



THE SECRET OF EFFECTUAL PRAYER

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





The Secret of Effectual Prayer

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The Secret of Effectual Prayer

SERMON REFERENCE: Romans 11:36

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2072

Everything begins with God. He is the source of all things, and everything leads back to Him. Everywhere we look, we see that Jesus is the power, preserver, and purpose of creation. Romans 11:36 says, “For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.”

When we understand that prayer is a cycle—that, like everything else in this world, it revolves around Jesus—we will learn the secret of effectual prayer.

The origin of prayer is rooted in the purposes of God.

God has given us the privilege of working with Him. Prayer creates a special bond with our Creator, who designed us to depend upon Him.

Prayer is also God's way of disciplining us; any prayer that is not rooted in God's will does not come to fruition.

Adrian Rogers says, “Prayer does not bend God's will to fit our will; prayer finds the will of God and gets in on it.”

The operation of prayer relies on the power of God.

God gives us the desire to pray; as sinful creatures, we have a natural inclination not to pray. Once we are saved, God puts His Spirit in our hearts which stirs up the desire to pray.

He also gives us direction in our prayers: guiding us in what we should ask for and leading us to know the will of God.

We can't conjure up faith, or make ourselves believe by our own strength. The dynamic of faith comes by hearing the Word of God; when He speaks in our alone time with Him, our faith grows.

Finally, the objective of prayer is the praise of God.

The purpose of prayer is to glorify God. When we become interested in His glory over our own personal glory, we'll see our prayers answered.

Adrian Rogers says, “Prayer goes into God's presence to carry something away. Praise goes into God's presence just to stay there forever and ever.”

Life Application

The secret of effectual prayer is that it happens by God, through God, and to God. Spend some time in prayer today and ask God to direct your prayers, so that you may know His Will. Spend some time praising Him today, as well; stay in His presence and seek His glory.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Today's message is about "The Secret of Effectual Prayer."
 - i) But it is no secret because the Word of God tells us how to pray effectually.
- b) There is a Divine Triangle.
 - i) The Divine Triangle is not a myth; it is a miracle.
 - ii) It brings things into being.
 - iii) Romans 11:36
 - (1) This verse talks about the sovereignty of Almighty God.
 - (a) Everything begins with God.
 - (i) He is the source of all things.
 - (b) Everything is accomplished through God.
 - (i) He is the force of all things.
 - (c) Everything returns back to God.
 - (i) He is the course of all things.
 - (2) All things are from Him, through Him, and to Him.
 - (3) Almighty God is sovereign.
 - (a) This is the theme of the Bible.
 - (i) How does the Bible start?
 - 1. Genesis 1:1
 - 2. All things are from Him or of Him.
 - (ii) How does the Bible end?
 - 1. Revelation 1:8
- c) All things come from Him and go back to Him.
 - i) It is true in the material world.
 - (1) Colossians 1:16-17
 - (a) This is a restatement of Romans 11:36.
 - (2) Jesus is the power of creation.
 - (a) Jesus put it all here.
 - (b) He is the reason for and the producer of creation.
 - (3) Jesus is the preserver of creation.
 - (a) "Consist" in Colossians 1:17 means that they adhere together.
 - (b) He keeps the molecular structure of this universe from flying apart.
 - (i) Every atom, by nature, would want to fly apart except that God has built into them an attraction that holds them together.
 - (ii) He has built the gravitational force into the universe.
 - (c) What some call the law of nature is actually the power of Jesus.
 - (i) Jesus is the one who keeps it all together.
 - 1. He is the glue of the galaxies.
 - (ii) There is no natural law; it is the laws of God that nature obeys.



- (d) Isaiah 40:26
 - (i) God has a name for every star in the universe.
 - 1. Jesus made all of that for His glory.
- (4) Jesus is the purpose of creation.
 - (a) “For” in Colossians 1:16 has the idea of progress toward an object.
 - (i) It has an idea of motion toward an object.
 - (b) The universe came from Him, is sustained by Him, and everything comes back to Him.
 - (i) People ask, “What is the world coming to?”
 - 1. It is coming to Jesus.
- ii) It is true in the spiritual universe.
 - (1) How is someone saved?
 - (a) Romans 11:36
 - (2) Salvation began in the heart and mind of God.
 - (a) Ephesians 1:4
 - (b) Christ died before the foundation of the world in the heart and mind of God.
 - (c) God knew us before we were born.
 - (d) Your salvation did not originate with you.
 - (e) It is of Him.
 - (i) It originated with God.
 - 1. 1 John 4:19
 - (f) It is through Him.
 - (i) Jesus came to this Earth, suffered, bled, and died on the cross.
 - 1. With His blood, He paid the price of our salvation.
 - (g) It is to Him.
 - (i) He did all of this so that we could know, love, worship, and honor Him.
 - (3) It is true in sanctification.
 - (a) Romans 11:36
 - (b) It is God who gives us the ability to live the Christian life.
 - (c) Holiness is not the way to Jesus.; Jesus is the way to holiness.
 - (4) It is true about stewardship.
 - (a) We cannot give Him anything.
 - (i) 1 Chronicles 29:14
 - 1. Anything we give to Him, He gave to us.
 - a. Whether it is salvation, sanctification, stewardship, or service.
- d) In today’s message, we will learn three things about effectual prayer:
 - i) The origin of effectual prayer.
 - (1) It is of Him.
 - ii) The operation of effectual prayer.
 - (1) It is through Him.
 - iii) The objective of spiritual prayer.
 - (1) It is to Him.
- e) When we learn that prayer is a cycle and that all things are of Him, through Him, and to Him, then it will help us to understand how to pray effectively.

