

# Three Good Reasons to Pray

by John Edmiston

## Walking In the Spirit – Series 53 (A Ministry of Eternity Christian Fellowship)

**1 John 4:16-19 MKJV** *And we have known and believed the love that God has in us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. (17) In this is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, that as He is, so also we are in this world. (18) There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear has torment. He who fears has not been perfected in love. (19) We love Him because He first loved us.*

The content, passion and power of our prayers will be affected by the reason that we pray. For instance if we love a sick child we will pray very purposefully and passionately for the healing of that child. Our love will make our prayers powerful. In life, our reasons and motivations drive our actions – including prayer. Love is the greatest of all motivations and lies at the very heart of the spiritual life and the prayer life.

On the other hand, praying for the wrong reasons can make our prayers ineffective:

**James 4:3 MKJV** *You ask and receive not, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it upon your lusts.*

There are at least three very good reasons to pray and they are:

1. Because you love God, His glory, His Kingdom and His will. You want to see God glorified and obeyed on earth as He is in Heaven.
2. Because you love your neighbor as yourself and you want their spiritual, physical and emotional needs to be met by God. You pray for others just as you would like to be prayed for. Because you pray for others passionately you can then also pray for your own needs as well.
3. Because you need God's love to dwell in you powerfully transforming your heart, mind and relationships into His perfect image.

Let's look at these three reasons for prayer in a bit more detail. The driving force of godly prayer is love. God is love and those who pray must pray in love if they are to pray in the Spirit. God is also truth and those who pray must pray in truth, according to God's will and God's Word. God cannot be convinced by lies or be requested to sin.

Things like love, gratitude, faith and thankfulness lie at the very heart of prayer. We are to pray with a pure heart. We are to be a bold and unintimidated people coming before the throne of grace as strong saints with hearts full of love. We are not to be anxious and fearful – for as we saw in 1 John 4:18 (above) perfect love casts out fear!

If we really love God then we will want Him to be honored on every possible occasion, and by every person on the planet. So we will pray that this will occur. We will pray “Hallowed be Thy Name” with all seriousness. His glory will be our passion.

Similarly we will pray: “Thy will be done, Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven” because our love of God will also make us love God's will and to desire His desires and to want what He wants to happen on this earth.

Because we love our neighbors as ourselves we will pray for daily bread, forgiveness of sins and deliverance from evil. Our prayers will be soft and forgiving not harsh and hateful, and we will forgive others as we also would like to be forgiven. We will plead for the lost, pray for the sick, ask wisdom for the government and peace for Jerusalem.

Just saying this much instantly makes most of us (including yours truly) realize that we lack the love that we need in order to pray well. We need to pray for love to fill our hearts and the hearts of others. The apostle Paul has given us a profound prayer that models how to pray for transforming love:

**Ephesians 3:14-21 MKJV** *For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, (15) of whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named, (16) that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; (17) that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, (18) may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, (19) and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God. (20) Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, (21) to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, forever. Amen.*

Paul prayed this prayer because he believed that God would answer it and fill the Ephesians with love. And Paul wrote it into his epistle to the Ephesians so that they (and us centuries later) would pray it ourselves. We are to pray for an abundance of the Holy Spirit so that we will be filled with love and become like Jesus. We are to pray this for ourselves and for the Church. Revival will come when this prayer is prayed and answered.

Spiritual coldness and selfishness lie at the heart of apostasy and fervent praying love lies at the heart of revival. We have to stop praying for our lusts and start praying for our loves.

We have to rethink our prayer lives. I suggest that you get a piece of paper and rule it up into three columns headed Love of God, Love of People, Love Itself respectively and then write your main prayer points into those columns. As you do this you will be reminded of the three good reasons why you are praying. Fill your prayer life with love and your prayers will grow and mature and your prayer life will become all that it should be.

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