

Praying in Jesus Name

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To speak in someone's name is to speak with their delegated power and authority. British policemen carry out their duties 'in the name of the Queen'. This authority only exists when he or she is in uniform and acting in Her Majesty's name. The authority of the name is not personal authority belonging to the policeman. If they should leave the police force it would vanish entirely. The policemen are also given tasks, ranks, areas of operation and so forth that indicate where their authority is primarily to be used.

All salvation is through the name of Jesus (Acts 4:12): whether it be salvation from judgment (justification) or salvation from the power of sin (sanctification) or salvation from illness (healing). In fact the bible describes Christians as those who 'call upon the name of the Lord' for salvation:

1 Corinthians 1:2 MKJV *to the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called out with all those in every place who call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours. (see also Acts 9:14,21)*

The name of Jesus means Savior:

Matthew 1:21 MKJV *And she shall bear a son, and you shall call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.*

And to call on that Name, by faith, brings healing and wholeness:

Acts 3:6 MKJV *But Peter said, Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!*

Acts 3:16 MKJV *And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, this one whom you see and know, His name made firm.*

Of course the Name of Jesus brings salvation to eternal life:

John 20:31 MKJV *But these are written so that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life in His name.*

Acts 4:12 MKJV *And there is salvation in no other One; for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*

Acts 10:43 MKJV *All the Prophets give witness to Him, that through His name whoever believes in Him shall receive remission of sins.*

Romans 10:13 MKJV *For everyone, "whoever shall call on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

With this in mind let's look at the NT passages about praying in the Name of Jesus:

John 14:12-14 MKJV *Truly, truly, I say to you, He who believes on Me, the works that I do he shall do also, and greater works than these he shall do, because I go to My Father. (13) And whatever you may ask in My name, that I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (14) If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*

John 15:16 MKJV *You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatever you shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it to you.*

John 16:23-24 MKJV *And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. Truly, truly, I say to you, Whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give you. (24) Before now you have asked nothing in My name; ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.*

John 16:26 MKJV *At that day you will ask in My name; and I do not say to you that I will pray to the Father for you,*

Let's deal with the puzzling John 16:26 first. In this verse Jesus is saying that we will have direct access to the Father in His Name. Jesus won't have to ask the Father for us. If we are acting and praying in Jesus' proper delegated authority God will automatically hear us and we can ask of God the Father by ourselves without having to 'go through' Jesus.

The other 'in My Name' verses in John's gospel use terms such as '*if you ask anything in My Name*' and '*whatever you may ask in My name*'. What does this mean?

Let's go back to the illustration of the British policeman. The policeman cannot go into a restaurant and order caviar on toast and a whole roast turkey 'in the name of the Queen'! But he can commandeer a car or truck in an emergency situation to save lives. Within certain limits at certain times that policemen can 'ask anything' and get it.

All these high-powered promises 'in Jesus' Name' are found in the Upper Room discourse in John 14-17 where Jesus is speaking to the Eleven (Judas has left the room) and where He is now teaching those who will soon be going out into ministry. The meaning is something like: "As you go out ministering the gospel of the Kingdom, you can ask anything you like in My Name and I will give it to you, so that you may bear much fruit and glorify My Father's Name."

Let's see how the early Church used the name of Jesus. Firstly to heal the sick:

James 5:14-15 MKJV *Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. (15) And the prayer of faith will cure the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up. And if he has committed sins, it will be forgiven him. (See also Acts 3:6,16 above)*

And in Acts 16:18 the name of Jesus is used to cast out demons:

Acts 16:18 MKJV *And she did this many days. But being distressed, and turning to the demonic spirit, Paul said, I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her! And it came out in that hour.*

And in Acts 4:29-30 to do wonders as a testimony to the gospel:

Acts 4:29-30 MKJV *And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your Word, (30) by stretching forth of Your hand for healing, and miracles, and wonders may be done by the name of Your holy child Jesus.*

Praying in the name of Jesus involves taking up the plans, purposes and delegated authority of God and asking for those things which will glorify His Name such as healing, exorcisms, signs, wonders, Kingdom proclamation and 'greater works' that will bear abiding fruit for the gospel of God. As we see revival breaking out our righteous joy will be made full!