**2) THE ORIGIN OF EFFECTUAL PRAYER ROOTS IN THE PURPOSE OF GOD**

- a) The prayer that gets to Heaven starts in Heaven.
 - i) Romans 11:36
- b) Prayer is God's way of getting Heaven's will done on Earth.
 - i) It is not man's way of getting man's will done in Heaven.
 - ii) We are just closing the circuit.
 - iii) God is a sovereign God.
- c) Why has God allowed us to pray?
 - i) God knows what we need before we ask Him, so why should we ask God for what He already knows we need?
 - ii) Could God do it without our praying?
 - (1) He will not do it without our praying; and if we do not pray, we will not have.
 - (a) James 4:3
- d) There are three reasons for prayer:
 - i) God has given us the privilege of working with Him.
 - (1) God has called us laborers together with Him.
 - (a) 2 Corinthians 6:1
 - (2) We work together with God as we work with one another, and we work with God in administrating the universe.
 - (3) God wants to move through His people.
 - (a) He can do it without us, but we could not do it without Him.
 - (i) There is joy in this fellowship and cooperation with Almighty God.
 - ii) Prayer bonds us with God.
 - (1) If we did not pray, then many of us would never think about God.
 - (a) We would take blessings for granted.
 - (2) God wants us to be perpetually dependent upon Him, so He teaches us to pray.
 - iii) Prayer is the way of disciplining us.
 - (1) Psalm 66:18
 - (2) One thing that can keep us closer to God more than anything else is the knowledge that if our hearts are not clean and pure, then our prayers will not get through.
- e) The origin of prayer is the purpose of God.
 - i) God has a purpose in His heart.
 - ii) He wants to work in us through prayer.
 - iii) Prayer did not begin with us.
 - (1) We don't name it and claim it; it has to begin with God.
 - (2) Luke 5:11
 - (a) In verse 5, the disciple's response began with "We" and ended with "nothing."
 - (i) Anything that begins with "we" ends with "nothing" spiritually.
 - (b) We have to get God's Word.
 - (i) In order for us to be fruitful in anything that we do, we have to get it from God.
- f) The reason why our prayers are not answered is because we are not rooted in the purposes of God.
 - i) Prayer does not bend God's will to fit our will.
 - ii) Prayer finds the will of God and gets in on it.
- g) Romans 11:36



3) THE OPERATION OF EFFECTUAL PRAYER RELIES ON THE POWER OF GOD

- a) Not only is prayer of God, but it is also through Him.
- b) God gives us the desire to pray.
 - i) We do not have the natural desire to pray.
 - (1) We have a natural desire not to pray.
 - (a) Romans 3:11
 - (b) Romans 8:5-7
 - (i) The fleshly mind is at war with God.
 - ii) There is nothing in us by nature that would cause us to seek God.
 - iii) But when God puts His Spirit in us, He gives us the desire to pray.
 - (1) Romans 8:15
 - (2) God puts His Spirit into our hearts and lets us know that we have been adopted into His family.
 - (a) Then, prayer is as natural as a little child saying, "Daddy Father."
 - c) God gives us the direction to pray.
 - i) We do not know by our own nature what to ask for.
 - ii) Philippians 4:19
 - iii) Sometimes we want things that we do not need.
 - (1) Sometimes we ask God to give us something that is not best for us.
 - iv) Sometimes we need things that we do not want.
 - (1) Only the Holy Spirit of God is going to show us how to pray for things that we may not want but that we really need.
 - v) Sometimes we want things that we already have.
 - (1) Sometimes we are asking God to give us what we already have, and we need to give it back to Him.
 - (a) 1 Chronicles 29:14
 - vi) The Holy Spirit gives us the direction to pray so that we can know the will of God.
 - (1) Matthew 16:19
 - (a) In this verse, the Lord is speaking to the church corporately and as individuals.
 - (b) In the Greek, this verse says, "Whatever you bind on Earth has already been bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on Earth has already been loosed in Heaven."
 - (i) It has already begun with God.
 - (ii) Now, we need to ratify on Earth that which is done in Heaven.
 - (2) We need to look to Heaven and find out what God's plan is in Heaven, and then transfer it to Earth and loose it on Earth.
 - (a) Manley Beasley: "The secret of success in the Christian life is to find out what God is up to and join Him."
 - (b) So many times, we ask God to rubberstamp our plans and bless this mess.
 - vii) How did Jesus pray?
 - (1) John 5:19
 - (a) He looked into Heaven to see what the Father is doing and what the Father wants; that is what Jesus asked for.
 - viii) Worship is placing ourselves on the altar until we are consumed.
 - (1) Romans 12:1
 - (2) A sacrifice is to be placed on the altar.
 - (a) In Old Testament times, the sacrifice would be consumed by fire.



