

## 20160529 Powerful Prayers Pt1

### Introduction

(Adapted from a series called Dangerous Prayers by Craig Groeschel)

Next three weeks- talk about 3 types of prayers.

### **What is prayer? (w/mic ask people)**

Prayer involves communicating with God, it involves relationship- we talk w/God.

How many communicate by email, texting, social media, cell phone?

Why do we use these forms to communicate?

>stay connected/feel apart of others lives

>convey information

If prayer is communicating with God, why is it that prayer is so difficult for us to find time for?

**When we pray we invite God into our everyday life situations.**

Prayer comes in many forms ...

>petition- ask God for something

>intercession- praying for others

>praise/thanksgiving

>confession/complaints

We also see prayer in the gift of tongues ...

**1 Cor 14:2 For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries.**

Inherent in our praying is the assumption that there is a personal God who hears our prayers

**What and how we pray clearly expresses what we believe about God and how He relates to men.**

Praying also assumes that God cares and that He has the power/ability to answer our prayers.

**Ja 5:16 The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.**

Let's establish first- who is a righteous man?

Effective- powerful, able to bring something about

Why are our prayers able-bring something about?

Because we believe there is a God, hears our prayers, cares, has the power/ability to act.

Foundation of our prayers- faith in God/His Word.

**Sincere and honest prayer has the effect of bringing our hearts and thoughts into alignment w/the will of God for our lives.**

Prayer is a process of interaction with God that brings revelation and change to us.

If we can truly understand what prayer is it will ...

>change the affections or our heart

>change our thoughts/thinking processes

Prayer will ...

>build up our faith and

>release in us a thankful heart

**1 Thess 5:16-18**

**<sup>16</sup>Rejoice always;**

**<sup>17</sup>pray without ceasing;**

**<sup>18</sup>in everything give thanks; for this is**

**God's will for you in Christ Jesus.**

Do you want to know God's will- here it is!

Many times our prayers are very safe/tame ...

>God bless me/God help me

>God protect me as we travel

It would be nice if God were a genie in a bottle who would pop out at our every request.

Particularly one that we would only need to call

on this genie when we have a desperate need.

Some say Christianity- crutch for-weak to lean on.

**Christianity is more like a defibrillator that brings dead people back to life again. (Adam Ford)**

If Christ makes a dead man alive then prayer helps to sustain that new life.

It is easy to pray, God I will do whatever you want me to do- w/o ever listening for God to speak.

How many of us are willing to give God a blank check when we pray? Takes courageous faith.

**Whatever, whenever, however, God, I am available to you.**

Today- pray a prayer-David prayed after- enemies attacked him/made accusations against him.

Instead of defending himself, David prayed ...

**Psalm 139:23–24**

**<sup>23</sup>Search me, O God, and know my heart;**

**Try me and know my anxious thoughts;**

**<sup>24</sup>And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.**

To understand David's prayer- break into 4 parts- **David prays ...**

**1. Search my heart**

**Search me, O God, and know my heart-**

Why would God have to search my heart- after all

I have a good heart compared to other people.

Most would say that our hearts are basically good

Actually, w/o Christ we do not have good hearts-

**Jer 17:9 “The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?”**

This why we need a Savior- God give me a new heart, make me a new creature in Christ.

**2 Cor 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in**

**Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.**

Even as Christians, with a new heart, we allow the flesh to drive our affections/attitudes.

We lie to ourselves and justify our unforgiving thoughts and ungodly actions.

It is appropriate to ask God to reveal whatever is in my heart that is not pleasing to Him.

God wants- bring us- deeper relationship w/Him as- HS transforms/shapes us into His image.

## **2. Reveal my fears**

**try me and know my anxious thoughts ...**

We are asking God- reveal our fears/insecurities.

What is it that makes us anxious? afraid?

Not talking about the fear of snakes/spiders, or the monster that lives under the bed.

What is it internally that makes us afraid/anxious?

>losing your job?

>not getting married by a certain age?

