

Prayer that Gets Results (Part 2)

5. Guard your heart motive in prayer

James 4:3

³ When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

This scripture is clear. **One of the biggest barriers to unanswered prayer is praying with the wrong motives.**

The blessing of God can destroy you if you do not have the character to contain it. It's crucial for every believer to know the purpose of prosperity.

One definition I like of prosperity is this one: **Prosperity is having everything you need in order to do what God wants you to do.**

Ask yourself, what is driving my behaviour? What do I visualise myself doing with the blessing I am believing for?

Mt 6:5-6

⁵ *“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*

A lot of intercessors lose their reward because they are looking for it in the wrong place. Don't pray to be seen. Don't pray in order to get a reward from man, or to be recognised. Trust God for His reward, part of which is answered prayer. When you pray with the right heart motive God will entrust you with more of His secrets and more significant burdens to pray through.

Why do you want your prayers answered? Is it so that you have a 100% track record of answered prayer? When you are a minister of healing or breakthrough you can be motivated by pride. Recently I cried out to God for breakthrough and had to say Lord it's not because of my ego but please have mercy on them and show them your compassion. Prayer is not a performance.

6. Put God's Kingdom first on your agenda

Mt 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Here is the mystery. There are some things you need to pray for whilst there are other things that are simply added to you because you as a reward for prioritizing God and His agenda.

Many people do not have things added to them. They still pray for them, but the things are never added because they did not do the first part; seek first the Kingdom. Others have things added to them that they insisted on in the flesh. Unfortunately, these things add sorrow to them. Some people are subsequently destroyed by those seemingly good things.

To seek the kingdom includes desire, investigation and prioritization.

Ps 37:4

Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

What does delighting yourself in the Lord look like for you?

Solomon put God's agenda first and was still granted access to so much more than He had requested. Are you doing the things that provoke God to bless you even more than you have requested?

1 Kings 3:5-15

⁵ *At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you."* ⁶ *Solomon answered, "You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day."* ⁷ *"Now, Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties."* ⁸ *Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number.* ⁹ *So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?"* ¹⁰ *The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this.* ¹¹ *So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be."* ¹³ *Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honour—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings.* ¹⁴ *And if you walk in obedience to me and keep my decrees and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life."* ¹⁵ *Then Solomon awoke—and he realized it had been a dream.*

Which prayers does God honour in your life? God sometimes shows me country flags for me to pray for those nations. I know that there is a reward for that. He will cover me in my personal desires.

What is God's primary agenda for your life? Find out what it is and prioritize those types of prayers that build into His mission and priority. When you do this, He knows the desires of your heart and grants them to you.

7. Walk in humility and brokenness

In our prayers we need to do the things that attract the favour of God. His favour is not automatic. God has shown grace to all of mankind but favour is not a generalised offering. Throughout scripture there are specific acts that involve and attract God's favour. We are saved by Grace but there are things in life that become easier because of favour. There are accelerations in the spirit because of favour.

James 4:6

But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble."

Some translations say, "God RESISTS the proud". This word means to rally against someone or something. Many people want breakthrough, but their pride is causing God to resist them. Their pride is short-circuiting the anointing.

Prov 3:34

He mocks proud mockers but shows favour to the humble and oppressed.

What does humility in prayer look like?

- Not boasting in the flesh

Phil 3:7

I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. (NLT)

Worthless = loss, damage, bad deal resulting in a fine or penalty (a mercantile term)

Phil 3:7-8 (Berean Bible)

⁷ But whatever was an asset to me I count as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I count all things as loss compared to the surpassing excellence of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ...

Rubbish = Skubalon = refuse, dregs, dung, table scraps that are thrown to dogs etc.

1 Cor 1:28 – 31

²⁸ God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, ²⁹ so that no one may boast before him. ³⁰ It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. ³¹ Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”

Mt 5:3 (NIV)

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. (NLT)

You can pray as much as you want for God's blessing but it may not come to you if you are not poor in spirit. Being poor in spirit is when one realises their need for God and walks in absolute dependence on God. One of the reasons people don't pray is because they do not recognise their dependence on God.

- Freedom from self-righteousness

Luke 18:10-14

¹⁰ “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ ¹³ “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ ¹⁴ “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Your righteous deeds should not be your source confidence. Focus on His goodness and mercy. The moment you focus on your own righteousness it opens a door to conversations about your failures and shortcomings. Yes you have done great things for God but you have also done terrible things. You are only reminding God of the good things.

- Brokenness

Ps 51:17

My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.

Sometimes brokenness is a sacrifice. It's not always easy. It often involves meekness. God is attracted to this.

Broken = To shatter, to smash to break into pieces, to hurt, or to demolish.

When you are broken God can use you. You are malleable.

Contrite = crouching, crushed, broken, humbled, bowing down.

Spirit = ruach = breath, spirit

Heart = inner man, mind, will

Sadly, many believers have not yet graduated from the school of brokenness. If you are still defensive and more worried about your image than the purposes of God, then you have not passed through the school of brokenness. Graduating from the school of brokenness will make your prayers more effective.

In summary, God is calling us to pray with the right motives, placing His Kingdom first, whilst walking in brokenness and humility.