- (i) If the sacrifice was not a holy sacrifice, then it would not be consumed.
 - 1. It would be repugnant; God would refuse it.
 - (ii) But if it was a holy sacrifice, without spot or blemish, then it was consumed.
 - (3) We have not really worshipped until we have placed ourselves on the altar, and God has consumed us with holy fire.
 - (a) Romans 12:1-2
 - (i) When we worship with loving, lingering prayer, God consumes and transforms us until we have the mind of Christ.
 - 1. We look into Heaven and see things that are in Heaven.
 - a. We see what is bound in Heaven, and we bind them on Earth.
 - b. We see what is loosed in Heaven and loose it on Earth.
- d) God gives us the dynamic to pray.
 - i) We must pray in faith.
 - (1) That faith comes from Him.
 - (2) Romans 11:36
 - ii) Faith cannot be conjured up, and we cannot make ourselves believe.
 - (1) But when we hear God, spend time alone with Him, and worship Him, then faith wells up in our hearts.
 - iii) Romans 10:17
 - (1) The word “hearing” in this passage means not just hearing words but hearing God.
 - (a) When God speaks to us, we then find faith in our hearts.
 - (b) Many of us just run into God’s presence and say, “Listen, Lord, Your servant is speaking,” rather than, “Speak, Lord, Your servant is listening.”
 - iv) We don’t get enough prayers answered because we don’t really worship God.
 - (1) We don’t really see what God wants to do in Heaven.
- e) Prayer is of Him, through Him, and to Him.

4) THE OBJECTIVE OF EFFECTUAL PRAYER IS THE PRAISE OF GOD

- a) Romans 11:36
- b) God is in the business of getting glory to Himself.
 - i) The reason many times that our prayers are not answered is that we are not interested in the glory of God.
 - (1) We are interested in our own glorification.
 - ii) When we get interested in the glory of God, we will see prayers start being answered.
 - (1) James 4:2-3
 - (a) We are to ask for the glory of God.
- c) It is prayer and thanksgiving that complete the triangle, “Of Him, through Him, and to Him.”
 - i) Prayer asks.
 - ii) Thanksgiving says, “Thank You.”
 - (1) Thanksgiving enjoys the gift.
 - iii) Praise enjoys the Giver when we just simply praise the Lord.
 - iv) Prayer goes into God’s presence to carry something away.
 - v) Thanksgiving and praise go into God’s presence just to stay there forever.
- d) John 14:13
 - i) We pray in the name of Jesus so that God will be glorified.



- e) When we pray, do not come with the brass of our emotions, come with both hands filled with the incense of Jesus' name.
 - i) Ask in His name.
 - ii) It really does not matter how we feel.
- f) It is not what we do, but it is God's grace that gets our prayers answered.
 - i) It is not our sweat; it is His blood.
 - (1) We are to pray in the name of Jesus.
 - ii) This does not mean that we ought not to do right, but there comes a time when we don't offer our emotions and performance; we stand on His promises.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) Prayer is the Holy Spirit finding a desire in the heart of the Father, putting that desire into your heart, and then sending it back to Heaven in the power of the cross and Jesus' name for the glory of God.
 - i) Romans 11:36
 - ii) When you learn to pray that way, you will pray as Jesus prayed.
 - (1) And you will see God do wonderful things in prayer.
- b) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- c) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Be finding please Romans chapter 11 and we're going to spend most of our time this morning in one verse, verse 36. We're talking today about, "The Secret of Effectual Prayer." Now I don't know why we like to put the word secret in our sermon titles, but it's no secret. It's right here in the Word of God how to pray and pray effectually. Down in the Atlantic Ocean there is a great mass of water bounded on three sides that is called the Bermuda Triangle, and some call it the Devil's triangle because in that great, massive part of the Earth, the ocean's surface, it is said that airplanes fly into that Bermuda Triangle and disappear. Ships sail into that vast place of water and they disappear. The Bermuda Triangle, many people say it's a great mystery. I think it's a myth. I don't think there's anything really to it.

I don't want to talk to you today about the Devil's Triangle. I want to talk to you about the Divine Triangle. The Divine Triangle is not a myth; it's a miracle. It doesn't cause things to disappear; it brings things into being. And that Divine Triangle is found right here in the Word of God. Look at it in Romans 11 verse 36, "For of Him and through Him, and to Him, are all things." Now friend, that is a wonderful, wonderful thought. If God will write that upon your heart, "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory forever." Now what this verse is doing is talking about the sovereignty of Almighty God. It says everything begins with God. He is the source of all things. Everything is accomplished through God. He is the force of all things. And everything returns back to God. He is the course of all things. All things are from Him and through Him and to Him. Almighty God is sovereign. You see, this is really the theme of the Bible.

