

Spiritual Weapons

THE WORD OF GOD IN PRAYER



The next few chapters contain teaching contained in *The Prayer Workshop*.

Spiritual warfare is accomplished when we take everything to God. Ephesians 6:18 says, “praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit...” This says it all.

What does “all prayer” include? It includes thanksgiving, praise, worship, prayer in the Spirit, supplication, and standing on specific promises [the Amplified Bible describes it as resting the whole of our confidence and trust on God].

Unless God specifically leads you to address the devil, don't. Keep your focus on Him and on what He has called you to do.

Ask God to fight your spiritual battles in Jesus' name and trust in His power.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Ephesians 6:12

In this life we aren't playing games. There is a very real battle going on. His Word is a spiritual weapon. In the book of Ephesians, when Paul is teaching the Body of Christ about their armor, he says:

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, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. Ephesians 6:17-18

For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

Learn To Use the Sword

Learn to apply and use the Word of God properly. It is like the difference between children who play at sword fighting and a swordsman who, after much training, has developed his skill. He is a master at what he does. The muscles he uses have become developed and strong. He has become quick, and when he strikes with the sword, he hits his target forcefully. It didn't come overnight, but now, after much training we become master swordsmen with the Word of God! Jesus stood on Scripture when He faced temptation (Matthew 4). The very Word of

God proceeded from His mouth. The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit. Remember this vital part of Scripture: “praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit” (Eph. 6:18). Praying in the Spirit is a supernatural weapon.

There is supernatural power in the Word of God. It is spiritual food, and it is the sword of the Spirit. The enemy must flee at the name of Jesus, and God's Word is a weapon.

Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

Colossians 2:15

One example of prayer using the Sword of the Spirit follows:

Father Your Word says in Psalm 27 that You are the strength of my life. I thank You for it! You are no respecter of

persons Your Word says that You are able to do more than I can ask or even think. There is nothing too hard for You. You are the Mighty God, limitless in power. Your Word will not return void! I praise You for what You are doing in my life (or in the life of the person for whom you are praying).

Can you find the Scripture within the above prayer? There are seven Scriptures mentioned in this prayer. Jesus has already defeated Satan for you through His redemptive work of the cross. We make this living reality through prayer and by the appropriation of God's Word and promises for our own lives (2 Corinthians 10:4; 1 Peter 5:9).

The Power of Prayer

KINDS OF PRAYER



Some of the most important Scriptures and secrets I can share with you are in this chapter. God is alive now. Finding that out will change your life forever. Knowing how great and powerful He is, and reading the following reminders will refresh you and bring it alive again.

2 Chronicles 20:12–22 tells the story of the prophet Johaz. The Spirit of the Lord told him to tell the people not be afraid of the great multitude that was coming against them. It was the Lord's battle and not theirs. When they began to sing and to praise, the Lord caused an ambush against their enemies. This is an exciting example of what

God can do when we look to Him, worship Him, and praise Him! Read the Scripture:

“O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.” Now all Judah, with their little ones, their wives, and their children, stood before the LORD. Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. And he said, “Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: ‘Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God’s. Tomorrow go down against them. They

will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the brook before the Wilderness of Jeruel. You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the LORD is with you." And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the LORD, worshipping the LORD. Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with voices loud and high. So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of

Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper." And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: "Praise the LORD, For His mercy endures forever." Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated. 2 Chronicles 20:12–22

Prayer of the Spirit

When we pray in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit takes over, praying through us according to God's will. The following Scriptures mention this kind of prayer:

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 for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Romans 8:26

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit... Jude 20

Waiting in the Presence of God

I have found “waiting in the presence of God” to be an extremely effective type of prayer that always brings huge results.

While attending Bible college, I had a remarkable experience that I want to share with you. This experience will help you to understand what this type of prayer can do.

One of my teachers was an intercessor. During one of his classes he shared a valuable insight with the class. He told us that the most powerful and greatest kind of

prayer was waiting in the presence of God on behalf of someone or some situation. He said he didn't know why it was so powerful, but that his experience had proven it to be so. I just listened and wondered about it.

“Mom” Goodwin

I left class that day to drive to Mom Goodwin's house. “Mama,” as I called her, was my spiritual mother. She was living in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma at the time. She had moved there after her husband went home to be with the Lord. She and her husband, Rev. J. R. Goodwin, were pastors for forty-eight years in the Assemblies of God churches and were written about in John Sherril's book *They Speak with Other Tongues*. They knew about the moving of the Holy Spirit.

Mom had a ministry of intercession. She would have an experience, dream, or word of knowledge...then pray about it. In the next

few days she would see what she prayed about on the news or in the lives of those they ministered to. They were known for their counseling ministry to ministers.