PRAYING FOR YOUR HEART'S DESIRE

As we set our heart on God's desires, He then allows us to pray for our heart's desires:

Psalms 21:1-4 MKJV *...The king shall rejoice in Your strength, O Jehovah; and in Your salvation how greatly shall he rejoice! (2) You have given him his heart's desire, and have not withheld the prayer of his lips. Selah. (3) For You go before him with the blessings of goodness; You set a crown of pure gold on his head. (4) He asked life from You; You give to him length of days forever and ever.*

Psalms 37:3-6 MKJV *Trust in Jehovah, and do good; you shall dwell in the land, and you shall be fed on truth. (4) Delight yourself also in Jehovah, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. (5) Roll your way on Jehovah; trust also in Him, and He will work. (6) And He shall bring forth your righteousness like the light, and your judgment like the noonday.*

Psalms 10:17-18 MKJV *Jehovah, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will prepare their heart, You will cause Your ear to hear, (18) to judge the fatherless and the oppressed, so that the man of the earth may no more terrify.*

Psalms 145:16 MKJV *You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.*

There is a balance here. The 'wicked' boast of their hearts desires (Psalm 10:3) and the sluggard craves his desires and gets absolutely nothing (Proverbs 13:4). So when we pray for our heart's desires we must be righteous in our lifestyle and diligent in our work ethic.

God occasionally grants the desires of people who ask for wrong things – such as when the Israelites insisted on having meat and God sent them quail:

Psalms 106:14-15 MKJV *but they lusted greedily in the wilderness, and tested God in the desert. (15) And He gave them what they asked, but sent leanness into their soul.*

Your desires need to be tamed and tutored into the way of Christ. You cannot just insist on God giving you whatever you want. That is not what prayer is about. Your desires have to line up with the will of God, with "His Kingdom and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:33).

When our desires coincide with God's desires prayer becomes very powerful indeed:

1 John 5:14-15 MKJV *And this is the confidence that we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. (15) And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.*

Desires have their seasons. There may be times when God causes you to pray for a normal human desire (such as a partner, a house or a car) that you have not prayed for much before. Before you knew that 'it was not the time' but now the Lord says 'pray for it – now is the time'.

Well what kinds of 'normal human desires' can we pray for? My answer is really vague – 'non-covetous ones'. If it fits God's plan for your life then pray for it. If it is simply something unnecessary that you want so that you can make the neighbors green with envy – forget it! Covetousness is idolatry. We should not be praying greedy prayers – but it is quite valid to pray for God's best blessings on your life.

For example if you travel extensively in ministry it is quite valid to pray for a comfortable and reliable car. If you entertain and have bible studies, then it is valid to pray for a house with a large den or lounge room and good parking (which is what we did). However I do not feel it would be valid for me to pray for a corporate jet. I don't need it, I couldn't pay for it and I cannot justify it except for sheer ego.

Don't believe the TV preachers. Money is NOT what you desire. Deep down you desire relationship, love, forgiveness, holiness, significance in God's work etc. You desire to see sinner's saved and God's Church built up. (That is if you are a believer).

Money may be a means to these things but it is not to be desired in and of itself. The desire of money leads to disaster (Judas, Demas, Ananias & Sapphira etc.):

Luke 16:13-15 MKJV *No servant can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. (14) And being money-lovers, all the Pharisees also heard all these things. And they derided Him. (15) And He said to them, You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.*

1 Timothy 6:7-10 MKJV *For we brought nothing into the world, and it is clear that we can carry nothing out. (8) But having food and clothing, we will be content. (9) But they who will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which plunge men into destruction and perdition. (10) For the love of money is a root of all evils, of which some having lusted after, they were seduced from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

You need to work out what you truly want, not just money, but what the money would buy. What is the reason for the cash? How will it help you? Then pray for the true desire, the end desire such as 'being free to serve the lord without anxiety'. Identify your truly godly desires – then pray in faith, believing that you have received them! (Mark 11:24)

PRAYING WITH ETERNITY VIEW

Colossians 3:1-4 EMTV *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. (2) Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (3) For you died, and your life has been hidden with Christ in God. (4) Whenever Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.*

It is just so easy to get caught up in Self and with the world and the things thereof. We end up with our minds set on our own busyness and lose sight of Heaven completely. At that point we need to be turned upside down and praying with eternity in view will do just that! Nothing will lift you out of your routine more than getting a glimpse of Eternity!

Paul insists that our mind, and therefore our prayers are to be set on things above, not on the things of the earth (Colossians 3:2 above). The reason for this is that we

are citizens of Heaven (Philippians 3:20), who have been raised with Christ (Colossians 3:1) and who are seated with Him in heavenly realms (Ephesians 2:6).

Philippians 3:20-21 EMTV (20) *For our citizenship exists in heaven, from which also we eagerly await for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, (21) who will transform our lowly body, that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.*

Ephesians 2:6 ASV *and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus:*

Your real self is not the person that you see in the mirror but the person you will be after Christ returns and you are found in Him. Some with very glamorous exteriors will be found to be abominations and objects of horror (Isaiah 66:24). Others who have been humiliated in this life will be glorified in the next like the beggar Lazarus in Luke 16.