How does the Bible start? Well, Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God." All things are from Him, or of Him. And then how does the Bible end? In the book of the Revelation chapter 1 and verse 8, "'I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending,' saith the Lord, 'which is, and was, and is to come.'" It's the theme of the Bible. All things, friend, come from Him and they go back to Him. **It's true in the material world.** How did this material world get here? Let me give you a verse of Scripture. Just put it in your margin by this verse and you can find it in Colossians 1 verses 16 and 17 if you're fast enough to turn to it, but here's what it says. It just illustrates this verse. Listen to it, "For by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers. All things were created by Him, and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." That's just a re-statement: "Of Him, through Him, and to Him are all things."

You see, **Jesus is the power of creation.** How did everything get here? Well, Jesus put it all here. Every time I see an atheist I think friend, don't palm yourself off as an intellectual. You know sometimes atheists want to strut a little bit like they're too intellectual to believe in God. An atheist believes nothing times nobody brought about everything. Now, you think about it. It's really kind of ridiculous. Sir Fred Hoyle, of the British Academy of Science, a leading mathematician and astronomer, shook up a lot of people when he said this. And let me give you what Sir Fred Hoyle had to say about this vast universe in which we live. I quote, "We must now admit to ourselves that the probability of life arising by chance, by evolution," now listen to this, "is the same probability of throwing six on dice five million consecutive times." And he goes on to say, "Let's be scientifically honest with ourselves. The probability of having life arise to greater and greater complexity in organization by chance is the same probability of having a tornado tear through a junkyard and form out the other end a Boeing 747." And then he goes on to say, now this is a scientist, "Random and impersonal chance



does not create complexity and design. Random and impersonal chance does not create complexity and design.” Jesus is the reason for and the producer of creation, and He’s also **the preserver of creation** because this verse that I just read to you said of the Lord Jesus, “By Him all things consist.” That is, they adhere together. He’s what keeps the molecular structure of this universe from flying apart. Every atom by nature would want to fly apart except that God has built into every atom, an attraction that holds it together, and He has built the gravitational force into our universe, and what some call the law of nature is but the power of Jesus, who is the one who keeps it all together. He is the glue of the galaxies.

It’s the Lord Jesus who fuels the sun with its power. It’s the Lord Jesus who veils the moon with its beauty. It’s the Lord Jesus who guides the planets through the universes. There’s no natural law. It’s the laws of God that nature obeys. Let me give you another verse. Just put this one down in your margin and meditate on it. What a great verse it is. Isaiah 40 verse 26. He tells us to go out now and just look at the skies on a starry nights. Listen to it, “Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things.” Now, when you look at the stars you say, “Who did that?” Look, “Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number; He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for He is strong in power. Not one faileth.”

Joyce and I took a vacation down on a little island in the Bahamas and there was no television there, no radio, nothing really, no air conditioning. Just a little place there on the beach; we loved it. And there was a dock out in front and at night time Joyce and I’d just go down and get flat on our backs on the dock and just look up at the stars and just lie there and talk and marvel at the stars in the universe. Now listen, the Bible says in this verse that, “He calls them all by names.” Have you ever thought about that, that God has a name for every star in the universe?

Now let me just give you a little astronomy here. If you were to hijack a light beam you know how fast you’d have to travel? 186,282 miles per second. Well, you say, “How fast is that? Well, blink your eyes. Just blink them like that. All right, in that time light would have gone around the equator all the way around the earth seven times, in the time you blinked your eyes. That’s how fast it travels. Traveling at the speed of light it takes you eight minutes to get to the sun. Now, the sun is 93 million miles away, so light coming 93 million miles only takes it 8 minutes to get here, but now we’re talking about the stars, and He calls all the stars by name. The closest star, the closest star to us is Alpha Centauri, which is four-and-a-half light years away. Now what is a light year? Well, that’s the distance it takes light to travel, traveling at 186,000 miles per second. 186,000 miles per second it takes light four-and-a-half years, four-and-a-half years traveling that fast to get to the nearest star. Now how far is that in miles? How far is a light year in miles? Well, a light will travel in a year 6 trillion miles. Now, so four-and-a-half light years away; that’s 27 trillion miles. That’s the closest star.

Now folks, there are stars, billions of stars in our galaxy. As a matter of fact, our galaxy is the Milky Way, and it is estimated there are 100 to 400 billion stars in the Milky Way, and from one rim of the Milky Way to the other rim of the Milky Way would be 100,000 light years, going just from one rim of our Milky Way to the other. Who made all of that? Jesus did. Jesus made all of that for His glory.

Albert Einstein as a young man in 1932 was an atheist, but in 1950 he became a believer in a higher power. Albert Einstein became what we would call today a theist. That is, he said, “All of this could not have happened. All of the mathematical laws and precision in the universe, the vastness, it could not happen by chance. There has to be a higher intelligence.” I wish he had known that higher intelligence is Jesus.

