the high priest and the high priest was doing what? Interceding. The role of the priest in the Old Testament was to discover God's will and help others understand it. That's what Jesus does, and that's what the Holy Spirit does. If we are going to discover God's will, what do we have to go do? We've got to go to Him.

Your intercession is to go to Him and ask Him to help you understand and facilitate how you can assist the people around you—your spouse, your kids, your workers, the people in your small group. How can you be an intercessor to help them receive God's will, and how can you help lead them there? It is not that they are going to look to you, but they are going to get it from you. Your role is to intercede. You are a priesthood. You're supposed to intercede as a priest, a minister.

We tend to think, *Well, I'm supposed to make them feel happy.* No, not at all. Your role is to seek God's will for this situation. What is the best thing you can do? Go to the Father. *What do You have to say about this? I know there's an issue here. Please reveal Your will to us.* We're to do that for each other.

# LESSON 2: OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

Intercession is a beautiful thing. It is joining with people around you who you want to invite into the process versus working alone to receive it yourself. *Maybe, I should be better at this.* But He says, *No, you need confirmation, and you need Me to speak through others.* That's what you do for each other. You bring faith. *I believe this. I know God's going to answer.* You've come to God together, and He will reveal His will, His wisdom, His truth so that you move into the place where He can deliver to you the Covenant.

**As we are in prayer, what can we absolutely count on regarding God's answers? What exactly are His promises and why are they all "yes" and not "maybe"? Why is this so important to our life of prayer?**

### Read 2 Corinthians 1:17–24:

<sup>17</sup> Was I vacillating when I wanted to do this? Do I make my plans according to the flesh, ready to say "Yes, yes" and "No, no" at the same time? <sup>18</sup> As surely as God is faithful, our word to you has not been Yes and No. <sup>19</sup> For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not Yes and No, but in him it is always Yes. <sup>20</sup> For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. <sup>21</sup> And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, <sup>22</sup> and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>23</sup> But I call God to witness against me—it was to spare you that I refrained from coming again to Corinth. <sup>24</sup> Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, for you stand firm in your faith.

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# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS.

### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

We are asking God to give us the Covenant, which is always His plan. What do we need to know? There's wisdom here. There's insight. We need to walk with Him, to learn to be obedient—to get to the right place at the right time with the right people for Him to fulfill His supernatural will. What promise specifically does He have to give us about this? And when we receive it, what is our response to be? Amen. What does that mean? So be it. The Jewish culture has a significant understanding of the word, *amen*. It's: *I've heard what You had to say. I see that You've applied it to me personally, and I receive that now. May it please You to fulfill it. So be it. May You fulfill it in reality. And how would You want me to walk with You into that reality?* Amen, so be it.

**On what basis do we receive power in prayer? What does this mean to have this spiritual power? Why is this so important to our prayer life and overcoming circumstances?**

#### **Read Matthew 16:13–20:**

Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ

<sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” <sup>14</sup> And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” <sup>15</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” <sup>17</sup> And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. <sup>18</sup> And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock<sup>[a]</sup> I will build my church, and the gates of hell<sup>[b]</sup> shall not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed<sup>[c]</sup> in heaven.” <sup>20</sup> Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

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## LESSON 2: OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

God says to Peter, *Based upon what just occurred and what you understood, I'm going to give you the keys to the Kingdom.* A key does what? It opens up the entrance into the Kingdom of God. This is where all the power is. It's where all the authority is. And you have received this because why? The Father disclosed this to you through revelation. He told you a secret. You didn't figure this out on your own. This is the key to the Kingdom. He is going to build His church on this truth of you receiving what the Father says through revelation.

As a result, you will have the power to bind and loose. What does power to bind mean? Bind up, tie up, corral, make sure there's no power there. It is binding up the work of the enemy and the opposition that you're getting from the world. What is loosing? It is releasing the door you unlocked that contain His promises and His power from the Kingdom. The promises that He discloses to you now, you can unleash that power into your circumstances. Your role is to live in the Kingdom, surrendered to the King. Who's the King? The Father. Who's there in His Kingdom? You. You've come into the Kingdom because you've surrendered your will to seek His will. *God, what do You have to say about this situation?* Let Him speak it to you. He will disclose it to you. And based upon that, you will be fulfilling it by experiencing what He has just said. This life of prayer is unleashing the power of God because He's speaking, you're receiving, and you are believing it. Amen. So be it.

**As we are learning to pray and exercise God's authority, what are we called to do? What does this mean regarding our role with others? How are we to handle the opportunity with others—both for those who receive and those who do not? Why is this so important to learn?**

### **Read Luke 9:1–6; 10:1–13, 17–20:**

#### Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Apostles

**9** And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, <sup>2</sup> and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. <sup>3</sup> And he said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics. <sup>[a]</sup><sup>4</sup> And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. <sup>5</sup> And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them." <sup>6</sup> And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS.

### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

#### Jesus Sends Out the Seventy-Two

**10** After this the Lord appointed seventy-two<sup>[a]</sup> others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. <sup>2</sup> And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. <sup>3</sup> Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. <sup>4</sup> Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. <sup>5</sup> Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' <sup>6</sup> And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. <sup>7</sup> And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. <sup>8</sup> Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. <sup>9</sup> Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' <sup>10</sup> But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, <sup>11</sup> 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' <sup>12</sup> I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

#### Woe to Unrepentant Cities

<sup>13</sup> "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

#### The Return of the Seventy-Two

<sup>17</sup> The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!" <sup>18</sup> And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. <sup>19</sup> Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. <sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

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## LESSON 2: OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

He says He is giving you authority and power to do what? Bring the Kingdom to the situations that you're going to face. It is there that the supernatural will happen. Why? Because you'll hear what He has to say, you'll believe it, you'll experience it, and then you'll give it away.

He says, *As you are going out, don't take food or bread—or any other provisions. Just go out and do it.* What does this mean? Take nothing, including your own idea of what is needed. The only thing they need is Him, to walk with Him, where He is going to do this work—Amen, may it be so. And they are to proclaim the Kingdom. When they did, they had all kinds of supernatural happen, and they were the ones giving it away—Jesus wasn't with them. He had spoken it, and they experienced His supernatural—because they were in communion with Him. They returned and shared how beautiful it was to experience exercising the promises, the power of God.

The seventy-two other people around Him asked if they, too, could have the authority to perform miracles. Jesus gave them the authority and sent them out as well. *Go out, do the same thing with the authority that I am now giving you. Don't take anything with you. Understand that the power comes from Me. You're going to exercise it because you're receiving it, you're believing it, and you then exercise it. When they come back, they return with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your Name. And He said to them, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you the authority to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.*

It is wonderful that He tells us that He is going to resolve our issues in life and also give us authority to bind and loose. He reminds us that we are not to be so enamored with this experience that we forget something important. Your name is written in the book of life, which means you're in relationship with Him. Don't drift from Him, thinking you can take it from here, for this is when you will lose it. Remember, it's all about the relationship. Make sure you are enjoying the relationship. Don't get obsessed with the power given. *Relax, come, and enjoy Me. Let Me lead. This will be exciting. It may take a while, but enjoy Me in the process. I will get there.* By this prayer, you will have authority to be in the supernatural.

