

BELIEVING PRAYER OF A PRAYING CHURCH

Acts 12:12-16

12 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying. 13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. 14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. 15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel. 16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished.

Believing prayer is never surprised.

The church gathered in the home of John Mark in Acts 12:12 was involved in "believing prayer." Against all odds they prayed on. Even when they did not believe for a miracle they persisted, they prayed on, they prevailed knowing that God Was Able to do better and more than they could ask – He did!

The Only Impossibility Is Pleasing God Without Faith

Prayer is, and always should be, the core of the church. It is the umbilical cord that ties us to the Lord Jesus. Jesus said, "Without me you can do (accomplish) nothing." Paul further expounds this truth in Hebrews 11 when he declares that it is virtually impossible to please God without being an on-fire prayer warrior. Listen...

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Hebrews 11:6

Conditions for Answered Prayer

To put it another way, without being involved in believing prayer you cannot expect that you can approach God, nor receive any reward from Him. Let's look at the conditions of believing prayer:

I. Believe that He is...

1. He is Able - Jeremiah 32:17,27
2. He is Sovereign - I Chronicles 29:11
3. He is Still on the Throne - Ephesians 1:18-21
4. He is Listening - Psalm 34:15

II. Believe he rewards "diligent seekers"

1. He Answers - Isaiah 59:1-2
2. He Does More Than We Ask - Ephesians 3:20
3. He Rewards Us - Luke 11:9-13

Are You a “Believer?”

Hope in the human sense is not faith. It is wishful thinking, or wishful praying, or wishful asking. God is not a wishing well that we should cast our prayer coins at his feet and hope for the best. Wishful praying is not praying in faith. It is not part of Jesus' promise that "when you pray, believe that you shall have..." Jesus meant "know assuredly" that you will have, not wish hard enough and maybe God will hear you.

BELIEVING PRAYER

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” – James 5:18 KJV

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective” – James 5:18 NIV

Faith is Essential - Hebrews 11:6 1) Believe He is 2) Believe He rewards those who diligently seek Him.

Faith is Demonstrable - Show me your faith. Faith without works (or evidence) is dead. Show your faith and its work. James 2:17-26 How? Be specific, persistent. Believe.

Faith is Tangible - Anchored on God’s Word, believing for something. Faith is always related to the “promises” - the Word of God and the work of God.

A GUIDE TO BELIEVING PRAYER

1. Be Specific

Matthew 20:30-34 Two blind men approach Jesus with shouts. Jesus asks, “What do you want me to do for you?”

Matthew 18:19 Teaches us to agree together with 2-3 people “as touching any thing” then ask and it will be done.

2. Be Persistent

James 1:7-8 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavers is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man *is unstable* in all his ways.

Luke 11:8-13 Jesus teaches us to be persistent before God with our needs. That is, we are to be urgent about it.

Prayer is “dominant desire.” What do you really want God to do? What do you long for?

3. Be Absolutely Convinced (Believe)

Mark 5:36 When a ruler of the synagogue came to Jesus for his daughter the news was that she was already dead. But Jesus said, “*Be not afraid. Only believe.*” Can you believe God when it appears all is lost?

Mark 9:23-24 A man with a demonized epileptic son came to Jesus crying for help. Jesus said, “*If you believe, all things are possible to him that believes.*” The man responded in desperation. “Lord, I believe - help my unbelief!”

Mark 11:23 Jesus again challenged his disciples when they saw him wither a fig tree with his words. “*Have faith in God. For I say to you that whoever shall say to this mountain, Be removed and cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he says shall come to pass, he shall have whatever he says. Therefore whatever things you desire when you pray, believe that you will receive them, and you will have them.*”

What Are You Believing God to Do?

Don't pretend you have faith when you really don't believe it is going to happen. That is praying a lie. Exercise real faith in God's goodness and promises. This kind of praying takes more time. One must come boldly to the throne of grace, but carefully and sincerely.

Be specific in the request that you *long for*, *believe God wants*, and *are willing to persist for*.

In your life and family

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

In your church.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

In the lives of others.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Take some time to consider your "faith requests." Be sure they are from the heart, not from the top of your head. You must long for them, believe for them, and plead for them. You must be willing to prevail for them, agonize over them, then search and claim God's promises for them.

- Are you really believing God to do as He promises, or are you just asking and hoping?
- Are you praying according to the will of God?
- Are you praying for God's purpose, God's kingdom or your own?