Frequently, I went to her house to fix her hair, clean her house, cook a meal, or for fellowship and prayer. We spent many hours together. My association with Mom Goodwin was a special blessing to my life. I will use fictional names for my other friends in the story.

I continued driving to her house and twice these thoughts came to mind: “Jennie and John [fictional names] can’t get out of the Middle East. If someone would wait in God’s presence on their behalf, God could get them out of the country.” Mind you, I didn’t know they couldn’t get out of Jordan.

I pulled into the driveway, got out of the car, and walked up to the door where Mom Goodwin met me. Before I even stepped inside, she said these words, “I just got a call from Voralee (I used to rent from her while in Bible

school), and she got a letter from Jennie and they say they can't get out of the Middle East."

I said, "Mom, you won't believe what just happened while driving over here." I told her about the Bible teaching on prayer, and about the thoughts that came to me on my way to her house.

"That sounds like God to me. You better do it."

I was excited. That night I sat in the presence of God on their behalf. I had sought the Lord many times, but this time I just sat there feeling foolish thinking: *You are the mighty God...I am nothing.* I wondered, *Should I read a Scripture? Do I do anything?* I pretty much just sat there in the presence of God, remembering part of Brother Lawrence's book *The Practice of the Presence of God: With Spiritual Maxims*. But I didn't feel anything.

In two days I got word that my friends gained legal permission to leave the Middle

East. Others had been praying. There was one particular guy who told me he was praying every day “in the Spirit” for them. God moved when I waited in His presence. While I’m sure God uses many people and many prayers, in this instance, the test for whether it was of God, is whether or not what God says comes to pass. This was really God’s Spirit speaking to me. Everything God said would happen came to pass when I prayed as He directed me to pray.

The Next Year

Almost a year to the date, Jennie and John told me that John’s brother couldn’t get out of the Middle East. He wanted to come to the United States to go to school, but had been turned down eleven times by Europe and the U.S.

The next morning I had a dream before waking: I felt an intense love in my heart. Then I heard myself speaking to John, “John,

I will pray. God can get your brother out of the country." I awoke with that.

"What will John think if I tell him that? What if that wasn't the Lord?" I thought about it for quite awhile with mixed feelings of excitement, wonder, and concern. I knew that God could do this. The experience was mixed with a tremendous amount of love and the knowledge that God had done it for my friends a year earlier. I decided that I would be careful how I said it, but that I would go and tell them that night.

"John," I began, "I'll pray. God can get your brother out of the country."

"Oh, thank you," he said.

That was it! I went home and did it.

I guess I spent about an hour waiting in God's presence. I also spent some time the next day, hoping to feel like I was done waiting in His presence for the need. In two days, permission was granted for my friend's brother to come to the U.S.

Through this kind of prayer God moves mountains; binds devils; overthrows the powers of darkness; sends His mighty; heavenly armies; and subdues the enemy in the situation. I don't know why it is so powerful. Maybe part of it is spending that time with Him. He is high and lifted up; you are the helpless one coming to Him. When all hope seems gone and you don't know what to do, wait in God's presence on behalf of the situation.

Miracles in Spain

More recently, my youngest son decided to take a trip to Spain with just his backpack to "live off the land." He went through many situations. I prayed all the way through it and there were many day-to-day miracles. Just before he came back this country, some interesting events took place. Here is the condensed version:

Two mornings in a row I woke around 4 AM and felt led by the Holy Spirit to wait in God's presence on his behalf.

Each day, there were specific things I felt I should share with my son.

The first morning I felt led to tell my son about an experience I had at about his age. God caused deep feelings within me that I should not go a certain direction. I had a horrible feeling inside me about taking that direction. For almost a month those intense feelings came and went.

I never experienced anything like that and didn't know what to make of it. I couldn't figure it out. I didn't listen to the "don't do it" feelings, and I followed what I thought, instead of my heart.

I ended up in a bad situation. Because of all that transpired, I realized that God Himself had spoken to me.

I told my son about the experience, and told him that this was the first time God spoke to me that way. I didn't even realize that God could do such a thing, although I loved God and cared about God in my life.

I wished I had known it was God.

After sharing it with my son, I had to tell him that I would trust his wisdom and just asked him to be sensitive to his gut feelings.

The next morning I woke with the knowledge that I was to pray, and here's what happened: Shortly after I began praying, I felt like I should call my son. If I hadn't called him right at that moment I would have missed him. He was on a train headed toward France. He said:

"I just wanted to tell you that it happened to me...I felt inside of me that I should come home. But I want to test it. Nothing like this has ever happened to me."

I thought *Oh no...if God wants him home and he's headed toward France, now what?* I was concerned that he might be headed for trouble.

Soon he was out of cell phone reach. I called a few of prayer partners and asked them to pray, and I went on to work.

The next morning I felt like I should try and call him one more time. I thought, "Perhaps he is now in an area where he can be reached by cell phone."