As we are learning this, do you believe God can heal? Yes. Has He ever done that for you? No. Wait a second. So, you think He can, but you have never asked Him to do that for you? If this is the case, you will never learn what it means to have Him speak and give the promises that fulfill His will supernaturally. In essence, you really don't believe it. But how would you like to learn to believe that the supernatural could happen in your life all the time? Is that possible? Yes. How?

# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS.

### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

Come and learn what prayer is all about. You will start to experience it, and when you do, things will happen. You'll give glory to God, and this will lead the person next to you to ask if it is possible for them, too. As you share your experience of learning it, it will go on and on, and God fulfills His Kingdom purposes.

**What does it mean to find courage in our heart to pray? As we pray this way, what will we then understand (vs. 28)? When we receive this, what then are we to pray (vs. 29); Why is this so important to our understanding of the process of prayer?**

#### **Read 2 Samuel 7:25–29:**

<sup>25</sup> And now, O LORD God, confirm forever the word that you have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house, and do as you have spoken. <sup>26</sup> And your name will be magnified forever, saying, 'The Lord of hosts is God over Israel,' and the house of your servant David will be established before you. <sup>27</sup> For you, O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have made this revelation to your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house.' Therefore your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. <sup>28</sup> And now, O Lord GOD, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant. <sup>29</sup> Now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For you, O Lord GOD, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever."

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## LESSON 2: OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

David had what he thought was a brilliant idea. He thought it would be a good idea to build God a permanent temple instead of moving the tabernacle around in a tent. He goes to Nathan, the prophet, for confirmation. David trusts that Nathan is hearing from God, and will be able to confirm God's will. *Nathan, I'm going to build God a temple.* Nathan says, *Good idea. Go ahead.* So, David thinks that he got confirmation he desired. But instead, God tells Nathan that he forgot something. *You didn't ask Me My will. You declared something, and the two of you agreed to it and thought it was right. No. David can't build Me a temple. He's a man of war. His son can, but he can't. Tell David that I have a promise for him—My will for him. The Messiah is going to come through him. The salvation of all the world is going to come through him. I'm going to build him a house.* Nathan understood and vowed not to repeat that mistake. Nathan would later have to tell David that David was the one who had sinned against God by committing adultery with Bathsheba and murdering her husband, Uriah.

David then said that he heard what God said and found courage in his heart to pray. What did that mean? *I heard Your statement. I don't understand what that means, and I'm not sure I believe that yet, so, I'm going to be in dialogue with You.* Courage in your heart means you are willing to dialogue with God until you get clarity and can say what? Amen. *I'm going to stay with it until I get clarity that I understand Your will and I can say, "So be it."*

This process likely took weeks. *What are You saying? What is this Messiah? What does it mean You're going to build me a house?* And then he prayed and prayed and prayed until he was able to state what he spoke in verse 28. *I understand that You are God, and I am not. I know that You can fulfill what You just said. I received that. Secondly, Your words are true. It's going to happen because You spoke it. I know that. Third and most importantly, You have spoken this to me personally. I know this promise applies to me personally. You said a Messiah is coming through me, through my house. You are going to build me a house. You've applied that to me personally, and I receive it.* In verse 29, he says, *Amen. May it please You to fulfill what You just said.*

Through prayer, understanding, and believing that He has applied it to you, you can then say, *Amen.* Why? Because you found courage in your heart to pray until you have clarity, you understand, and you believe the words are true and apply to you. Your prayer then flips from seeking, understanding, and clarity to, *Thank you. Amen, so be it. I'm not going to ask You any further about Your will. I already know it. I already believe it. Now I can simply ask if You'd fulfill it.* Your prayer shifts from seeking the answer to declaring the answer.

# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

From the following seven sets of verses, what are hindrances to answered prayer? What do they mean? Why is this so important as we understand the importance of being in intimate relationship with God in our prayer life?

**Read Proverbs 15:29:**

<sup>29</sup> The LORD is far from the wicked,  
but he hears the prayer of the righteous.

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If you are in a wicked state, are you in sin? You're in the flesh, you're in the carnal, you're hostile to God. He said, *I'm not hearing your prayer. I'm hearing the prayer of those who have a heart to hear. Do you?*

**Read Psalm 66:18:**

<sup>18</sup> If I had cherished iniquity in my heart,  
the Lord would not have listened.

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# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS.

### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

Do you cherish iniquity? *Cherish* means to pay more attention to what you want over what God wants. He said, *If that's where your heart is, I'm not going to listen. You've disqualified yourself. Why? You're not with Me. You're not even here. You've gone elsewhere.* That's a hindrance. You have decided that you do not want to see God's will but that you are seeking your own. This hinders His ability to reveal His will since you are not at a place or have a heart to hear it.

**Read James 4:3:**

<sup>3</sup> You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

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Your motive in prayer is that you are looking for Him to confirm your selfish desire—what you want to have happen—and you're trying to tell Him what you want Him to do. Why? Because you are a friend of the world, and by definition, you're at enmity against God. Remember, it's not that you're in the world, it's that your focus is on how the world operates—your selfish desire. You are thinking that because you are a child of God, He should give you what you want. Rather, your motive ought to be to follow Him. Not for Him to follow you.

# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS.

### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

#### Read James 1:5–8:

<sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

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When you ask for wisdom, God says, *I will give it to you without finding fault, but you must believe that I'm going to give it to you. You have to get settled and believe I'm going to show you My will, what you've asked for.* It's about motive. It's about whether or not you want to hear this and if you expect it. *If you ask for it, I will give it to you.*

#### Read Matthew 12:33–37:

##### A Tree Is Known by Its Fruit

<sup>33</sup> “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. <sup>34</sup> You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. <sup>35</sup> The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. <sup>36</sup> I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, <sup>37</sup> for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

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# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS.

### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

He says that by your words you're going to be judged. You are seeking His will. You are hearing God's will. You are processing God's will. You know God's will. You believe God's will. You can declare God's word. He says that you will be judged by what you say. Are you speaking your own will? Are you speaking what you have decided versus speaking His will and following His will. That's going to judge you. Have you heard what He has said? Do you believe it? If not, then stay with Him and pray with Him. Authentically go with Him and He'll complete it—He will be the finisher of faith, and we are to respond, *Amen, So be it.*

When it is happening, are you experiencing it? Your words will reveal that. It's very simple. If you're experiencing the beautiful life of God by processing what you're understanding, you will have the fantastic Covenant life in the middle of the trouble.