>of the future and what it might hold?

>not being able to pay your bills

>of losing a loved one?

This prayer is important because ...

**What we fear the most, reveals where we trust God the least. Craig Groeschel**

If I fear ...

>I will not be able to pay my bills then I am NOT trusting God to be my provider.

>for the safety of my children then I am NOT trusting God to keep- children safe.

>what tomorrow holds then I am NOT trusting God with my future.

We can pray ... God, reveal my fears, show me my anxieties- where I am not trusting You?

In the process of praying this prayer we must learn how to be led by faith, not fear.

Prayer helps us to establish faith over fear in our hearts and minds.

**Ja 1:17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.**

Often our fears keep us from hearing the voice of God and then being obedient to that voice.

I must love pleasing God more than my anxious thoughts, more than my fear of failure.

**1 Pet 5:7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.**

**Phil 4:6-7**

**<sup>6</sup>Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.**

**<sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

We pray, faith rises up in our hearts, the peace of God settles in, and guards our hearts/minds.

Use the Bible to renew your mind and set faith in your heart in place of your fears/anxieties.

**2 Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.**

As we pray/ask God to reveal- anxious thoughts,  
then we can cast those thoughts down and  
raise up faith/truth in their place.

If there is any area of your life in which there is no  
hope, then you have believed a lie. (Rom 15.13)

### **3. Uncover my sins**

**and see if there be any hurtful way in me**

This prayer becomes more difficult and requires  
courage to pray and a willingness to be honest  
God ...

>is there anything in me offensive to You

>is there anything in me inconsistent with  
Your truth

>show me anything that I am doing that is  
displeasing to you

At times it is difficult to see our own sins ...

It is easy to see others sins, but not our own sin.

We tend to accuse others and excuse ourselves.

When people talk to us about our sin do we get  
defensive-

>it is none of your business,

>take the log out of your own eye before  
you try and take the speck out of my eye.

Give God permission to show you any sin or  
anything inconsistent w/truth- in your heart.

I am not talking about introspection- introspection  
is more harmful than good.

Introspection never leads to encouragement.

It is not good to go inward to find out what is  
wrong with ourselves.

We do not have the power to change ourselves.

We must see what God is showing us and look to  
His grace to bring change.

**Jn 16:8 “And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment;**

I want to deal with in my life what God is dealing with in my life.

**Three questions to help- uncover our sins ...**

**1. What are other people trying to tell us?**

If more than one person has talked to you about the same thing, maybe you should listen.

**2. What have I been rationalizing away?**

What are we making excuses about ...

>it is not a big deal,

>this is how I am,

>it is not hurting anyone

**3. Where am I most defensive?**

What do you not want to talk about?

If there is sin or disobedience confess it and ask for God’s grace to overcome in that area.

**1 Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

**4. Lead me**

**Lead me in the everlasting way ...**

Lord, when I begin to see areas of my life where I need to change- lead me- show me what needs to change/how to change it.

Jesus, I need your help/power/grace to change.

Lord, show me how to live for you above everyone and every force trying to shape me.

Search my heart, reveal my fears, uncover my sins, lead me.

**Conclusion**

Remember ...

**John 8:31–32**

**<sup>31</sup>So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;**

**<sup>32</sup>and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”**

If you continue- ongoing, living, process.

God’s Word is like a lamp that will expose dark areas in our hearts and minds.

Being truthful with God and with ourselves is what will set us free.

Learn to submit yourself to what God is showing you and ask God for the courage to face it.

This is why we believe our House Churches and small groups are very important.

In these groups- come together- as- community of God- share our mutual need of God.

In these small groups we learn that others are imperfect people and we do not need to be afraid to reveal our own imperfections.

As we recognize our needs it helps to point us to the Lord to get what we need to be healthy.

Our area of need points to where we must call on the Lord and learn to depend on Christ.

**Let’s close by praying together ...**

I want us to stand up/pray this prayer together ...

**Psalms 139:23–24**

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