

MT. SPOKANE CHURCH

A HEART LIKE MINE

Discovering God's Will for Your Life

'Prayer Is Not an Agenda'

Message 3 of 8

August 17th, 2008

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⇒ Please turn in your Bibles to Psalm 30:11-12.

"You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever." Psalm 30:11-12 (NIV)

⇒ Please turn in your Bibles to Matthew 7:7-8.

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened." Matthew 7:7-8 (NIV)

- A legitimate **question** we all can ask at some time is 'Why haven't my prayers been answered?'
 - ☞ Webster's Dictionary defines 'agenda' as a list or outline of things to be considered or done; an underlying often ideological plan or program.
- Praying with an **agenda** means we have our own ideas of how things should happen.
- Praying with 'expectation' is **different** It means we expect God to do something according to His plans and purposes trusting that He is always looking out for our best interests.

"The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations." Psalm 33:10-11 (NIV)

"Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails." Proverbs 19:21 (NIV)

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." Luke 22:42 (NIV)

"This, then, is how you should pray, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:9-10 (NIV)

3 Biblical Principles To Help Us Pray In a Way to Get Results

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE #1: Prayers of expectation that get results are prayed to God.

⇒ Please turn in your Bibles to Acts 12:5-19.

"So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him." Acts 12:5 (NIV)

- In order for a prayer to be really *unto God*, there must be a definite and conscious **approach** to God when we pray.
- In much of our prayer there can be little thought of God. Our mind can be taken up with thoughts of what we need – our agenda. It is not occupied with the thought of the mighty and loving father of whom we are seeking our requests. Prayer can **focus** on self not God.
- The first thing we must do is to see to it we get an audience with God. We must really get into His **presence** and be more taken up with God than with our petition.

⇒ Please turn in your Bibles to Matthew 6:31-33.

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”
Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

- We should **believe** that God is listening to our prayer and expect that He is going to answer in His time and way according to His purposes.
“The Lord Almighty has sworn, ‘Surely, as I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will stand.’” Isaiah 14:24 (NIV)
- Prayers that get results are only possible through the Holy Spirit’s **power** We must look to the Holy Spirit to really lead us into the presence of God before we begin making requests.

⇒ Please turn in your Bibles to Romans 8:26-27.

“We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.”
Romans 8:26-27 (NIV)

- The Greek word for intercedes is “*entugchano*” (ἐντυγχάνω). It means to plead, appeal, petition, or to intervene on behalf of someone.

“He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.” Ephesians 2:17-18 (NIV)

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.” Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE #2: Prayers of expectation that get results are prayed earnestly.

⇒ Please turn in your Bibles to Acts 12:5.

“So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.” Acts 12:5 (NIV)

- The Greek word for earnestly is “*ektenos*” (ἐκτενώζ). It means earnestly, fervently, intensely. From a verb which means to “stretch out the hand.”, thus it means to be stretched out in earnest, resolute, tense activity.

“And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the

ground.” Luke 22:44 (NIV)

“During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.”

Hebrews 5:7 (NIV)

- Prayer that gets results is prayed with our **whole** heart and soul, stretching out toward God in intense, fervent, agonizing expectation and desire.
- Earnest prayer is done by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is often accompanied by **fasting**.

“While they were worshipping the Lord and **fasting**, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had **fasted** and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.” Acts 13:2-3 (NIV)

- There are special times of seeking God for **others** when prayer and fasting – withdrawal from fulfilling natural appetites – produce earnest prayers of expectation that gets results.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE #3: Prayers of expectation that get results are prayed united.

“So Peter was kept in prison, **but the church** was earnestly praying to God for him.” Acts 12:5 (NIV)

- There is power in individual prayer, but there is vastly increased power in united prayer with **others** Jesus asked others to pray with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane.

⇒ Please turn in your Bibles to Matthew 18:19-20.

“Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

Matthew 18:19-20 (NIV)