If you're not, it's going to be full of *evil*. The word evil here means things that annoy, frustrate, irritate, and cause you lots of difficulty. If you get into this prayer life with God, you'll experience fantastic fruit. Would you like to learn that? This is critical because the words you use to handle this will judge you.

#### Read Galatians 5:16–22:

##### Keep in Step with the Spirit

<sup>16</sup> But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. <sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, <sup>21</sup> envy,<sup>[a]</sup> drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do<sup>[b]</sup> such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

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# LESSON 2:

## OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS.

### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

If you stay in a place of anger, envy, and opposition in dissention, by definition, what does that mean? You're out of the Kingdom because you're in in the flesh. What does He want you to do? If you've got a problem, if you are angry that this person came against you, things are unfair, this is unjust, you're frustrated, or you are struggling with anger regarding wanting to set this all straight, what does God want you to do? Come to Him in prayer, and ask Him to reveal to you and show you how you can get freedom now. Come to Him and let Him resolve this for you by giving you what? Truth, insights, secrets. *I'll show you how to be led to freedom in spite of this situation. And I will take you deeper. Your thoughts of anger, envy, and frustration are actually not such bad thoughts—but you need to come and dialogue with Me so that I can lead you to My will—which will be resolution. Then you will experience the fruit of the Spirit in your soul. I want to bless you, but you're not in a place where I can bless you. Let Me help you with that—let Me take you deeper and deeper and deeper. Why? Because you pursue the truth.*

#### Read Mark 11:25:

<sup>25</sup> And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."<sup>[a]</sup>

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## LESSON 2: OUR ROLE IN THE PRAYER PROCESS. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER.

If you stand praying and He reminds you that you have unforgiveness in your heart, what are you supposed to do? Stop. Come into the Kingdom and let Him process forgiveness in your heart—you need to talk to Him about this. Why? His nature is forgiveness—to give you freedom as you live in His nature—you are to forgive them on the same basis that you have been forgiven. He is not talking about reconciliation; He is talking about your heart and a demonstration that you have His nature within you. In order for the power of prayer to be experienced in your life, you're going to have to be with Him in the Kingdom. One of the indicators of not being in the Kingdom is if you are in unforgiveness. He will remind you of that. What does God call you to do then? *Stay with Me. Come and talk to Me. Let Me give you forgiveness for them, so that you can receive freedom. From there you can reestablish the opportunity to continue in your vibrant prayer life where you will experience My supernatural work and bring full resolution to all your issues, including difficulty with others. It's illustrating My life in you. Come with Me. I'll give it to you. You can learn it. You can experience the freedom of it.*

As we conclude this lesson, we've learned about the beauty of walking with Him in His Kingdom, and He says, *I'm going to hand you this authority. I'm going to speak to you. You're going to be a priest. You're going to be that for yourself and be that for others.*

What does a priest do? Discover God's will—ask, seek, and knock. Go seek it. He will give it to you. Intercede for other people by saying, *Let me go with you to discover God's will, and then together we get to understand His will. We can process through to faith and then we can declare it and say, so be it. Amen.* And He said that is the way He'd like to deliver all His life for you—through this beautiful relationship, prayer. He said there are hindrances to that—that you basically walk out of the Kingdom with selfishness or impure motives, or you never process it. You are living in unforgiveness. All these things that are illustrating that instead of seeking God's will, you are self-centered and at enmity against God. You are hindering His ability to speak His will, His promises, His resolutions—especially meant for you personally.



# LESSON 3: HINDRANCES TO PRAYER (CON'T). KEYS TO ANSWERED PRAYER.



**“We have the privilege because of the Holy Spirit in us to be in the same place the disciples were with Jesus—where they could ask Him anything at any time, and there was always dialogue, discovering God's will.”**

**A**s we complete our course, *Believing Prayer—Our Connection to Life in the Spirit*, we've learned a lot about prayer. We know that it isn't our wishful thinking, and it is not asking God to fulfill our wish list. Rather, it's relationship. We have the privilege because of the Holy Spirit in us to be in the same place the disciples were with Jesus—where they could ask Him anything at any time, and there was always dialogue, discovering God's will. So, we've really understood that in this beautiful relationship, it's all the time. We have the opportunity to listen, to discuss, to process, to hear what He has to say, as well as share our authentic heart. As we do that, we're seeking His will—ask, seek, and knock. Seek what He has to say. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done. It's seeking His will about the issues of your life as you're going to Him and asking, *What do you have to say about this?* And He says, *I'm going to tell you secrets, things that I know that you don't, that I'll reveal to you so that you understand My will and then receive My promises.*

As you receive His promises, He is asking you to process that so you can also get to where David went, which is: *You are the Almighty God. Your words are true. You have said this to me, and I understand it now. Amen, so be it.*

We also covered some of the hindrances, which are disregarding the opportunity to go to Him, holding iniquity in our heart; struggling with our desires, our problems, our anger, our envy, and sitting in unforgiveness. There is a variety of things that keep Him from being able to answer us, but primarily, it is because we're not with Him. We will continue to understand hindrances and then how to fully experience the wonder of believing prayer, and seeing things happen supernaturally in our lives.

# LESSON 3: HINDRANCES TO PRAYER (CON'T). KEYS TO ANSWERED PRAYER.

**What else is a key hindrance to prayer? What does this mean in our lives? Why is this such an important element to understand as we move from hindrance to promoting vibrant and powerful prayer?**

### Read Hebrews 3:15–19:

<sup>15</sup> As it is said,

“Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

<sup>16</sup> For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? <sup>17</sup> And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? <sup>18</sup> And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? <sup>19</sup> So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

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These are the Israelites. They miraculously walked across the parted Red Sea and were saved from the Egyptians, and God says, *Now, My heart for you as you walk with Me is for Me to deliver to you the Promised Land and the promises, the abundance of promises I have for you. It is a fantastic place. It won't be easy to receive this, but I will do the work. In the world, you're going to have trouble, but I've overcome it, and I'll deliver My good will to you.*

In Hebrews 3:15, it says *Today, if you hear His voice.* The word *today* is always in the now. So, in the now, what is He doing? He's speaking. A lot of people talk about why they go through this long period of silence in the wilderness, as God seems to be silent. But the problem isn't God, it's you. Christ said, *I did nothing except what the Father spoke. The Father didn't say, No, I'm not speaking to you today, I'm going to withhold talking to you for a couple of weeks. Good luck.* This did not happen at any time. God was speaking because He says, *Today I'm going to...I have something to say to you.*

## LESSON 3: HINDRANCES TO PRAYER (CON'T). KEYS TO ANSWERED PRAYER.

He further says, *Don't harden your hearts*. Hardening your heart is rejecting the opportunity to hear and follow. He says they could not receive the promises because of their what? Unbelief. The word unbelief is the refusal to be persuaded that what God has to say is true. You have decided that you are going to go your own way, and you are not even willing to process—with a clear result of disobedience. This is not struggling with whether or not you can follow through on something or not being sure that you have complete agreement or understanding or if you are capable of being obedient. He say, *That's not the issue*. The issue is when you stop and aren't willing to go any farther. You are disobedient because you don't think He can't help you any farther. It's OK that you struggle, but stay with Him. It's like the father of the boy who was possessed with the demonic. The disciples couldn't cast out the demon and asked Jesus if He could help. Jesus said, *If you believe, all things are possible*. The father responded, *I believe, help my unbelief*. Did Jesus condemn that? He did not. He met him where he was. The father understood it and believed, but was struggling to going all the way with it. He didn't have faith yet, and he didn't have certainty, but he approached it saying he believed but needed help getting to faith. Stay with Him.