The true believer has their life in Christ and has been washed by the blood, cleansed and made whole. The believer is a completely new creation in Christ, an eternal being, with an eternal life, made in the image of Christ Jesus:

Colossians 3:10 MKJV *... and having put on the new, having been renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,*

Romans 8:29 MKJV *For whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be the First-born among many brothers.*

1 Corinthians 15:49 MKJV (49) *And according as we bore the image of the earthy man, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.*

2 Corinthians 3:18 MKJV (18) *But we all, with our face having been unveiled, having beheld the glory of the Lord as in a mirror, are being changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord Spirit.*

As we pray with eternity in view we are changed from glory to glory by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:18 above). Praying with eternity in view changes others as well because we are then praying for what they most need in order to be a joyous citizen of Heaven.

If they are not a believer we should pray that they will receive repentance and faith.

If they are filled with doubts, we should pray that they grasp the Truth in all its fullness.

If they are struggling with sin we can pray for their deliverance from temptation.

If they lack wisdom we can pray that they be given a spirit of wisdom and revelation

If they are new disciples we can pray that they will understand God's love

If they are slack and drifting away we can pray that they may know the fear of the Lord.

If they are in ministry we can pray for spiritual protection and an abundant harvest.

If they are a student of the Word we can pray that God will show them Christ.

If we pray with eternity in view then the needs of this world change – and get much more urgent. We start to tremble at sin and cry out for revival. We see the lost as lost for all eternity and realize how short a time we have to reach them.

If we pray with eternity in view then the needs of the Church and the glory of the Church fill our minds. Not just a better air-conditioning system but the need for holiness and unity and true fellowship and for the exercise of the spiritual gifts in love.

To some these may seem to be abstract and impractical things. Our culture wants us to be like the fools in Ecclesiastes 10:19 who think that 'money is the answer for everything'. The problem is that money cannot purchase eternal life. God knows perfectly well that we need houses, cars, food, drink, clothes and so on and He will provide these things if we seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33).

Our inheritance is ourselves perfected in Christ. We inherit eternal life, immortality, holiness, sinlessness, incorruption, glory, an undefiled resurrection body and the image of God. We become glorious liberated sons of God who rule and reign with Christ and who finally realize the fullness of who they are as a new creation in Christ Jesus.

Unless we inherit eternal life no other inheritance (such as a grand castle in the sky) will matter because in the end it would be snatched away by death. We have to inherit ourselves in Christ before we can inherit anything else at all.

If we are to inherit ourselves in Christ and enter the Kingdom of God then our minds and prayers must be fixed above - where our life is hidden with Christ in God. The Holy Spirit will help us to do this if we ask for it His task to show us Christ.

The prayers that we see in the New Testament were prayers for glory to come down, prayers for God to be revealed. Prayers for boldness in preaching, for miracles, for wisdom and revelation and hope and love and for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

In contrast with the OT, in the NT, there are no prayers for vengeance on enemies or for victory in a physical battle between nations. In fact the cares of this life are scarcely touched upon in their prayers. They are too busy getting ready for Heaven!

Eternity is what matters and eternity should fill our prayers. When eternity is our central focus then this life's trials will seem far less burdensome because we will realize the glory they are bringing us:

2 Corinthians 4:13-18 MKJV *(13) For we, having the same spirit of faith (according as it is written, "I believed, and therefore I have spoken"); we also believed and therefore speak, (14) knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus shall also raise us up by Jesus, and shall present us with you. (15) For all things are for your sake, so that the superabounding grace might be made to abound through the thanksgiving of the greater number, to the glory of God. (16) For this cause we do not faint; but though our outward man perishes, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. (17) For the lightness of our present affliction works out for us a far more excellent eternal weight of glory, (18) we not considering the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are not lasting, but the things which are not seen are everlasting.*

Start praying over Scriptures about eternity such as Psalm 91, Revelation chapters 4&5, Romans 8, 1 Corinthians 15:12-58 and so on.

Fill your mind with the heavenly things.

Grasp hold of your reward and your inheritance and start seeing your day-to-day existence in the light of the Throne.

PRAYING FOR HEALING

I prayed for others to be healed for many years, with absolutely no success. I believed in healing and I read extensively about healing but my prayers went nowhere. I actually became very negative about the whole thing and evens aid to folk: "Don't ask me to pray for your healing because you will probably drop dead!"