You see, Jesus is the producer of creation. Jesus is the preserver of creation. By Him all things consist. And **Jesus is the purpose of creation.** Our verse I gave you, Romans 11:36, says, “All things were made by Him, and for Him.” And the word for is the Greek preposition “ice” and it has the idea of progress toward an object. It has



an idea of motion toward an object. You see, look, the universe came from Him, the universe is sustained by Him, and everything comes back to Him. People ask this question; "What's the world coming to?" It's coming to Jesus, "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things." It's true in the material universe.

Friend, it's true in the **spiritual universe**. Think about the things that we have in the spiritual universe. How did you get saved? "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things." **Your salvation began in the heart and mind of God.** The Bible says, "Before He swung this planet into space, you were in His heart and in His mind." And Christ died before the foundation of the world in the heart and mind of God, and God knew you before you were born, and your salvation did not originate with you; it originated with God. First John 4:19, "We love Him because He first loved us." It is of Him. And then it is through Him. Jesus came to this Earth, suffered, bled, and died for us on the cross and with His rich, red, royal blood paid the price of our salvation. And then it is to Him. Why did He do all of that? So that we could know Him and love Him and worship Him and honor Him. It is true in salvation. "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things."

Not only is it true in salvation, but **it's true in sanctification**. Once you get saved, how do you live the Christian life? "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him." You see, it is God that gives you this ability to live the Christian life. One of the greatest lessons I've ever learned about being a Christian is this; that holiness is not the way to Jesus; Jesus is the way to holiness. "For it is of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things."

Not only is it true about salvation, not only is it true about sanctification, **it's true about stewardship**. You talk about giving something to Jesus. This morning we're going to take an offering. Well, let me tell you something. In the truest sense you won't give Him anything, did you know that? Why? Read First Chronicles 29:14, "Of Thine own have we given unto Thee." Fathers' Day is coming pretty soon and some little boys will go get from their daddies some money to go buy their daddy a present. You see, listen, "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him." "Of thine own have we given unto thee." Anything we give to Him, He gave to us; everything; whether it be salvation, whether it be sanctification, whether it be a stewardship, whether it be service, it's, "Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things."

Now, we said we're going to talk about prayer. Let's see how this relates to prayer. There are three things I want you to learn about prayer this morning, effectual prayer. I want you to see the origin of effectual prayer; "It is of Him." And then I want you to see the operation of effectual prayer; "It is through Him." And then I want you to see the objective of spiritual prayer; "It is to Him." When you learn that prayer is a cycle, that like everything else in the material world or the spiritual world, that, "All things are of Him, through Him, and to Him," it will help you to understand how to pray effectual prayer.

Now listen to me very carefully, we are going to talk about effectual prayer. What is **the origin of effectual prayer? It roots in the purpose of God.** Now that's worth writing down. Effectual prayer, the origin of effectual prayer, is this; it roots in the purpose of God. Now here is the great secret of effectual prayer. Listen carefully. The prayer that gets to Heaven starts in Heaven. Now the prayer that gets to Heaven starts in Heaven for, "Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things." You see, prayer is God's way of getting Heaven's will done on Earth, not man's way of getting man's will done in Heaven. What we do when we pray is just close the circuit. "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things." God is a sovereign God.

Why has God allowed us to pray? Have you ever thought about that? Prayer is so mysterious. I mean God knows what we have need of before we ask Him so why should I ask God for what He already knows I need? And God loves me. Why should I have to persuade a loving God to bless me or give me what I need? What is the purpose of prayer? Could God do it without our praying? He will not do it without our praying and if we don't pray we will not have, for the Bible says in James 4 verse 3, "We have not because we ask not." What is the reason for prayer?



Well, let me just give you three of them right here for just a moment. You see, God has given us **the privilege of working with Him**. Now, God in His administration of the universe has called us as laborers together with Him. The Bible tells us very clearly in Second Corinthians chapter 6 and verse 1, "We are workers together with Him." Now you think about it, that Almighty God said to Adrian, "Adrian, I want you to help Me run the universe." You say, "That's arrogance." Well, then blame the apostle Paul. He said, "We're workers together with Him." We work together with God as we work with one another, and we work with God in administrating the universe. God wants to move through His people. Well why would He do it that way? I've often used the illustration of flying an airplane. I don't know how to fly an airplane, but there have been times when I've been up with the pilot and he would say to me, "Do you want to fly this airplane?" I say, "Sure." So he turns the airplane over to me. He's sitting there alongside of me, of course, and he's got his hands on his controls. I have mine on the other controls and I'm flying the airplane. Now folks, I want to make it very clear he could do it without me, I couldn't do it without him, but there's the joy of that fellowship as he says, "I'm going to let you help me fly this airplane." God says, "I want to let you help Me to run the universe," and the way we've going to do it is through prayer. And so there is that cooperation with Almighty God. When we pray we have the privilege of working with God. And then because of that we also find **there is that bonding**, that bonding that we have. Did you know if we didn't pray many of us would never think about God? Many of us would take just the blessings for granted. But God wants us to be perpetually dependent upon Him so He teaches us to pray, He teaches us to pray.