When He said that they could not enter because of their unbelief, it is because they decided what? Not to listen to God. They were not going any further. By definition, this means they were now disobedient. Why? Because they weren't willing to let Him give them the power to be obedient. *It's OK that you're not obeying Me at this moment, but do you have a heart to go and let Me help you understand the instruction that I'm giving you?* If you refuse to go any further, you've stopped the ability for Him to deliver your prayer for resolution. Prayer is His answer to speak His will of what He will do. However, you've disqualified yourself because you don't care or you've decided you don't want to pursue it anymore. This circumstance is too tough. In doing this, you have prevented God from taking you to the Promised Land.

# LESSON 3: HINDRANCES TO PRAYER (CON'T). KEYS TO ANSWERED PRAYER.

**Review the following two sets of verses. Another element of opposition is coming from whom? What does this mean in regard to what we will encounter in our life? Why is this so important to understand as we experience life and the power of prayer?**

### **Read Ephesians 6:10–13:**

The Whole Armor of God

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

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The things you're dealing with a lot of times have the enemy behind it. What does he have? He has what are called wiles or schemes, and he is cunning. His simple strategy is what? Preventing you from trying to be in the Kingdom and from hearing God's voice so that you can understand, declare, and experience God's will. What does Satan want? He wants to get you out of the Kingdom because he knows that if you are not in the Kingdom, you can't hear God's voice. Then, guess whose power you are under? You are under Satan's power, and he is going to kill, steal, and destroy you. His strategy is to distract you and to fight against you. The key is if you are falling for it with the temptation to do things on your own. If you have an issue that you have to resolve, Satan uses this as an opportunity to draw you out. He will make you busy, or get you angry, fearful, and full of anxiety. Whatever gets you to leave the Kingdom is what he is going to do. These schemes and strategies are based upon him observing you. He see what causes you to exit the Kingdom. He sees how it works. He is going to hit the cause of that, which means you are going to



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be in a spiritual battle where the enemy is working to thwart God's will. He will do this by getting you out of the Kingdom where all the power is and into this world where you cannot hear and process God's will.

### Read Daniel 10:10-15:

<sup>10</sup> And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. <sup>11</sup> And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. <sup>12</sup> Then he said to me, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. <sup>13</sup> The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, <sup>14</sup> and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come."

<sup>15</sup> When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and was mute.

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This describes prayer. You've had a heart to understand His will. You ask for it, and He is coming to give you that. But He also encounters Satanic, demonic opposition that He had to fight through to get to you. Why? Because there are principalities and powers who are trying to thwart the information, the message, the activity of God. We are to ask, seek, and knock. While you're seeking, he's working against it. You're trying to watch for what happens next, and he's fighting the information, the truth getting to you. It's a real spiritual attack, but God gives us a remedy. He says to put on the armor of God because you have to fight this spiritually. In order to do this, what do you have to do? Get back to the Kingdom where His power is superior. If you are in the Kingdom, Satan can be cast off and

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will flee, and all these things can stop because you're experiencing a spiritual attack of the enemy. Keep in mind, though, that his attack will be successful against you if you stop praying and stop asking for God's will. If you stop asking what He is going to do about this or what He has to say about this, you'll stay out of the Kingdom and then Satan has successfully thwarted God's will for you. The attack is real. God says, *If you come back here, I can handle it and still provide you My will, but if you stay out of the Kingdom and in the world, in the self, you have prevented Me from answering your prayers.*

**What is another hindrance to prayer? What does this mean and why is this so important to then understand so we stay in the middle of powerful prayer?**

**Read 1 Peter 3:5-7:**

<sup>5</sup> For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, <sup>6</sup> as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.

<sup>7</sup> Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you[a] of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

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Both husband and wife are to honor each other. When you don't go to unity, you hinder your prayer. Why? Because one or both of you are not hearing from the Spirit. You're not going to Unity, which is not just between the two of you, negotiating—it's with you two and the Holy Spirit. When you get to unity, you have discovered God's will.

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It is there, He says that the blessing that He has commanded will occur. It is through unity with Him that you will discover His will, and He will command the blessing that He has planned. When you dishonor each other by not going to unity, what are you doing? You aren't caring what the Holy Spirit is saying, and you are going to do what you believe is best for the two of you. In doing this, He says that you've hindered your prayer life because now you can't receive His will, which is what you want. That's why it's critical that you are willing to stay in unity with your spouse—and with the Holy Spirit. It's OK that you get angry. It's OK that you get disappointed. It's OK that you disagree. But, do you have a heart to say—in forgiveness—*Let's work this out, and let's process until we receive God's will.* The lack of honor is not being willing to do that. It's not that you have disagreement; it is that you're not willing to go to unity and ultimately hindered your prayer.

**Another simple element of prayer is what? What does this mean and how is this easily overcome?**

**Read James 4:2:**

<sup>2</sup> You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask.

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It's pretty simple. Why don't you ask? You're trying to do it your way. You wonder why you should bother praying when you never see anything happen. You are cynical. You are resigning. Why bother? God says, *You didn't even start the process. You never even asked. You never even came to ask Me. You've given up.* Cynicism and resignation are big hindrances.

As you consider all these hindrances, the reality is that it is basically because you, through a variety of reasons, have walked out of the Kingdom. His will can only be known where? In the Kingdom. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done. You've got to be with Him so He can express His will to you. He is trying to tell

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you something, and He is looking around and wondering where you went. You are not there to hear Him. Instead of going to Him and letting Him lead you into His wonderful will which He will show you and give you the power to believe and follow, you actually go backwards, you go away from it. He tells us that we have a choice—believing prayer is being with Him where He will deliver His wonderful, good will to you in your circumstances, or you can hinder this process by walking away and not enjoying the relationship that brings answers to your prayers. So, let's look at the conditions to answered prayer.

**From the following three sets of verses, what are the conditions to answered prayer? What do they mean practically for how we are to pray? Why is this so important to our meeting these conditions to experience answered prayer?**

**Read John 14:12–14:**

<sup>12</sup> "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup> Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup> If you ask me<sup>[a]</sup> anything in my name, I will do it.

