

PRAYER

of

PETITION

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I went into the ministry after having shut my automotive business down, but I still had a lot of debt from my company. In the natural, there was no way I could pay back everything I owed. It was too much money. I didn't know what I was going to do. I was bound by my lack of finances, and I felt hopeless. I couldn't fully focus on my new ministry with the looming bills that were piling up on my desk and the many phone calls I was getting from bill collectors who called me at all hours of the day.

If there was anything I needed to learn right then it was how to pray. At the time, I didn't know much about prayer. I certainly didn't know the things that I'm going to share with you in this article. But I was desperate. I needed a miracle. I needed help. I learned about the power of prayer and, specifically, the Prayer of Petition,

early on in my ministry. I started out in 1969, and kept notebooks of the revelations God showed me regarding prayer. Recently, I was looking at the first notebook I kept from 1969 to 1972. I was a young believer then. I had just given my heart to the Lord on February 11, 1969, and I already had a lot of impossible-looking situations in my life.

Many people have never even heard of the Prayer of Petition. Some people may find it too demanding, or a little too specific. Others may find it doesn't fit the small religious box in which they put the topic of prayer. I don't pray because it makes me feel spiritual or so I can be holier-than-thou or because it makes me look or feel good. **I pray to get results.** Friend, I believe in the power of prayer, and I also believe that the Bible teaches us scriptural principles that we can apply to get results in our prayers sooner than we think.

As I devoted my time to learning about the best way to pray, I turned to the best resource—the Bible—and I began to study what it says about prayer. I didn't learn about this topic on my own. I also had the help of godly men like Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth Hagin, Oral Roberts, and T. L. Osborne. I got my hands on everything they had to say about prayer. I was determined to learn how to pray.

I found out the quickest way to get results from an impossible situation was through the Prayer of Petition. This is nothing more than a formal request that you create and write down based on facts found in God's Word about His will. It's a prayer that you present to God that you took the time to carefully and diligently prepare. It's a prayer that you offer in confidence and in thanksgiving. And best of all, It's a prayer that brings about powerful results.

I NEEDED A MIRACLE.
I NEEDED HELP.

When I crafted my first Prayer of Petition because of my dire financial straits, God came through for me. It worked! The prayer I formed based on His Word came to pass and I got delivered from my circumstances. The same thing can happen for you!

Now, this is important: Somewhere along the line, I stopped praying this way. I quit preparing my Prayer of Petition the way God had taught me to. Maybe I got too busy. Maybe I was in too big of a hurry. Who knows exactly why? The bottom line was, I was no longer getting the kind of results I used to get when I carefully and studiously constructed a Prayer of Petition.

I am going to make you a promise. The Prayer of Petition will enhance and energize your prayer life. It will change you. It will make things happen. It will bring you to places you never could have otherwise gone. You know as well as I do that if there is anything the Church needs right now it's an energized prayer life that brings results. The fact is, there are some things that are happening in the spirit world right now that will never manifest in the natural if they are not birthed in prayer. Are you ready for it?

Let's get down to some fundamentals. The Prayer of Petition is a prayer supported by evidence and facts based on the known will of God through His Word. It is based on the apostle Paul's writing in Ephesians:

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints (Eph. 6:10-18).

PRAYER WEAPONS

There are three major weapons that you and I have access to when we pray: The name of Jesus, the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit. These weapons are not carnal, but spiritually strong enough to pull down strongholds and change what seems to be impossible into possible. Are you facing an impossible situation today? I want to remind you of the weapons you have in your arsenal to use in your Prayer of Petition.

- The name of Jesus.

Just think about it. The Bible tells us that the name of Jesus carries power in heaven, in earth and under the earth. It also tells us that every name is subject to the name of Jesus. I don't care what that name is. It may be cancer. It may be financial lack. It may be depression. It may be addiction. If something has a name, then it is subordinate to the name of Jesus.

- The Word of God.

The Prayer of Petition revolves around praying the Word of God. When you pray the Word of God, then you're praying in agreement with God's will. Paul ends his spiritual charge in Ephesians 6 by telling us to take the sword of the Spirit, which is "the Word of God praying." That's all one thought. I don't know if you knew this before, but the Word of God can pray. But it needs a vehicle, a voice, someone to speak it out. In other words, God needs us to pray His Word. Not only that, but the best part is that God promised us in Isaiah 55:11 that the Word of God will not return to Him void. That promise guarantees results!