And then **prayer is the way of disciplining us**. Have you ever prayed and not gotten your prayer answered? Of course. And you say, "Well, why didn't God answer my prayer? Is there something wrong in my life? Have I been out of fellowship with God? Is there unconfessed, unrepented of sin in my life?" And many times we'll find out that there is and the Bible says Psalm chapter 66 verse 18, "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." And I think one of the things that keeps me closer to God than anything else is the knowledge that if my heart is not clean and pure my prayers will not get through. So the origin of prayer is the purpose of God. God has a purpose in His heart and in His life. He wants to work in me through prayer.

Now folks, prayer did not begin with you. As a matter of fact, you don't name it and claim it, it has to begin with God. I remember reading about the disciples in Luke chapter 5, the first 11 verses, they were out fishing after the resurrection of Jesus and Jesus said, "Have you taken anything, have you caught anything?" Don't you hate it when you've been fishing all night and haven't caught anything and somebody asks you that question? "Have you caught anything?" Here's what they said. Now listen to it. They said, "We have toiled all night and have taken nothing." The sentence begins with we; it ends with nothing. Anything that begins with we ends with nothing spiritually. And then Jesus said, "Well cast your nets out on the other side." And they said, "Well, at Your word we will." And now friend, we have to get God's Word. In order for us to be fruitful in anything that we do we have to get it from God. The origin of prayer, it roots in the purpose of God.

You know, the reason we don't get our prayers answered folks is that we're not rooted in the purposes of God. We are like that little boy who was heard praying, "Tokyo, Tokyo, Tokyo." Somebody said, "What are you doing?" He said, "I've just finished my geography lesson and I'm asking God to make Tokyo the capital of France." You see prayer does not bend God's will to fit our will. Prayer finds the will of God and gets in on it. We're going to say more about that later on, but remember this, that the origin of effectual prayer roots in the purposes of God. "For of Him are all things."

Now here's the second thing. Not only does the origin of effectual prayer root in the purposes of God, but **the operation of effectual prayer relies on the power of God** because, not only is prayer of Him, but it is through Him. You see it's God that gives you **the desire to pray**. Did you know that you don't have a natural desire to pray? You have a natural desire not to pray. I'm talking about your flesh. Let me give you some



Scriptures. Romans 3 verse 11, we've already looked at this, "There's none that understandeth, there's none that seeketh after God." No not one. That's what the Bible says. You have a natural inclination not to pray.

Let me give you another verse, Romans 8 verses 5 through 7, "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace, because the carnal mind is enmity against God." That is, the fleshly mind is at warfare with God. "It is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be." Your nature does not want to pray. There's nothing in you by nature that would cause you to seek God. No, not at all. But God, when He puts His Spirit in you, gives you the desire to pray. Romans 8 verse 15, "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, 'Abba, Father.'" God puts His Spirit into our hearts, let's us know that we've been adopted into His family, and then prayer is just natural, as natural as a little child saying, "Daddy, Father."

But the natural man, the carnal nature, doesn't want to pray. So how is prayer through Him? Well, first of all, He gives us the desire to pray. And now listen very carefully. Not only does He give us the desire to pray, He gives us **the direction to pray**. I mean, what are we to ask for? We don't know by our own nature what to ask for. You know the Bible says in Philippians 4:19 that, "God will supply all of our need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Sometimes we want things we don't need, isn't that true? Yes, that's definitely true. Have you ever thanked God for unanswered prayer? I have. I've asked God for things I thought I needed and He didn't give them to me, and I argued with Him, but He still didn't give them to me. Do you know what Mrs. Billy Graham said? Mrs. Billy Graham said, "If God had answered every one of my prayers I would have married three other men other than Billy Graham and everyone of them been wrong." You know, you're asking God to give you something that's not best for you. Sometimes we want things we don't need and sometimes we need things we don't want. Isn't that true? My dad used to say, "You need a spanking." I didn't want one, but I needed one. He was right. Well, only the Holy Spirit of God is going to show us how to pray for things that we may not want, but that we really need.

And then sometimes we want things that we already have. You take a church like this sometimes. We'll come to a building program and we'll say, "Oh, Lord God, give us the money to build this building." Why should we pray a prayer like that? The money to build the building is sitting right in the congregation. I mean it's in our bank accounts. We're asking God to give us what we already have, where we just take what we already have and give it back to God and say, "Of Thine own have we given unto Thee." First Chronicles 29:14, which I've already mentioned. Sometimes we want things we don't need; sometimes we need things we don't want; and sometimes we want things we already have, but the Holy Spirit of God gives us the desire to pray, and the Holy Spirit of God gives us the direction to pray so we can know the will of God.