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If you ask Him under His authority as He speaks His supernatural will, you then can believe that He is going to deliver it. Consider this analogy. There is a CEO who reports to a board. Just because the CEO thinks something is a good idea, doesn't mean he actually has the authority to move forward without the approval of the board. If he wants to acquire a company, negotiates the purchase price, and signs documents without approval, there are a number of problems—the main one being that the board never agreed to it. Even though he represents the company, does he have the right to sign that document? No, because they have not discussed it. They have not weighed the pros and cons and come to an agreement together. Even if he thought they would agree to give him the money for the

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purchase, he has to make sure he has the funds to complete the transaction and that he is signing on their behalf that the resources to fulfill this are there.

When Christ says to ask in His name, you're asking for Him to give you His authority to represent Him in this situation. And so, what do you have to do in prayer? You have to ask the Father what His will is. He says, *Here's My promise. Here's My will in My Name. I'll give you authority now, and the power to deliver My will. You can now declare it, and it will be done.* By asking in His name, you'll do many, many, many miracles. You'll see the supernatural. Think about how wonderful this is. You're asking Him for His will, He is going to tell you His will, and then you will get to experience the supernatural. This will be normal and will happen all the time.

**Read John 15:7-8:**

<sup>7</sup> If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

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Are you abiding in the relationship? If so, where are you? In the Kingdom—because abiding means you have surrendered your will to His will, and you're willing to follow and believe what He has to say. So, you're abiding in Him, and He further says that His words, His rhema to you, apply to you personally.

And they need to be abiding in you, How does that work?

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You have heard His words to you—mostly rooted from your time in the Word, in Scripture. You are praying them. You have memorized them; you have processed them so that you then can understand them, receive them, believe them, and follow them. Was this found in a five-minute prayer? No, that's where the time comes in. It's a dialogue between you and your spouse, amongst your small group, your inner circle as you process this with God. *God, may I have clarity? I have to get those rhema into my soul where I can say that I understand it and I believe it.* It doesn't matter how long it takes, He is just asking you to stay with Him. He will do the work. When you do that and you understand it, you can then say, *Amen—may it be so.* And it will be so. The Father will do it. What does it mean when the Father does it? It means He's just done something that you cannot do yourself. He is answering prayer. It will be supernatural, and you will bring glory to Him by telling of the process of Him speaking, praying until you believe it (abiding in Him) and then seeing it happen in reality. All the glory goes to God. This is answered prayer.

### Read 1 John 5:14–15:

<sup>14</sup> And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. <sup>15</sup> And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

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We are to pray according to His will. If that's the requirement, what do we need to know? It's very simple. We need to hear and receive God's will. This is why we process with our spouse, our inner circle, etc. so that through insight and the prophetic, we come to know the clarity of God's will. It takes a while, but we are to persist until He shows us His will. He says, *When you can pray My will, which takes a while, you know then that I hear you. What is He hearing?* If you pray according to His will, you know that He hears that you understand His will. He is listening.

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Do you understand His will? If you pray, *God, I believe this to be your will*, and it's not His will yet, what will He do? He will not hide it—He'll reveal it. If you stay with Him and keep going, He'll say, *No, you don't have that right. I'll trouble you. I'll have your spouse say that they don't think that's right. You'll have somebody in the small group say, "Yeah, you know what? I can't fully confirm that. You're getting there, but I don't think you have it all."* God will get you the message because He is waiting to hear that you have His will. If you don't have it, He will work it so that you do receive it. But again, where do you have to be to receive it? In the Kingdom. *Stay with Me, stay with Me, stay with Me until I hear that you have it.* When you get there, He will hear that you have it, and then He will do what? He'll do it, and you can have confidence in this beautiful process.

**As Jesus summarizes prayer for us, what are the key elements that we are to experience in order for us to see the fulfillment of prayers (as we understand His will)? What then are we to do as we understand His will? Why is this so important to powerful prayer?**

### Read Mark 11:20–24:

The Lesson from the Withered Fig Tree

<sup>20</sup> As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. <sup>21</sup> And Peter remembered and said to him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered." <sup>22</sup> And Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. <sup>23</sup> Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. <sup>24</sup> Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received<sup>[a]</sup> it, and it will be yours.

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## LESSON 3: HINDRANCES TO PRAYER (CON'T). KEYS TO ANSWERED PRAYER.

As Jesus walked into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, He cursed the fig tree. As He and His disciples were walking back out again to Bethany on Monday, He's waiting to see if anybody notices the tree, which Peter does and says, *Hey, look at that. You spoke to that tree and it completely is gone.* Jesus said, *Yes, let Me help you understand what happened. Have faith in God.* In Greek, *have faith in God* means to have the faith of God—because He's the author and finisher of faith. How does He author? He speaks to you. How does He finish? He takes you to certainty where you believe. You believe. You believe. He said, *Have the faith of God.* You must work at that, processing it until you have clarity about His will; until you understand it and you believe it. At that point, He says what? He says to speak to the mountain, the very circumstance that you're involved in. He says not to ask Him to go do it, which is what we typically would do. He says, *You speak to that mountain. Speak what I've declared. Be removed, overcome, bring resolution. I spoke to the issue, and you now speak what you know to be My will.* When you do that, it's going to happen.

The implication of a mountain is something that is way bigger than you can handle. This power of His will is overwhelming, but it can be resolved. He summarizes this in verse 24, *I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.* Notice that *already received* is past tense. He can give you that because He's not limited by time. What He sees in your life, in this situation that you have in front of you, is that it is already done. He already sees it as done. He says, *Get in the same place as Me. You've asked for My will. I've spoken it. You've declared it.* And you can now say that this has already happened. It's going to happen. Already happened and so going to happen in my future. He says, *Speak to it, and take the power that I'm giving you and the authority I'm giving you and apply it.* And he says to remember with your boldness.



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**How are we to enter into prayer with God? On what basis can we join Him, and what then can we expect? What does it mean to come to come with Him with a sincere heart? Why is this so important in the prayer process?**

## **Read Hebrews 10:19–24:**

### The Full Assurance of Faith

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, brothers,<sup>[a]</sup> since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,<sup>20</sup> by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,<sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God,<sup>22</sup> let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.<sup>23</sup> Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.<sup>24</sup> And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,

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With boldness and confidence, enter where? The Holy of Holies, in the presence of God, in the throne room. The reason you can enter is because of what? What Christ finished, completed. He was on the cross, and He lifted up His eyes and said it is what? It is finished, completed at that moment. What happened to the curtain in the Holy of Holies? It was ripped in two from top to bottom. It was 80 feet high and eight inches thick. It wasn't a human thing. A person couldn't even get to the top of it with a ladder and tear it off. It was God opening it up and saying that because of what Christ did, no longer is there a requirement for priests to go in there on your behalf, but you go in directly. He further says, *March in with boldness and great confidence*. When? All the time. Not because of anything you do. It's been done. You are a believer with the Holy Spirit in you. You have the right, the privilege, at any time to do what? March in and enter with a heart to discover His will.