In the midst of my despair I noticed that the healing prayers in the New Testament always had the form of a command e.g: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk" or an invocation "Your faith has made you whole, be cleansed." I mentioned this I passing at an evening service I was preaching at and a considerable number of folks came forward for healing and I was trapped – I had to use command prayer! And much to my surprise it actually worked!

When I started praying using the biblical method I began to see about 25% of those I was praying for healed immediately and others healed over a period of a

day or two. Though not everyone was healed - it was certainly much better than zero percent!

It has been my conclusion that just as we can command demons to leave in the name of Jesus, we can also command wholeness of mind and body to come forth. Let's look at some of the healing prayers in the New Testament;

Acts 3:6-8 MKJV *But Peter said, Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk! (7) And taking him by the right hand, he lifted him up. And immediately his feet and ankle-bones received strength. (8) And leaping up, he stood and walked and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God.*

Matthew 9:27-29 MKJV *And when Jesus passed on from there, two blind ones followed Him, crying and saying, Son of David, have mercy on us. (28) And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, Do you believe that I am able to do this? They said to Him, Yes, Lord. (29) Then He touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith let it be to you.*

Matthew 9:6-7 MKJV *But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, then He said to the paralytic, Arise, take up your bed and go to your house. (7) And he arose and departed to his house.*

John 11:43-44 RV *And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. (44) He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*

Mark 1:40-42 RV *And there cometh to him a leper, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. (41) And being moved with compassion, he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou made clean. (42) And straightway the leprosy departed from him, and he was made clean.*

Do you notice something here? In each of these examples Jesus or the apostles use a command formula when they are praying e.g. 'rise up and walk' be cleansed' 'according to your faith be it unto you' etc. There is the clear use of spiritual authority to defeat sickness and disease. There is no 'if it be Thy will' praying. They knew they had authority to heal. God had designated healing authority to them and they were using it!

Matthew 10:1 RV *And he called unto him his twelve disciples, and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease and all manner of sickness.*

Notice something else. They commanded the desired end state into being. They saw what needed to happen and called it forth! They called the 'things that are not' – as though they were!

Romans 4:17 RV *(as it is written, A father of many nations have I made thee) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that are not, as though they were.*

Jesus told Lazarus to 'come forth'. This end state ("coming forth") necessarily implied that Lazarus would be alive, healthy, walking, talking etc. Similarly the lame man at the Gate Beautiful was told to "rise up and walk" and the leper was told to "be cleansed". Even when Jesus spoke to the storm he said "Peace, be still" thus invoking the desired end state (a peaceful lake) into being.

The prayer of faith sees what God wants done and calls it forth!

James 5:14-18 MKJV *Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. (15) And the prayer of faith will cure the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up. And if he has committed sins, it will be forgiven him. (16) Confess faults to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous one avails much. (17) Elijah was a man of like passion as we are. And he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for the time of three years and six months. (18) And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth caused its fruit to sprout.*

James 5:14-18 tells us that:

1. Healing comes from a prayer of faith
2. Offered under the anointing (both of oil and the Spirit)
3. By people of authority in the fellowship (elders)
4. That confession and absolution of sin may be required
5. That we should be righteous and pray fervently like Elijah did
6. That we can expect our prayers to be highly effective just as Elijah's were
7. That prayer can affect the physical realm (drought, rain, growth) and if prayer can do such massive things as this, then it should also heal the sick (implied way of arguing among Jews – if the greater effect is true then the lesser must be also - e.g if a truck can carry 2000 pounds then it can surely carry 50 lbs.)

Putting all this together we find that praying for the sick involves:

- a) Using our delegated spiritual authority (in the name of Jesus) to command healing in the same way that we do when we cast out demons
- b) The structure of healing prayer is generally a command or an invocation focused on a clear result, calling a desired end state into being as if from nothing e.g 'rise up and walk'.

c) This is a prayer of faith, which envisions the healing happening, seeing it first in the spiritual realm and believing in a good God who loves to heal and Who has the power to do so.

d) Confession of sin may be required. (But don't jump to the conclusion that because they are sick, therefore they must have sinned – see John 9:1-5 on this).

e) Those who pray should be mature Christians who live righteous lives and pray fervently.

This kind of praying feels very risky at first and it probably best to 'try it out' in a small group setting at first or in situations where you can 'fail safely'. After all I don't know anyone who heals 100% of the people they pray for. But we don't convert 100% of the people we share the gospel with either (yet we should still share the gospel). Having some healed is way better than having nobody healed and each miraculous healing gives glory to God and to the gospel.