- The Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God is like the muscle of God. When you call upon the Holy Spirit, He is the one who causes the Word of God to come to pass and to manifest in your life. He's the One who makes it all happen.

THE PRAYER OF PETITION IS DISTINCT

In verse 18 in the Ephesians text that we are studying, we are told to pray "always with all prayer." The Amplified Bible says this a little differently: "Pray at all times (on every occasion, in every season) in the Spirit, with all [manner of] prayer and entreaty." We can gather from this passage that there are different kinds of prayers. I believe that if you don't pray the right kind of prayer in certain situations, you won't get the results you need.

The Prayer of Petition is distinctive from other kinds of prayer. It's used only in specific circumstances and requires specific applications to affect a specific result. It is a prayer that's prayed in faith. It is a prayer that refuses to be moved by what it sees. It is a prayer that will not allow negative circumstances to dictate whether or not you believe that what you prayed will come to pass.

It's important to know what to pray in different circumstances. A lot of times people say, "Let's pray." Well, what kind of prayer are we going to pray? It's like saying, "Let's play sports." We have to know what sport we are playing. You can't play football with baseball rules. You can't play basketball with volleyball rules. There are certain rules that go along with each particular sport. It's the same way with prayer.

The prayer of thanksgiving and praise is a prayer where you are offering thanksgiving to God in advance for what you believe He is going to do. You are praising Him in advance for the answer you believe is on its way. I believe the greatest expression of faith is when you can praise God before you ever see anything happen.

The prayer of dedication and worship is a prayer where you are dedicating yourself to God. It involves a different approach from that of the Prayer of Petition. In the prayer of dedication, it is permissible to say to God, "if it be your will," because you are praying about making a choice to commit to doing whatever you believe God is leading you to do with your life.

Here is an example of a prayer of dedication. When friends of ours felt called

Texas, they weren't that excited about it. After all, New York was their home and their ministry base. Texas seemed so far away and, well, like a different planet than New York. But the Spirit of God started to deal with them about the move, and they began to pray, "Father, we really don't want to move to Texas. In our hearts, we want to stay in New York. But if it be Your will, we

1

An earnest request; entreaty

2

A formal written request

3

Something asked or requested

You'll notice in Ephesians 6:18, Paul encourages us to pray with "all prayer and supplication." Those two words are different. They are not one and the same. It's like putting your shoes and socks on; they both have to do with your feet, but they are two totally different objects and have two totally different purposes.

A formal request addressed to a person or



There are three kinds of prayer recorded in the New Testament:

1*The prayer of thanksgiving and praise***2***The prayer of dedication and worship***3***The prayer that changes things, which includes the Prayer of Petition*

will move." That's the same kind of prayer of dedication Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42).

Because of their willingness to follow His will, and their humble attitude, God made it clear they were to move to Texas, and God has abundantly blessed their obedience. The Prayer of Petition, the prayer that changes things, is based on the known will of God or His Word. You don't need to pray, "If it's Your will, God, please heal me," for instance, because the Scriptures already tell us that by His stripes we are healed. So we already know healing is His will.

THE BASICS

For our study purposes, there are three definitions I want to highlight that characterize the Prayer of Petition. Today's Merriam-Webster dictionary defines petition as:

But Noah Webster, the man who compiled the First Edition of An American Dictionary of the English Language (1828) gave this definition:

1

In a general sense, a request, supplication or prayer; but chiefly and appropriately, a solemn or formal supplication; a prayer addressed by a person to the Supreme Being, for something needed or desired

2

A formal request or supplication, verbal or written; particularly a written supplication .

3

The paper containing a supplication or solicitation

4

To make a request to; make supplication to a superior for some favor or right
A formal request or supplication.

group in authority. The person that we're interested in presenting this petition to is the highest authority in the universe, our Father God.