If you are not and you are going to do your own will, you're not praying; you're off somewhere else; you're not in the Holy of Holies. You have the beautiful right

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to be there, but you're not there. We are to take advantage of this. If you have some problems, some issues, some decisions to make, Just march on in and start processing it. Deal with it with God, and have great boldness and confidence in knowing that He will answer you. You are going to get an answer. You will receive His will, and it's going to be best and none better. You are coming in because you can expect it. He says to come in with a sincere heart. Talk about it. Don't waver because God is faithful, and He is going to tell you His will. That is why you are to boldly receive it and then boldly declare it. How beautiful this is. Go in and stay there until you boldly receive His will. Stir each other up to stay in the throne room and receive His will. Keep each other there.

**Review the following three sets of verses. What did the woman who had a disease do to approach Jesus? Why did she do this? What did she understand about this? Why then was she healed? What does that mean for us to experience God's supernatural work? When there is unbelief around us, what are we to do? Why?**

### **Read Matthew 9:18–26:**

#### A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed

<sup>18</sup> While he was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live."<sup>19</sup> And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples.<sup>20</sup> And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment,<sup>21</sup> for she said to herself, "If I only touch his garment, I will be made well."<sup>22</sup> Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly<sup>[a]</sup> the woman was made well.<sup>23</sup> And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion,<sup>24</sup> he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him.<sup>25</sup> But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose.<sup>26</sup> And the report of this went through all that district.

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## LESSON 3: HINDRANCES TO PRAYER (CON'T). KEYS TO ANSWERED PRAYER.

A woman walks amongst the crowd and pursues Jesus to touch the hem of His garment. When she does, she is healed instantly. Christ says, *Who touched Me because I perceived power has gone from Me.* Peter says, *What do You mean, who touched You? Everyone's touching You.* Jesus said, *No, I perceive power has gone out from Me. Who is it?* The lady said, *It was me. I've had a problem for years. I spent all my money chasing doctors. Nobody could heal me, but I know You could. So, I came and I grabbed your garment.* What does He say? *Well done, daughter. Your faith has healed you now.* Why? Because she believed that power was where? In the hem of His garment. We need to understand this because it wasn't a magical thing. Otherwise, if that's where the power is, then everybody would say, *I have to also get to that hem, the magical system. I don't care about Christ. I just have to get to the hem.* She knew something far deeper about this truth.

Later when He goes to heal the daughter who died, everyone is saying not to bother the teacher anymore. It's over. The circumstances are over. What's done is done. But Jesus said: *Why are you doubting? I tell you what, you all leave. I have to get unbelief out of the room. James, Peter, John, and James—you come with Me. You parents, come with Me because we have a heart to believe.* He then said, *Let Me perform a miracle. I'm going to raise her from the dead because you believed it was not over.* Why does He do this? Because He has the power and the heart to deliver that power supernaturally—do you believe it?

Let's understand this further, particularly about the hem of His garment.

### **Read Numbers 15:37–41:**

#### Tassels on Garments

<sup>37</sup> The Lord said to Moses, <sup>38</sup> "Speak to the people of Israel, and tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner. <sup>39</sup> And it shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the Lord, to do them, not to follow<sup>[a]</sup> after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to whore after. <sup>40</sup> So you shall remember and do all my commandments, and be holy to your God. <sup>41</sup> I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am the LORD your God."

# LESSON 3:

## HINDRANCES TO PRAYER (CON'T). KEYS TO ANSWERED PRAYER.

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God says to His people, *Put these tassels on your garments*. On what's called the hem, put a blue thread through it and may it remind you not to seek your own will, but to do what? Seek Him and the power that comes from that understanding. It was a place of exchange where you surrender your will to follow His will. This was signified in the hem of the garment that everybody was supposed to wear. Remember, that is the way it works. The power is in this exchange.

**Read Malachi 4:2-3:**

<sup>2</sup> But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. <sup>3</sup> And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.

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## LESSON 3: HINDRANCES TO PRAYER (CON'T). KEYS TO ANSWERED PRAYER.

You who are righteous, seek My will. There you will experience healing. The word there refers to being in His wings. The Hebrew translation means in the hem of His garment. He has healing in the hem of His garment. Why are you righteous? Because you are with Him, seeking His will. The woman who was healed knew the scriptures and put two and two together. She said, *Jesus is God. Jesus is the healer. If I could just touch the hem of His garment where there is healing, I will be healed.* What has she been observing about Jesus? She observed that he had been healing people. She further said, *If I'm righteous and seek God's will, I'll receive that power that is in the hem of His garment. I just have to grab it.* It wasn't the actual garment. It was the act of faith that believed that He had the power. Now, in her case, what happened? She went after it. She didn't passively say: *Well, I'm probably not going to get it because He's never going to come near me, or I don't even know if I should go ask Him.* She just said, *I'm going. I'm going after this. I don't care what the consequences are. I'm going after it.* And He says, *Your faith has healed you. Your belief has healed you, and you understand it.*

As we're seeking His will, we're going there to touch the hem of His garment because we believe what? He has the power and authority to bring about supernatural in our life. We are going after it. That's the boldness—We are going after this. It's not a human answer. It's not, *Could You help me manage this thing better? Could You give me great insight so I can maneuver better?* No, why don't you tap into His power and believe that He will resolve it through His supernatural power, which is prayer. The key is to believe and go after it.

He says we are to then confirm it with unity.

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**What is the importance of Unity? Why does God answer our prayer when we get to unity? How are we to live with our spouses, friends, and our inner circle?**

**Read Psalm 133:**

When Brothers Dwell in Unity  
A Song of Ascents. Of David.

**133** Behold, how good and pleasant it is  
when brothers dwell in unity!<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>2</sup> It is like the precious oil on the head,  
running down on the beard,  
on the beard of Aaron,  
running down on the collar of his robes!

<sup>3</sup> It is like the dew of Hermon,  
which falls on the mountains of Zion!  
For there the Lord has commanded the blessing,  
life forevermore.

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He is going to command blessing when you come to unity with another who also has the Spirit. The power is going to be issued. Why? You discovered it and He used unity to confirm it. You don't even have to worry about it. Remember, He is listening. Keep processing until you get to unity with the Spirit. He will confirm it. Now you have it. You can tap into the power. It's going to happen.