Now let me give you a key verse here. It's not found in Romans, but it's found in the Gospel of Matthew. Just jot it in your margin. Matthew 16 verse 19. The Lord is speaking to the church, corporately and as individuals, and here's what He says, "And I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven." Well, how would you like to have the keys to the kingdom of Heaven? I mean, how would you like to have the key that unlocks the treasury of Heaven? "I give unto you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven," now listen to this, "and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven." Now, what this says in the Greek language is, "Whatever you bind on Earth has already been bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on Earth has already been loosed in Heaven." That is, it has already begun with God; now you need to ratify on Earth that which is done in Heaven. You see, what we need to do is to look to Heaven, find out what God's plan is in Heaven, and then transfer it to Earth and loose it on Earth.

Manley Beasley, who has preached from this platform and who's now in Heaven, a dear personal friend of mine, said that, "The secret of success in the Christian life is find out what God is up to and join Him. Just find



out what God is doing in Heaven and join Him.” So many times we’re asking God to rubberstamp our plans and bless this mess. How did Jesus pray? Jesus prayed by this principle, put this verse down, John 15 verse 19, “Then answered Jesus, and said unto them, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son,’” speaking of Himself, “‘the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do, for what things soever He doeth the Father, these also doeth the Son likewise.’” What Jesus said is just, “I look into Heaven, I see what the Father is doing, I see what the Father wants. That’s what I ask for, that’s what I get.” Do you know what worship is? Worship is placing yourself on the altar until you’re consumed.

Now look, you’re in verse 36. Just go to chapter 12 verse 1. Look at it, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” Now, a sacrifice is to be placed on the altar. And what happened to a sacrifice in the Old Testament when it was placed on the altar? It was consumed by fire. Now, if that sacrifice was not a holy sacrifice it would not be consumed. It would be repugnant. God would refuse it. But if it was a holy sacrifice, that is, without spot or blemish, pure, clean, that sacrifice would be consumed. Now you have not really worshipped until you’ve placed yourself on the altar and God has consumed you with holy fire.

Now, when you do that, when you place yourself upon the altar and let God consume you, you are consumed by Him, then, you know what happens? Well look at it, look in chapter 12 verses 1 and 2, “Brethren, by the mercies of God, present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service,” now watch this, “and be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” When you worship, when you worship with loving, lingering prayer, God comes and He consumes you and then He transforms you and you now have the mind of Christ. You look into Heaven. You see things that are in Heaven. You see what is bound in Heaven and you bind it on Earth. You see what is loosed in Heaven and you loosed it on Earth.

And you see it is God that gives you the desire to pray, it is God that gives you the direction to pray, it is God that gives you **the dynamic to pray** because you must pray in faith, and where’s that faith going to come from? Well, “Of Him, and through Him, and to Him.” You can’t conjure up faith, you can’t make yourself believe, but when you hear God, when you’ve been alone with God, when you are worshipping God and God speaks to you, then faith wells up in your heart.

Remember not long ago we preached from Romans 10 verse 17, “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God,” and we told you that word hearing is the word rhema, which means not just hearing words, but hearing God. When God speaks to you, you have a rhema of God. Then you find that faith in your heart. Many of us just run into God’s presence and we say, “Listen Lord, Your servant is speaking,” rather than, “Speak Lord, Your servant is listening.” And finally when we find out what’s going on in Heaven, whatever is bound in Heaven, then we bind it on Earth, and whatever is loosed in Heaven then we loose it on Earth. You see, listen, prayer is of Him. It is through Him. It is the Holy Spirit who gives us the desire to pray. It is the Holy Spirit who gives us the direction to pray. It is the Holy Spirit who gives us the dynamic to pray. Prayer is of Him and through Him.

I don’t know whether you’ve ever prayed this way or not. I don’t pray this way enough. You know, I’ve had just enough sojourns into prayer to realize how powerful prayer is and just how miserable my prayer life is, but I can think of those times when God has spoken to me in worship and I have had things laid on my heart that I prayed, and God has done them in such miraculous ways. When I was preparing this sermon I thought of an experience I had down in Florida in my first little church. My first little church in Fellsmere, Florida. There was a man in that church whose name was Johnny. I had Johnny on my heart. He was a young man, handsome, tall, and he was staying at a home, he was boarding at a home, and in that home there were a lot of children.



And I would go to try to win Johnny to Christ and the kids in that home, there were so many of them, and they were so happy that the pastor would come they would come sit in my lap, pull at me, talk with me, run around the room, show off, want to sing for me, and there's Johnny over there and I could never find time to talk to Johnny. I never could get Johnny by himself. I was in the living room of a deacon. He had gone away and I'd borrowed his house to pray. I was down on my knees praying in that deacon's home and I said, "Lord, I can't get a chance to talk to Johnny. Every time I go over there, why there's so many people and so many children. Lord, I want to win Johnny to You. I believe he's ready to be saved." Now folks, I cannot explain this but God spoke to my heart and God said, "You get in your automobile, you go downtown, there on the corner you'll see Johnny. Ask Johnny to ride to Vero Beach with you and on the way to Vero Beach you talk to him about Me and you can share Jesus with Johnny." Now folks, I had no idea where he was even in town or where he might have been, what time of day, but God said, "You go right in the center of town and he'll be there."