Here is what I found out happened after he had last talked to me: He had gotten off the train in France and found somewhere to sleep for the night. *Waking, a feeling came over him that he couldn't do this anymore, that he was drained, and that this was the end of him trying to 'live off the land' in Europe.*

I later knew that this was God's voice speaking to him. God had spoken to my son, even though he wasn't sure it was God speaking.

He got on a plane and came back to Madrid, where he was getting ready to board a plane to New York! Thank God he had left money in the bank for a trip home.

The moment I called him, he was indeed in calling range (his cell phone was only for Spain).

“I’m so glad you called me”, he said.

“I was hoping you would. I’m getting on a plane for the United States right now. In fact, if you had waited a minute, we would be taking off and you couldn’t have gotten through to me.”

My son got on the plane and was soon back at work in the states.

God’s Power Displayed

While finishing up this book, a beautiful example of waiting in God’s presence took place.

It was four in the morning and I couldn’t sleep. I am an early morning person anyway.

I went downstairs, ready to have devotions, when the phone rang. It was a friend of mine calling from Michigan. "Jimmy is on life support. He's brain dead and on a respirator. They're going stop using the respirator at eleven this morning."

I couldn't believe it! This is a young man our prayer group had been praying for. His father said that he had been experiencing sleep apnea, and that he just stopped breathing. I told him that I had gotten up to pray and would pray. I made a couple of calls to prayer partners and began to wait in God's presence. It is two hours earlier where I was.

Around six, I felt something although I didn't know what it meant and just remained before the Lord. I prayed a few things as I waited, such as that God would send his angels to the hospital in Michigan, pour out His Spirit, and that if He could minister to Jimmy in his condition, that He would. I asked God, that if he could speak to him

even if in a coma, that He would. “Have mercy on him Lord. Remember him as a child. I ask for your kindness toward him. You are the only One that can help him. Please don’t let him die without being ready.”

Those prayers, are basically all I could think of to pray.

At 8:10, the Scripture came to me, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die...” (John 11:25–26).

I thought... *“that’s nice, I love that Scripture.”* I didn’t realize what was happening. I felt strongly that God wanted me to stay before Him for Jimmy.

Then, from 8:15 to 8:30 the most wonderful thing I’ve ever experienced happened to me. God poured out His powerful, supernatural presence on me. I was filled with gratitude and worship. I praised Him with a supernatural awareness of His goodness,

kindness, compassion. “How wonderful God was to Jimmy. God was Almighty. He was Great!”

Jesus had filled my being with true worship...I wept for joy. I had joy I had never before experienced in my Spirit. It was great. I *knew* Jimmy was okay. There were now only thirty minutes left before the hospital was going to remove the respirator.

I decided I should stay before the Lord until that time. At eleven Michigan time, a tremendous silent presence of God came over me. I just felt like a child. I thought “*Maybe Jesus and His angels are ready to take Jimmy.*”

He was. As the respirator was removed from Jimmy, his dad holding his hand, Jimmy left this life...but stepped into glory with the Lord Jesus.

Prayer Workshop

SIMPLE STEPS



This next chapter will give you the step-by-step method found in *The Prayer Workshop*. In it, you will find out the keys to results in prayer. It's not a matter of using a key to "get what you want" as though there is any selfishness involved. There is no selfishness whatsoever in the following method. I use the word "key" because I found, to my joy, that making a few changes in how I was praying totally regenerated my prayer life and filled my heart and mind with peace.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God,

which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6–7

The above verse is the theme Scripture for *The Prayer Workshop*. This bit of advice from the apostle Paul sums it up: Don't worry, instead, pray about everything. It then adds that the peace of God, which surpasses understanding, will keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. What a promise! Of course, we must pray according to God's will and in line with what Scripture teaches us. But many things *are* God's will.

In the Old Testament, David prayed that God would overthrow and overturn the works of darkness, and in response God sent out His arrows and scattered the foe, lightnings in abundance, and He vanquished them (Psalm 18:14). There are many answers to personal prayers in the Bible. Have you ever wanted to pray but didn't know how to

begin? Or have you tried everything but not received the joy and fulfillment you had hoped for in prayer?

Through these steps, you will become renewed in your excitement for spiritual things and about God Himself, His faithfulness, and the integrity of His Word. If you already have received answers, you will be further inspired and become even more full of faith in God. Through spending time with God in prayer, you will experience the priceless treasure of developing a relationship with God.

The price Jesus paid for our sins at Calvary affords us the opportunity to be born again and to come into the family of God, which is the Christian's greatest gift. The relationship we can then have with our God is the next greatest gift.

Prayer is the key to building a close relationship with God. As you engage in prayer, you will never be the same again.

Prayer need not be tedious. God does not require you to perform a list of prerequisites before He will answer you. Yet there are things that God asks of us.