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**What were these believers doing? What was God doing? How then do we redefine prayer for us? What does that mean for how we process things together? What can we then expect? Why?**

### **Read Malachi 3:16–18:**

The Book of Remembrance

<sup>16</sup> Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The Lord paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name. <sup>17</sup> “They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. <sup>18</sup> Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

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When you were talking to each other, God was what? Listening. In 1 John 5:14–15, He says, *If you pray My will, I hear you while you're talking to each other.* What is He listening for? He is listening to hear if you are receiving His will as you are discussing, processing, understanding, and receiving. Throughout the process, God is giving insight, wisdom, His will, and telling you to pay attention. Do you understand what you just said? That's a piece of the puzzle, and your insight, this secret, just became known to you as you talked it through with someone else. We have now discovered what prayer is. Wow. Our leaders experienced this at a retreat. We had sent everyone out for personal discussion—to take their most difficult struggles and talk to each other. We wanted to see what happens. When we all came back together, it was universally said, *We got an aha!* Everyone received new insight just by talking it through. God says, *I'm going to give you*

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*discernment to know the difference between good and evil—what's going to be My good will and what's not. You will learn of this while you are talking about it. We are to learn to talk it through. This is a beautiful element of prayer—not just giving God a list, but talking to each other with a heart to discover His will. This is prayer.*

In this course, there's a long list of Bible characters, and you can review that they also prayed as we have described. All are fantastic examples of processing and hearing God's will, and it being fulfilled for them in their particular circumstances.

**From the following two examples, describe how these Bible characters followed all that we have learned as they entered into prayer? What did this look like? What did God then provide, and what was the outcome for these characters in their situations? How is God speaking to us as we follow these and enter into a new understanding of prayer?**

### **Read 2 Chronicles 1:1–22:**

#### Solomon Worships at Gibeon

**1** Solomon the son of David established himself in his kingdom, and the Lord his God was with him and made him exceedingly great.

**2** Solomon spoke to all Israel, to the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, to the judges, and to all the leaders in all Israel, the heads of fathers' houses. **3** And Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon, for the tent of meeting of God, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness, was there. **4** (But David had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim to the place that David had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem.) **5** Moreover, the bronze altar that Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, had made, was there before the tabernacle of the Lord. And Solomon and the assembly sought it<sup>[a]</sup> out. **6** And Solomon went up there to the bronze altar before the LORD, which was at the tent of meeting, and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it.

#### Solomon Prays for Wisdom

**7** In that night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, "Ask what I shall give you." **8** And Solomon said to God, "You have shown great and steadfast love to David my father, and have made me king in his place. **9** O LORD God, let your word to David my father be now fulfilled, for you have made me king over



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a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. <sup>10</sup> Give me now wisdom and knowledge to go out and come in before this people, for who can govern this people of yours, which is so great?" <sup>11</sup> God answered Solomon, "Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked for possessions, wealth, honor, or the life of those who hate you, and have not even asked for long life, but have asked for wisdom and knowledge for yourself that you may govern my people over whom I have made you king, <sup>12</sup> wisdom and knowledge are granted to you. I will also give you riches, possessions, and honor, such as none of the kings had who were before you, and none after you shall have the like." <sup>13</sup> So Solomon came from<sup>[b]</sup> the high place at Gibeon, from before the tent of meeting, to Jerusalem. And he reigned over Israel.

### Solomon Given Wealth

<sup>14</sup> Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. <sup>15</sup> And the king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stone, and he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah. <sup>16</sup> And Solomon's import of horses was from Egypt and Kue, and the king's traders would buy them from Kue for a price. <sup>17</sup> They imported a chariot from Egypt for 600 shekels<sup>[c]</sup> of silver, and a horse for 150. Likewise through them these were exported to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria.

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Solomon had two sons, Rehoboam and Jeroboam. They both became of the flesh and fought each other. Israel was split into two sub-countries, Israel and Judah. Judah was Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Now there are two lines of kings being developed. Jeroboam killed his brother, and he's now reigning in Israel; and Abijah is now reigning in Judah. Jeroboam decides he's going to go take that over, too. So, they called for battle, met at a certain place, and sent their best to fight. As

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they lined up, Jeroboam had 800,000 men. Abijah had 400,000. By definition, in the natural, what was going to happen? Jeroboam is going to win. He has far more soldiers and will win on numbers alone.

Abijah realizes that he is in trouble and goes to God. *God, what do You have to say about this? God reminds him of what He had stated previously, The Covenant of God is His will—for this situation and all situations. I'm going to protect you. I'm going to take care of you. Nobody shall be able to defeat you. It doesn't matter what the circumstance is. My promise is this.*

How did Abijah know that? He'd been a student of the logos, of the word. He didn't say, *I have no idea what you're talking about.* Rather, he said, *Yes, I've read this. I've processed this.* God reiterates that this is for you today.

God tells Abijah to tell Jeroboam that if he has a heart to hear truth, he'd better just go back. Otherwise, he's going to get defeated. And that's what Abijah speaks, *You've forsaken God, while we have followed God. We know that we're going to be victorious because God spoke it, we've talked to Him, and we understand it. We speak it because we believe it.*

Jeroboam denies this and says, *No, I don't believe it. It doesn't matter what you say. We're going to attack now since we are larger than you, and we will prevail.* Not only did he go to battle against Abijah, he did something that nobody had ever done before. He set an ambush behind Abijah to trap him—with men before and behind so Abijah had nowhere to go. Jeroboam was certain he had Abijah. But what did Abijah do? He called out and cried out to God, *What do You have to say about this? God said he would win in this specific situation. He trusted it. And they believed what God had to say. They went out with great confidence, moving with authority. They believed it was going to happen. They knew that specifically. Yes, the ambush was a surprise, but when this new situation came up, they went back to God and asked, What do You now have to say? And God said, I'll take care of that.*

Not only did they win the war, what else did he do? He chased after Jeroboam, and Jeroboam never recovered. His own actions turned against him, and he wound up never again being in full power, while Abijah thrived. What's the difference? Abijah prayed. He sought God. *What's Your will? I believe You will state Your will, and I will get to see the victory of it.*

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### Read Acts 10:1–41:

#### Peter and Cornelius

**10** At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, <sup>2</sup> a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God. <sup>3</sup> About the ninth hour of the day<sup>[a]</sup> he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, “Cornelius.” <sup>4</sup> And he stared at him in terror and said, “What is it, Lord?” And he said to him, “Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. <sup>5</sup> And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter. <sup>6</sup> He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea.” <sup>7</sup> When the angel who spoke to him had departed, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier from among those who attended him, <sup>8</sup> and having related everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

#### Peter's Vision

<sup>9</sup> The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour<sup>[b]</sup> to pray. <sup>10</sup> And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance <sup>11</sup> and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. <sup>12</sup> In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. <sup>13</sup> And there came a voice to him: “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.” <sup>14</sup> But Peter said, “By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.” <sup>15</sup> And the voice came to him again a second time, “What God has made clean, do not call common.” <sup>16</sup> This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

<sup>17</sup> Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood at the gate <sup>18</sup> and called out to ask whether Simon who was called Peter was lodging there. <sup>19</sup> And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Behold, three men are looking for you. <sup>20</sup> Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation,<sup>[c]</sup> for I have sent them.” <sup>21</sup> And Peter went down to the men and said, “I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason for your coming?” <sup>22</sup> And they said, “Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say.” <sup>23</sup> So he invited them in to be his guests.

