



Praying With God Video Course

Session Four

Positioned To Pray With God

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'After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly' Acts 4: 31

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*'But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), **and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus**'*
Ephesians 2: 6 NKJV

We pray effectively and powerfully when we are correctly 'positioned'. This means understanding our position and status as New Covenant believers. The apostle Paul instructs us on how to do this through making some shifts in our thinking and understanding the principles of prayer in the New Testament. In the above scripture, Paul says we must pray at all times 'in the spirit'. This is not a suggestion, but a command.

When Jesus was talking to the woman at the well in John 4: 23-24, He says God is looking for those who worship God 'in the spirit'.

In John 5: 19, Jesus tells us that He only does what He sees the Father doing. He does this by continuously looking 'in the spirit'.

We are told to do the same. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 4: 18 to 'look not to things that are seen but to the things that are unseen' and in Colossians 3: 2 to 'set our minds and keep them set on what is above, (the higher things) , not on the things that are on the earth.' (Amplified).

So how do we do this? We can position ourselves to pray with God, in the spirit, by understanding who we are in Christ. This enables us to keep our focus on the 'things above', 'the higher things' and to be 'in the spirit'.



Principles of our position in the New Covenant

1. New Creatures

'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.' 2 Corinthians 5:17

We are different to the people in the Old Testament. Unlike them, we are born again which makes us 'new creatures' with 'better' promises and status. If you carry on reading 2 Corinthians 5: 17 to 21 you see that we are now reconciled to God, we are His ambassadors who can 'lay hold of His divine favour'. We are spirit beings. We are not

the old person, but new creatures alive to God and the word of God. Revelation of this will change the way we pray.

2. Spiritual beings not mere humans

'But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God.' John 1: 12-13

'Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.' 2 Corinthians 5: 16

Another aspect that we should understand about our New Covenant status is that we are spirit beings, not 'mere' humans. The prayers we offer are spiritual and result in a spirit realm action which affects the natural and physical world we live in.

3. The Mind of Christ

Paul explains to us in 1 Corinthians 2: 7-16 that God has given us mysterious supernatural wisdom that seems foolish to those who don't believe. Because our spirits are now awakened to God and His word, we can understand, perceive and discern spiritual matters and we have 'the mind of Christ'.

4. One with Him

'The Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the 'fullness' of God is in us: and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.' Colossians 2:10

We are one with God. In the Old Covenant God was distant to His people, He didn't dwell in them. They offered their prayers TO Him, without being in the special relationship that we have with Him now. Now, we are in Him and He is in us. The Holy Spirit is in us. The Father is in us. If God lives within us, this means we can think like Him, we can walk, talk and act like Him. We can pray like Him. We can pray WITH Him.

5. Redeemed and Made Righteous

'..in whom we have redemption through His blood,[a] the forgiveness of sins.' Colossians 1:14

'For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.' 2 Corinthians 5:21

In the New Covenant our status changes. We are permanently redeemed and made righteous. This does not take place only once a year as it did in the Old Covenant but is a

permanent state. We move from being servants of God, to His sons and daughters. We move from petitioning God for things to administering His affairs.

6. Relationship with the Father

'For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.' Galatians 3: 26

We can come to Him now as beloved 'sons'. We have ongoing and dynamic relationship with Him. We can talk to Him, and if we listen, He will 'talk' to us.

7. Unlimited and free access to the Father

'For through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father' Ephesians 2: 18

We are different to the people in the Old Testament because we can come boldly to the throne of grace to ask for help if we need it. (Hebrews 4:16). We have free access to Him because the curtain has been torn the way is 'open'. The door is open (Hebrews 10: 19-22.) This changes the way we pray. We no longer need to ask for God to 'come down' or to 'rend the Heavens' as He has already done this and the way is open. We need to continue to ask and ask and ask Him for something, hoping He has heard and will answer us. Our prayers should be bold and confident, knowing that He hears.

8. We know that our prayers are heard

'This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.' 1 John 5: 14

'Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.' Hebrews 4: 16

In the Old Covenant people did not have this assurance or confidence that their prayers would be heard. For example in Psalm 88: 2, the psalmist asks God to 'incline Your ear to my cry'. In the New Covenant this is already done. God has said He hears us. In Psalm 102: 2, the psalmist asks God not to 'hide His face' from Him but in the New Covenant we are told in Hebrews 13: 5 that God will never ever leave us and that He will do whatever we ask in the name of Jesus and within His will. (1 John 3:22)

So our attitude in prayer should be one of confidence that God hears our prayers and we don'



Key Points

1. We need to understand our status as New Covenant believers.
2. This will affect the way we pray and relate to God.

3. There may be some adjustments or 'shifts' we need to make in our thinking.



Bonus Notes: Characteristics of New Covenant Prayers



'The heartfelt and persistent prayer of a righteous man (believer) can accomplish much [when put into action and made effective by God—it is dynamic and can have tremendous power]. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours [with the same physical, mental, and spiritual limitations and shortcomings], and he prayed [d]intensely for it not to rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. Then he prayed again, and the sky gave rain and the land produced its crops [as usual].' James 5:16b-17, Amplified

1. Heartfelt, earnest, fervent

Effective prayers are strong, deeply felt and flow from our innermost being. We can be moved by various circumstances – personal, to do with our families or businesses or church, as well as for nations. In 2 Kings 20:1-3 King Hezekiah was sick and near death. Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, 'Thus says the LORD: *'Set your house in order, for you shall die, and not live'*. Then he turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the Lord, saying, *'Remember now, O Lord, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done what was good in Your sight. And Hezekiah wept bitterly.'* His life was extended because of his fervent prayer.