Before You Start: Forgiveness

Before you pray, you need to be sure there is nothing between you and God. You need to ask for forgiveness of your sins. You also need to forgive others of anything you have against them. How can we ask for forgiveness if we refuse to forgive others their trespasses against us (Luke 6:37 and 17:3)? If I feel like I can't forgive, I ask for His help: "God, I can't forgive, but I ask You to love and forgive in and through me by Your Holy Spirit. Please give me the grace." This will work!

*Leave your gift there before the altar,
and go your way. First be reconciled to
your brother, and then come and offer
your gift. Matthew 5:24*

Enemies to Answered Prayer

Look at the list of hindrances to prayer below. Take time to pray about these issues in your life. Once you've done it, you will be more likely to recognize these things as hindrances in your walk with God. You will want to take each issue to God, removing these obstacles from your life as soon as possible.

Here are some of the enemies and roadblocks to answered prayer:

- Unforgiveness (Matthew 5:24)
- Hatred (Matthew 5:24)
- Doubt (Matthew 17:41; 21:21
Mark 9:14-29)
- Fear (Matthew 14:30)
- Unconfessed sin (Isaiah 59:2)

Now I will show you how to begin your path to freedom from the burden of unforgiveness.

Steps to Freedom

- 1. Confess.** After you examine yourself, ask God to forgive and cleanse you:

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

- 2. Accept forgiveness and cleansing.**

Walk in faith with a conscience void of offense toward God.

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Hebrews 10:22

Noted University Study

Below is an excerpt from *Stanford Medicine*, Volume 16, Number 4, Summer 1999, which is published quarterly by Stanford University Medical Center:

The Art and Science of Forgiveness

If you feel good but want to feel even better, try forgiving someone.

—FREDERIC LUSKIN, PH.D.

For centuries, the world's religious and spiritual traditions have recommended the use of forgiveness as a balm for hurt or angry feelings. Psychotherapists have worked to help their clients to forgive, and some have written about the importance of forgiveness. Until recently, however, the scientific literature has not had much to say about the effect of forgiveness. But that's starting to change. While the scientific study of forgiveness is just beginning—the relevant intervention research having been conducted only during the past ten years—when taken together, the work so far demonstrates the power of forgiveness to heal

emotional wounds and hints that forgiveness may play a role in physical healing as well.

What is intriguing about this research is that even people who are not depressed or particularly anxious can obtain the improved emotional and psychological functioning that comes from learning to forgive. This suggests that forgiveness may enable people who are functioning adequately to feel even better. Published studies on forgiveness have shown the importance of forgiveness training on coping with a variety of psychologically painful experiences. Studies have been conducted with adolescents who felt neglected by their parents, with women who were abused as children, with elderly women who felt hurt or uncared for, with males who disagreed with their female partners' decisions to have abortions and with

college students who had been hurt. These studies showed that when given forgiveness training of varying lengths and intensities, participants could become less hurt and become more able to forgive their offenders.

Receiving Forgiveness

Forgiving others is powerful, according to the above study, and it brings emotional and physical benefits to your life. It also can benefit the lives of those being forgiven. Perhaps there can now be the opportunity for healing in a once severed relationship.

Forgiveness gives us a clear conscience and the associated peace of mind that it brings. “Forgive, and be forgiven” is good advice.

Let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard

*your hearts and minds through Christ
Jesus. Philippians 4:6–7*

A Prayer Workshop to Get Started!

- 1.** Confess and receive forgiveness for any sin, including unforgiveness, doubt, unbelief, fear, and anything else that might be between you and God (1 John 1:9).
- 2.** List your requests. “...Let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6).
- 3.** Take authority over the enemy. Pray that God will “overthrow and overturn the works of darkness” (2 Chronicles 25:8).
- 4.** Pray in detail. Make specific (scriptural) requests to the Father in Jesus’ name. You can always add “If it be Your will” on the end of a prayer if you don’t know the will of God.

5. Place your trust in His specific promises. Know that it is faith in Who God is, in His integrity, and in the integrity of His Word in which we rest our faith.
6. Thank God and praise Him for what He *is doing according to His will* “...by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6).

What Is GOD’S Part?

God is faithful. His promises are true (1 Corinthians 1:20). His Word is true (Romans 3:4). He will watch over His Word to perform it (Isaiah 55:11). So, when you find promises upon which to rest your faith, God is pleased. He will hear and answer you. You must realize that God has more love and understanding for His creation than we can possibly comprehend. He is also more powerful than we can grasp.

Remember

- There is joy in knowing that God is alive and well and that He is interested in you! He wants to answer your prayers. Did you know that in two of the gospels it says, “Everyone who asks receives” (Matthew 7:8, Luke 11:10)?
- Jesus said to ask and we would receive that our joy be full (John 16:23–24).