A formal application in writing made to a court or a place of authority requesting judicial action concerning matters therein set forth. I know, I know. That is a lot of legal-sounding jargon. Our ministry attorney, who serves on our board of directors, knows a lot of about legal terms, and he's shared with me that if you'll study the Bible, you'll find a lot of them in there. This has nothing to do with being "legalistic," but being accurate in one's prayer life.

We're going to approach this particular definition just like a lawyer presents his case before a court. I am able to expound on this in chapter 4 of Prayer of Petition. There I will show you how you research facts and evidence to build your case—your Prayer of Petition—and present it before the throne of God and ultimately win your case, or get your results. When you prepare

your petition with diligence and study, you can have a boldness, confidence and peace that the Judge of all the earth will do what's right.

MY FIRST PRAYER OF PETITION

Carolyn and I have so many examples of Prayers of Petition that came to pass exactly the way we prayed them. Let me share with you the first one we prayed when I started out in ministry.

You already know how difficult it was for us financially when I first went into full-time ministry. I had no idea how I would get out of the mess I had made. I was pretty discouraged at the time I first started learning about this kind of prayer. I had so much debt that it was impossible to stay ahead in the financial game. I didn't know how I was going to get the money to pay back everything and everyone I owed.

So I went to the Word of God and looked at examples where God met the financial needs of His people. I studied and researched and constructed my prayer. I used Scriptures in my prayer because that is how we pray the will of God, through what He says in His Word.

At the top of the page I wrote "Petition for Debt Owed," and I signed and dated the bottom of the prayer. Here is how it read in my notebook.

Father, I come boldly unto the throne of grace that I may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need according to Hebrews 4:16. Jesus said in John 16:23, "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing, Verily, verily, I say unto to you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." Therefore, I come before You with the mighty name of Jesus.

Your Word states in Philippians 4:19, "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (NKJV). I have need of [and here is where

I inserted the amount of money I needed] for the purpose of paying off the debts that I owe in my business. I am doing this in order to be in harmony with Your Word, which says in Romans 13:8 that I am to owe no man anything, but to love him. I am asking You in the name of Jesus to supply that need.

How You do it is not my concern, because right now I cast the care of it all over on You, according to 1 Peter 5:7. Father, I know in order to reap a financial harvest I must first sow a seed. I have three dollars. That's all I have to sow in order to put this spiritual law of giving and receiving in operation which is stated in Luke 6:38. You said, "Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together. . . shall men give into your bosom." Your Word also states in Mark 11:24, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

Therefore, on this day, February the 9th, 1972, at 2:35 pm, I believe my need is met. And I now offer praise and thanksgiving because 1 John 5:14-15 says, "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (NKJV). And if I know You hear me, then whatever I ask I know I have the petitions I've desired of You. So therefore, Father, I thank You now even before I can see it. I believe that my need is met. I thank You for it in the name of Jesus.

That was my Prayer of Petition. Fourteen weeks from that date, every debt I had was paid off! I still had needs, but all my old

debts were paid in full. How did God do it? Supernaturally. I can't even begin to tell you the miracles that God wrought as a result of my praying this Prayer of Petition.

Don't misunderstand me. I'm not telling you that if you pray this same petition, you'll get the same results, and in 14 weeks your debt will be paid off. I'm just giving you an example of a Prayer of Petition that worked in my case.

THE POWER OF CONSISTENCY

A year or two before I started writing my new book, *Prayer of Petition*, my wife, Carolyn, told me the Lord had been speaking to her. He said that we needed to go back and start praying like we used to. So one day we both began to do just that. It's amazing what happens when you get back to the basics and revisit an act that once worked. You know what you'll find? It still works! So many of us forget this basic principle. Sometimes when we try something again that was once successful, we think we've stumbled upon something new.

I don't want any of you to forget the truth of the Prayer of Petition. You can never quit praying like this. Stick with it. It works! I hope you will join me on this journey toward experiencing greater miracles in your life than you have ever experienced before. It's time to get your prayers answered. No matter how bad your situation looks, no matter how impossible, no matter how bleak, no matter how depressing, know that all things are possible. God can perform the miraculous and turn your circumstances around.

Regardless of how dire your situation may seem, be encouraged! There is hope. It's time you learned how to pray the Prayer of Petition and watch God divinely operate in your impossible-looking situation and bring about His best for your life. **AIF**

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