



Update

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Vernon & Martha Hedge

Prayer is Connection with God

One of the greatest hindrances to our current prayer life is **memory**. Remembering what didn't work out. We prayed, we received what we believed God was going to do about our request, we acted on it, but when we looked around it didn't appear that anything happened. One thing I had to learn is that God doesn't move on my imaginary time schedule—the answer to my prayer may be years away as easily as it may be immediate.

My wife Martha received a word from the Lord last November which said, *There is a great shaking coming, but America will not fall. It will **change** but will not be turned away from Me. Pray for strength for the saints; pray for your own endurance. The battle is Mine, **but you must pray**. Assume nothing—I move through prayer. No fear—fear not!* This is a word of what God **intends** to do, but its fulfillment depends on people praying and pulling down strongholds over the nation.

I have been called to a more serious approach to prayer in my personal life. In reading the Scripture and books by champions of prayer, I have received a visitation from the Lord. Let me share just a few things that I hope will inspire you.

True prayer connects. Prayer does not consist of appropriate words, but true prayer is “connecting” with God and carrying on a conversation with Him. In the final analysis, prayer is aligning my thinking with God's

thinking. God's purposes and plans are conditioned on His servants connecting with Him **in** prayer. His glory and His will are conditioned on connecting with Him **during** prayer. “Praying through” is petitioning God for what's in His will until we know Heaven has granted it and then we know it will happen on earth.

E. M. Bounds helps us gain perspective. He said: *Prayer is the easiest and the hardest of all things; the simplest and the sublimest; the weakest and the most powerful; its results lie outside the range of human possibilities—the range of prayers is limited only by the stop the power of God places on it.* (Wording updated)

God initiates. Prayer is important because with every move of God on the earth, He first contacted a person. We probably would not think of many of these **contacts** as prayer. Understanding that prayer is connecting with God, Moses at the burning bush was in a connect session with God. Andrew Murray,

the famous prayer warrior of South Africa, knew that prayer was a connection with God. He said, *God rules the world by the prayers of his saints, that prayer is the power by which Satan is conquered, that by prayer the church on earth has disposal of the powers of the heavenly world.*

We must wait. God works for those who wait for Him. *For since the beginning of the world men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, nor has the eye seen any God besides You, **Who acts** (works) **for the one who waits for Him*** (Isa 64:4). The Hebrew word “wait” in this verse is the idea of being in seclusion, getting away from distraction in order to wait for someone whom you know is coming. God works for those who stay in connection with Him until they know what heaven is going to do.

John Hyde, a missionary to India, interceded during the latter years of his ministry for an average of one soul won to Christ per day. Then he increased it to two, then four per day. If it didn't happen, he went to God to see what happened. He fully knew that he had no power in himself and that there was a price to be paid. He said,

When we keep near to Jesus, it is He who draws souls to Himself through us, but He must be lifted up in our lives; that is, we must be crucified with Him. It is self in some shape that comes between us and Him, so self must be dealt with as

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Jesus was dealt with on the cross. Self must be crucified.

Then indeed Christ is lifted up in our lives, and He cannot fail to attract souls to Himself. All this is the result of a close union and communion, that is fellowship with Him in His sufferings.

God tells us. God tells us what He is going to do and then He requires us to seek Him to do it. When the Jews were in Babylon nearing the time that they were being sent back to Jerusalem, they were concerned that there would not be enough men to repopulate Israel. So, the Lord sent a message through Ezekiel saying, *Like a flock offered as holy sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they shall know that I am the Lord* (Ezekiel 36:38 NKJV). This was God's promise to them. Then He spoke another message through Ezekiel, *Thus says the Lord God: "I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me to do this for them: I will increase their men like a flock"* (Ezekiel 36:37).

God told them what He would do, then He required them to seek Him to do it. "Inquire" is **darash** and means to diligently seek after. "Inquire" results in worship, and worship is internal, centered in connecting with God and fully surrendering to Him.

Here is a practical definition of worship: We are in a state of worship when all we know about ourselves is surrendered to all we know about God at this point in our growth. *By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and **worshiped**, leaning on the top of his staff* (Heb. 11:21). While worshipping, while connecting with

God, he received prophetic insight about Ephraim and Manasseh.

E. M. Bounds said it this way, *While prayers move God to work, at the same time God puts prayer to work. As God has ordained prayer, and as prayer has no existence separate from men, but involves men, then it follows that prayer is the one force which puts God to work in earth's affairs through men and their prayers.*

Jesus said, Ask. *And in that day you will ask Me nothing* (after He had ascended). *Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you* (John 16:23). When we see our world in chaos and the condition of the church in America, that insight is a call to be a watchman for the purposes of the Kingdom of God. Ezekiel was given this instruction, and the spiritual application of it carries over into our time. *So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore, you shall **hear a word from My mouth** and warn them for Me* (Ezek. 33:7). Yes, you are a watchman for the Kingdom of God, and you can hear a word from His mouth.

E. M. Bounds states our marching orders so well, *To no other energy is the promise of God committed as to the energy of prayer. Upon no other force are the purposes of God so dependent as this one of prayer.*

The Word of God expands and swells larger and more powerful on the results of prayer which is the reason prayer is so necessary.

The work of God staggers and fails or advances as prayer puts forth its strength. Prayer puts God's work in His hands and keeps it there. It looks to Him constantly and depends on Him implicitly to further His own cause.

Connecting in prayer is but faith resting in, acting with, and leaning on and obeying God. This is why God loves prayer so well, why He puts all power into its hands, and why He so highly esteems men and women of prayer. (Some wording updated)

Access to God's ear. It is all too easy for us to put our heads in the clouds, grieved by what we see happening in our homeland, but do little or nothing about it through prayer. These words of E. M. Bounds call us to action.

When the Church fails to connect with God in prayer, the cause of God decays, becomes superficial, and evil of every kind prevails in the lives of her members. We cannot carry out the divine plan if we are not connected in prayer with the One who has the plan.

Not to pray is a denial of God, a denial of His existence, a denial of His nature, and a denial of His purposes toward mankind. When you are in connection with God, your prayer is moving heaven, and heaven in turn is moving you. It is only when the whole heart is gripped with the passion of connecting prayer that the life-giving fire descends, for none but the earnest man gets access to the ear of God. (Wording updated)

Join me to intercede for our nation and our local churches. Let us become the earnest men and women who access the ear of God through prayer to carry out His divine plans.

Champions of prayer: E. M. Bounds (1835-1913), *The Reality of Prayer*. Leonard Ravenhill (1907-1994), *A Treasury of Prayer*. John Hyde (1865-1912), *Praying Hyde*. Andrew Murray (1828-1917), *With Christ in the School of Prayer*. ⚙

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