In another example earlier in the history of Israel, Hannah (who became the mother of the prophet Samuel) made a heartfelt prayer. She was distressed by the fact she had been unable to have a child and by the severe provocation she had received from her rival. *'And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the LORD and wept in anguish'*, 1 Samuel 1:10. Her deep and anguished prayer produced a son.

Nehemiah offered heartfelt prayers for the Jerusalem when he heard about the condition of the broken down walls and his intercessions resulted in the rebuilding of the walls.

In Gethsemane, the prayers of Jesus were so passionate that His sweat was as blood.

Heartfelt prayer has power, and energy, and life in it. It is not a cold, lukewarm, lifeless, formal or offered in a customary way.

2. Persistent

The Vulgate Latin version of this word renders the word 'persistent' as 'daily'. So, the qualities of powerful and effective prayers are constancy and consistency. They are regular, continual, and without ceasing.

3. Accomplish much when put into action

Just as the ordinary man, Elijah, offered prayers which had nation changing results, so should our prayers show fruit and results.

4. Go beyond what we imagine or think

'Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.' Ephesians 3: 20. God is able to do more than we can ever dream or imagine. When we pray with our intellect only we miss the potential of what God may do, we sell ourselves and Him short. Our mind set needs to shift from we don't know how to pray to the realm of anything and everything is possible.

5. Focus is on the unseen realm (the solution not the problem)

'Therefore if you have been raised with Christ [to a new life, sharing in His resurrection from the dead], keep seeking the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind and keep focused habitually on the things above [the heavenly things], not on things that are on the earth [which have only temporal value].' Colossians 3: 1-2:
Amplified

'So we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen; for the things which are visible are temporal [just brief and fleeting], but the things which are invisible are everlasting and imperishable.' 2 Corinthians 4: 18

We need to think 'above the line' not 'below the line' and set our mind on things above, not below. When we pray this means we don't tell God all about the problem but instead we speak the solution and agree with what His Word says about it.

6. **Bring freedom:** for 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty', 2 Cor 3:17.

7. **Increase the supply and influence of the Holy Spirit:** Philippians 1: 19

8. **Produce the peace of God** around you. Philippians 4: 6-7

9. **Give wisdom and revelation**, so you can know what He has called you to do.
Ephesians 1: 17-19

10. **Reveal the deep things of God:** 1 Corinthians 2: 11-14

11. **Build you up:** Jude 20

12. **Christ or Kingdom Centred:** When we look at the prayers of Paul they were seldom for his personal needs but more for Kingdom needs.

13. **They look to 'see'**. Jesus always looked to see what His Father was doing. John 5: 19

Activities



Bible Study: Prayer in the Spirit

The New Testament gives us very clear and specific instructions about how to pray and what to pray for. Although there are specific types of prayers like thanksgiving, prayers of faith commitment and petition, there are many times and situations when we do not know exactly how to pray. Read the following scripture - how are we to pray?

Romans 8: 26-27: _____



Reflective Questions

1. When we pray, how does our 'position' differ to that of people in the Old Testament?

2. Do you need to change your focus when you pray? Have you identified any 'shifts' that need to be made in your thinking or approach to prayer?



Bible Study: Characteristics of New Covenant Prayers

| Scripture | Characteristics |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| James 5:16b-18 | Earnest, heartfelt, persistent |
| Acts 16: 25-26 | |
| Ephesians 3: 20 | |
| 2 Cor 3: 17 | |
| Philippians 1: 19 | |
| Philippians 4:6-7 | |
| 1 Cor 2:11-14 | |
| John 5: 19 | |
| Your own example | |



Bible Study: The Apostolic Prayers of Paul

Paul's apostolic prayers in the epistles are good examples for of us of what to pray for. His prayers can guide us and shape our praying. Read through some of his prayers and observe:

-what does he pray for? Or another way of putting this is what is the focus of his prayers?

-to what extent does he pray for his own needs?

| Verses | Focus (What does Paul pray for?) |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Romans 15:30-33 | |
| 1 Corinthians 1: 4-9 | |
| Ephesians 1: 15-23 | |
| Ephesians 3: 14-20 | |
| Colossians 1: 11-14 | |
| Colossians 4: 2-4 | |
| Galatians 4: 19 | |
| Philippians 1:9-11 | |
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