PRAYING IN THE OPPOSITE SPIRIT

Luke 23:33-34 MKJV *And when they came to the place which is called Calvary, they crucified Him and the criminals there, one on the right, and one on the left. (34) And Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do. And parting His clothing, they cast lots.*

Matthew 5:43-45 MKJV *You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." (44) But I say to you, Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you, (45) so that you may become sons of your Father in Heaven. For He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*

One of the most powerful forms of spiritual ministry is when we do not retaliate against evil but instead pray 'in the opposite spirit' so that we love our enemies as Christ commanded us to.

Life is full of negative situations and Satan takes advantage of them. The Devil wants us to become bitter, resentful, hateful and unforgiving because then he can get a foothold in our lives to destroy us spiritually.

Ephesians 4:26-27 ISV *"Be angry, yet do not sin." Do not let the sun go down on your wrath, (27) and do not give the devil an opportunity to work.*

The Devil also wants us to be angry so that we will turn against our friends, family, pastor and church and cause division and defile many:

Hebrews 12:14-15 ASV *Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord: (15) looking carefully lest there be any man that falleth short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby the many be defiled;*

One of the best ways to cope with unjust treatment is to take it to God in prayer, and especially to leave the matter in the Lord's hands: **Romans 12:19 ISV** *Do not take revenge, dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath. For it is written, "Vengeance belongs to me. I will pay them back, declares the Lord."*

1 Peter 2:21-23 MKJV *For you were not called to this? For Christ also suffered on our behalf, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps, (22) He who did no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth, (23) who when He was reviled did not revile in return. When He suffered, He did not threaten, but gave Himself up to Him who judges righteously.*

Here are some examples:

- a) Moses interceding for the rebellious Israelites who constantly complained against him and even wanted to kill him. (Exodus 32:30-35)
- b) Jesus interceding for the soldiers who crucified Him (Luke 23:33-34 above)
- c) Stephen praying for forgiveness for those who stoned him. (Acts 7:60)
- d) Paul praying for the salvation of the Jews which persecuted him. (Romans 10:1-4)

This does not just apply to physical persecution but to other things as well. For instance we can pray that the boss who humiliates us will be blessed or that an annoying neighbor will be saved. Instead of raging and resenting we can be interceding!

Instead of fuming over disruptive social situations pray that their positive opposite may occur. For instance if you are concerned over corruption pray for integrity and transparency. Pray for the salvation of your leaders and your government, for wisdom, grace and protection and that God may place the love of righteousness and truth in their hearts.

No matter how bad the situation is you should not pray with rage, anger, bitterness and unforgiveness in your heart!

1 Timothy 2:8 KJV *I will therefore that men pray ever where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.*

I find that when I get worked up over something it takes me some time to get into position to pray in the opposite spirit – or even to work out what the opposite spirit

is! For instance if a person has shown me rejection and contempt then the opposite spirit is one of reconciliation and honor.

Instead of flaring up and vowing revenge I should show them honor (at least in my prayers). I should desire reconciliation. Now they may not ever reconcile – that is up to them. But if I pray aright then my heart would be free of resentment, anger and bitterness. I would have done the right thing before God and had a testimony before the angels.

Praying in the opposite spirit has the advantage of gradually lifting us out of the 'reactive life' where we let other people 'press our buttons' and make us react. Over time we learn to handle things better, to pause and pray, to be steady in our inner selves. This pays big dividends both personally and professionally because no one wants to be around a person who is easily agitated but everyone enjoys someone who is calm, professional and loving.

You may not be able to stop yourself getting angry, but there is no need to stay angry!

Praying in the opposite spirit vents all the poisonous destructive anger and lets God deal with it. Tell your problem to God and push through until you know you are in the right place spiritually once more. We see this often in the Psalms where King David brings some agonizing conflict with his enemies before the throne of God:

Psalms 25:15-22 MKJV *My eyes are ever toward Jehovah; for He shall pluck my feet out of the net. (16) Turn to me, and have mercy on me, for I am wasted and afflicted. (17) The troubles of my heart are enlarged; bring me out of my distresses. (18) Look on my affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins. (19) Look on my enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred. (20) Keep my soul, and deliver me; let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in You. (21) Let purity and uprightness keep me; for I wait on You. (22) Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.*

Now we need to remember that King David had enormous power and could have simply had his political enemies killed just as many kings of that time would easily have done without a second thought. But David chose God's way and did NOT take his own personal, spiteful revenge. These psalms indicate that David was restraining his anger and his political and judicial power and was leaving the matter with the Lord.

Just a final note, praying in the opposite spirit does not apply if your life or the life of your children is in danger. You should not stay in an abusive or violent situation. There is an appropriate time to go to the police and to protect yourself and your family. I am not encouraging staying in hopeless and dangerous situations. What I am encouraging is reacting to life's provocations in a Christ-like manner.

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