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The next day he rose and went away with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him. <sup>24</sup> And on the following day they entered Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. <sup>25</sup> When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. <sup>26</sup> But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am a man." <sup>27</sup> And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered. <sup>28</sup> And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean. <sup>29</sup> So when I was sent for, I came without objection. I ask then why you sent for me."

<sup>30</sup> And Cornelius said, "Four days ago, about this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour,<sup>[d]</sup> and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing <sup>31</sup> and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. <sup>32</sup> Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon who is called Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.' <sup>33</sup> So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come. Now therefore we are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord."

## Gentiles Hear the Good News

<sup>34</sup> So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup> As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), <sup>37</sup> you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup> And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, <sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, <sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

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Cornelius is a Roman centurion—the leader of a regiment of 100 Roman soldiers. Remember, the Roman religious and belief system was based upon myths, with gods of various elements—Zeus, Mars, Venus, Apollos, etc. Cornelius didn't think this to be right and believed that there had to be something greater than that. He thought that perhaps the Jews with one supreme God may be closer to the truth, and he had said that he'd like to know that. He doesn't understand prayer and doesn't know who to pray to. What's he doing? He's talking. *I wonder, is there a real God? Is there? If that's true, I'd like to know Him and the truth of this.* What God is doing is listening because He says, *Your prayers have been answered. Send some of your soldiers to a guy named Peter, who's in Jaffa, which is by Caesarea; and go this particular street, to this particular house and go find him.* So that's the answer. His prayer is answered. It's not done yet, but that's the first part of it.

The story continues with Peter, who is on his roof praying—talking to God, and God interrupts him with a vision. It's a vision of unclean animals and unclean things—prohibitive food to a Jew. God gives Peter the instruction to arise and eat. Peter says what? *No way. No, I've never done that. This doesn't make sense to me. I'm not doing it.* But God continues, *Yes, Peter, arise and eat.* Peter refuses. *Yes, Peter arise and eat.* Again, Peter refuses.

Was Peter being obedient? No, not at all. He was not going to eat the unclean things. But, then the Word tells us what Peter did next. He pondered all this—wondered about all this, seeking to understand all this. *God, I can't at the moment do that in my heart, because it doesn't make any sense to me.* But, he is seeking further insight and truth about all this. While he's pondering it, who shows up? The three soldiers from Cornelius. *An angel sent us to see you and to hear what you have to say.* The Holy Spirit then tells Peter to come, pay attention, and go with them. Peter does as he is told.

Why could he be obedient to this and not to the vision and the instruction regarding the vision? What's the difference? This is something that he has heard before. He has been given lots of instruction before. *Do this. Do that. Go with this guy. Stop.* He has heard this before, followed this before, and knew this to be right before. He was used to that. It was not contrary to anything he had experienced before. He didn't understand the vision at all, and couldn't do it, but going with the men was not an issue.

So, Peter starts his journey with these three gentiles to go to Cornelius' house in Caesarea. All the while, he's still pondering the vision. At that moment in time, he knows that God is sending him to a gentile's house, and he knows he saw a vision about unclean things. In the past he had considered gentiles to be unclean and he normally would not go there. But God told him to go there. *God, are You saying that the gospel is for everybody? Is that what You're saying?*

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What's happening? Peter is seeking God's will. Even though it's a struggle, and it is really tough, he still wants to know God's will. The fact that he was disobedient didn't bother God at all because he had to work through it to a point where he understood this and then received this. He was disobedient, but his heart was to continue further with the Lord with a heart to follow and obey—it's all about the heart. If you are struggling or having a hard time doing this, keep going. God said, *I understand, but let's keep going. That's what He said to Peter. You still have a heart to know My will and you're pondering, and I'm putting two and two together for you. And then He does.*

Peter is receiving truth as he ponders all this, prays about all this with God along his journey to Cornelius' house. When he gets to his house, there are all these people in the room. It wasn't just Cornelius, rather he brought everybody—family and friends. He told them that somebody was going to come and tell them about God. So, when Peter asked him why he had requested Peter to come, Cornelius said: *An angel appeared to me and told me to go get you, and that you would tell us the answer about God.* Then it hit Peter—the discernment that he was seeking, *I perceive, I understand, I know that nobody in the world is uncommon. The gospel is for everybody.* Wow. He got it. He understood that. Then he goes and teaches them what it all means—God the Father, the death and resurrection of the Son, the Holy Spirit. The entire group said: *We believe it. Can we get baptized now?* They were baptized and received the fullness of Holy Spirit and everything starts happening. This was the initiation of the gospel expanding from just the Jews to all peoples of the Earth. This was the beginning of it. Who is involved with that? Peter. And what did he do? He asked God what His will was. This is tough.

Think about the whole process, centered in prayer. God could have said, *Look, Peter, I just want you to do it. That's it. Here's the answer. Here's everything, now go and be obedient.* He could have said directly to Cornelius—*I'm God, I'm Jesus. You need to accept Jesus. That's the answer.* But, He didn't do any of that. What did He do? Hey, Cornelius, you go get Peter; and Peter, you listen to what they are requesting and keep pondering what I have revealed to you. What is He doing? He is working both sides of the deal at the same time. Why? He's doing way more than we could ever think or imagine. What would we like? We just want the answer, but God says, *Let's walk together. I'm doing things beyond your understanding, putting it together, and I'm using the whole process to help you. I'm using you to help them and them to help you—and you're all going to discover My will.*

The issue was always the heart—not that you have to be blindly obedient, but rather do you have a heart to stay with Him and receive the truth by talking to Him, processing with Him, receiving revelation from Him—prayer.

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God miraculously was fulfilling His great purpose, the Covenant, which, in this case is, *I'm going to bless you, Peter. I am going to bless you, Cornelius. So that what? You give it away.* Cornelius gave it away, and Peter gave it away. How beautiful is that?

As we finish this course, our time in the Word has been a great illustration of prayer. It isn't a wish list. Prayer isn't *God, would you?* It's spending time with Him, talking to each other, seeking His will, getting to unity. He's listening. Do you understand His will? He will get you there, just like He did with Peter and Cornelius. He will get you there, just have a heart to go. Keep talking. Keep processing. Keep considering until you receive His will, and then you can declare it—and then you'll see it be fulfilled. Pray to God by being in His Kingdom, with a heart to understand His will. Begin to shift your prayer life from *Would You?* to *What do You have to say to about this?* And then enjoy the process of doing that.