

The Ark
June 29, 2022
Billie Hunt

Acts 10:1 NKJV *There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian ^[a]Regiment, ²a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave ^[b]alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always.*

- He was a Roman of very high rank (a gentile)
- Feared God – that is he believed in the God of the Jews even though he was not allowed to worship with them because he was a gentile
- He commanded his entire household to worship God.
- He prayed (it was probably three times each day)
- He gave alms

³About ^[c]the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, “Cornelius!”

⁴And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, “What is it, lord?” So he said to him, “Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.”

Memorial -there are many memorials mentioned in scripture. Often God would instruct that a stone memorial or monument be erected so the people would remember something.

In our time there are many memorials... I think of two in Washington, D.C.

- The Lincoln Memorial and
- the Martin Luther King Memorial, there is also
- a memorial wall to those who lost their lives I Vietnam.

These memorials cause us to remember and be thankful. BUT THE ANGEL SAID:

THIS MEMORIAL OF CORNELIUS' PRAYERS AND OFFERINGS MADE GOD REMEMBER!!!
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He gave Cornelius specific instructions:

- *⁵ Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter.*
- *⁶ He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea.*
- *He^[d] will tell you what you must do."*

⁷ And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. ⁸ So when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa.

Cornelius obeyed and sent men immediately. However, he could not have known that God was also working on the other end.

Our part is to trust God and move in obedience. God then looks ahead and makes a provision for us:

While the men were on their way Peter grew hungry and went up on the roof to wait for dinner to be prepared. However, God met him there and gave him a vision that not only changed his life, but the entire direction of the church; Three times Peter saw a sheet let down from heaven with unclean animals that Jews were forbidden to eat and three times he was commanded to "kill and eat"... when Peter protested that it was unlawful for him to do so.... God said ""What God has ^[f]cleansed you must not call common."¹⁶ This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

Peter went with the men who were sent to Cornelius and there he shared the Good News of Jesus Christ... AND

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. ⁴⁵ And ^[g]those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with

Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.

Then Peter answered, ⁴⁷ “Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” ⁴⁸ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

- Cornelius got exceedingly, abundantly above all he could ask or think:
- Salvation for his entire household
- He was the first Gentile to be received into the church

HE COULD NOT HAVE KNOWN **WHAT** HIS PRAYERS AND GIVING WERE BUILDING FOR HIM AND FOR HIS ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD!!!

The next time you feel your giving is insignificant, or your prayers are doing no good

REMEMBER...there is a memorial under construction in Heaven.

- With each offering you are adding to that memorial
- With each prayer its building rises higher

KEEP BUILDING, GOD IS PAYING ATTENTION!!!! And He will do exceeding and abundantly above all you could ask or think (Ephesians 3:20)....according to the power at work in you... and that brings me to tonight's subject:

Praying Powerful Prayers

*JAMES 5:16 Amc¹⁶ Confess to one another therefore your faults (your slips, your false steps, your offenses, your sins) and pray [also] for one another, that you may be healed and restored [to a spiritual tone of mind and heart]. **The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working].***

Prayer is the most powerful force in the universe and it is a mystery. I cannot fully explain prayer, but over the years I've learned two secrets of powerful prayer, which I will share with you tonight.

Few even know what prayer is. Prayer is a dialogue with God.

Many treat prayer as a monologue.... Taking their list of petitions to God and then saying amen and leaving....

How sad when we don't wait for the one with the answer... the wise one... the creator of the universe to speak to us and impart His wisdom and direction in our spirit.

Jeremiah 33:3 NKJV Call to Me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things which you do not know.

Jeremiah teaches us that prayer is a two-way proposition.... We call and God answers. With me, usually God answers through His word. He opens scripture to us.

Just as the Bible gives our prayer direction, prayer brings a new dynamic to our Bible reading:

- God speaks to us through His Word and
- we speak to Him through prayer.

Jeremiah 33:3 Call unto me and I will answer thee and show you great and mighty things that you do not know.

Prayer is the talking part of our relationship with the Lord and is vital for our spiritual growth, but we also desperately need to hear from God and that usually comes through scripture.

THIS BRINGS ME TO THE FIRST POWERFUL PRAYER SECRET....LEARN AND PRACTICE PRAYING THE WORD OF GOD.

Isaiah 55:11 NIV. So is my word that goes out from my mouth. It will not return to me empty but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

I don't know exactly when I started Praying the Word, but I can tell you there is great power in returning God's Word to Him....

Whatever my need I know there is a scripture that I can pray that will accomplish my deliverance.

God created the heavens and the earth with His spoken word and I know putting God's Word in my mouth will bring forth miracles in my life and the life of those for whom I pray.

You ask...."How do I know what prayers to pray?"

Research your need and find scriptures that speak to that need.

However, when you are in prayer relationship with God and reading his word regularly.... He often gives you the perfect scripture for your need from His Word:

Exodus 14:14 I will fight for you and you will hold your peace

13. Tell the people, fear not, stand still and see the salvation of God for the enemy who has come against you, you will never see again, no not ever!!!

14. For I will fight for you and you will hold your peace.

I practice meditating and memorizing the word for several reasons:

- To increase my inventory of scriptures to pray
- To energize my brain as I age

Second Secret to Powerful Prayers: PRAYER IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
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Romans 8:26 NKJV Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession ^[a]for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

A Key Lines: “We do not know what we should pray for as we ought” and “He knows the mind of the Spirit and makes intercession according to the will of God”.

When we allow the Holy Spirit to pray through us, He always prays the perfect will of God. People always get nervous when we talk about “praying in the Spirit”, but it is the greatest secret to powerful prayer because the Holy Spirit is a part of the Godhead and He always prays the will of God!

A prayer language is a very precious, powerful and private thing. If you have not experienced the wonder of allowing the Holy Spirit to pray through you, I encourage you to ask Father God to help you yield to His glorious power in this area.

Now look at verse 28... *“And we know, that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”*

All things are not good.... We live in a fallen world and we have an enemy who desires to destroy us (John 10:10) but when we learn to pray effective and especially learn to pray in the Spirit, we will experience God releasing His Glorious Power in our lives and meeting our every need.

IF I HAVE TIME... let me close with by returning to Isaiah 55:8-11

*“For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord.*

*⁹ “For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts.*

*¹⁰ “For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven,
And do not return there,
But water the earth,
And make it bring forth and bud,
That it may give seed to the sower
And bread to the eater,*

*¹¹ So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me ^[a]void,
But it shall accomplish what I please,
And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*

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