Folks, I got up off my knees, got in my Ford automobile, and drove to the center of that city, and there on the street corner was Johnny. I said, "Johnny, I'm going to Vero Beach. Do you want a ride with me?" I didn't tell him what for. He said, "Sure," and jumped in the car. On the way over there I talked to him about Jesus. When we got there we turned around and came back, didn't do a thing in Vero, stopped the car, bowed our heads, and Johnny prayed and asked Jesus Christ to come into his heart. He was wonderfully saved. I thought, "Man, I wish I could do this all the time. I mean, I wish I could get that kind of an insight into Heaven where God would just speak to me." Now, I don't know that God's always going to do it that sensationally, but I know, friend, that we don't get enough prayers answered because we don't really worship God. We don't really see what God wants to do in Heaven. But prayer, listen, prayer is of Him. It is through Him. Now watch this, and it is to Him.

Now the origin of prayer is the purpose of God; the operation of prayer is the power of God. But now listen carefully and here's where many of us miss it, **the objective of prayer is the praise of God.** Now if you don't get that, you're going to miss the whole thing; the objective of prayer is the praise of God. Now listen to it again, Romans 11:36, "For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever." You see, God is in the business of getting glory to Himself and the reason so many times that our prayers are not answered is that we are not interested in the glory of God. We're interested in our own personal aggrandizement. When you get interested in the glory of God you're going to see prayers start being answered. James said in James 4:3, "You have not because you ask not, and you ask and receive not because you ask amiss that you might consume it upon your lust." But we're to ask God for the glory of God.

Now listen, it is prayer and thanksgiving that complete the triangle, "Of Him, through Him, and to Him." Thanksgiving just simply says, "Lord, thank You." Thanksgiving says, "Thank You." Thanksgiving enjoys the gift. Praise enjoys the Giver when we just simply praise the Lord. You know, prayer goes into God's presence to carry something away. Praise goes into God's presence just to stay there forever and ever and ever. And by the way folks, this is why we pray in the name of Jesus. You know, He says that, "We're to ask in His name," now listen to it, now listen, "We are to ask in His name, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." Now think about that. Why do we pray in the name of Jesus? That God'll be glorified. That's what it means to pray in the name of Jesus.

Over in Israel there's a grove of trees planted in my name. Some of my Jewish friends said, "We're going to plant a grove of trees in your name in Israel." That's an honor. Do you know what they were saying they were doing that for? For my honor. In your name the Adrian Rogers Grove of Trees is for your honor. If you want to say it, for your glory. Now prayer in Jesus' name is for the glory of God. "Ask in My name," Jesus says in John 14 verses 13 through 16, "that the Father may be glorified in the Son to whom be glory forever and ever." That's how you pray in the name of Jesus. And, oh, it's so sweet to pray in the name of Jesus.



Have you ever waked up in the morning and knew it's time to pray and just didn't feel like praying? You know when you wake up sometimes like that you just don't feel like praying, isn't that true? You just don't feel like praying. Have you ever done that? You just don't feel like praying and so you don't pray. But sometimes you don't feel like praying. And you say, "Well, you know, it would be just mockery if I were to pray today or right now, so I'll wait till I feel better." Then later on you get to feeling better. Maybe you take a couple of Alka-Seltzer or something like that, you know. Maybe last night you had sauerkraut and ice cream and so you take an Alka-Seltzer. And then after a while you get to feeling better and you say, "Now I can pray." Well, I want to ask you a question; do you think God was in that plop, plop, fizz, fizz? I mean, did that make you more spiritual? No, you just felt better. Now folks, when you pray, don't come offering to God the brass of your emotions. Come with both hands filled with the incense of Jesus' name. Ask in His name. It really doesn't matter how you feel. Pray in the name of Jesus.

I tell you I've done this before. I've come sometimes and it's time to preach on Sunday and I say, "Oh God, Oh God, I've been so busy, I'm here, this, that, I've been running around doing a lot of things good, but none of them as good as prayer. Lord, I just don't deserve your blessings this morning. Oh God, I'm so sorry." And the Lord says to me, "Now wait a minute, if you had been really doing what you ought to do then do you think that your prayer would be rewarded because you've been such a good boy. Don't you realize it's My grace that gets your prayers answered." You see folks, it's not my sweat; it's His blood. You pray in the name of Jesus. I'm not saying that we ought not to do right. I'm not saying that we ought not to serve Him, but there comes a time when you say, "Oh God, I'm not offering my emotions and I'm not offering my performance. I'm standing on Your promise. I'm praying in the name of Jesus." And God answers your prayer and then you say, "To whom be glory forever," and you pray in the name of Jesus.

Now I'm finishing this message, but now let me tell you what prayer is, is what I've said about prayer. I've talked to you about the origin of prayer. I have talked to you about the operation of prayer. I've talked to you about the object of prayer, a divine triangle for, "Of Him and through Him and to Him are all things." Now here is the bottom line. Let's just wrap it up. Let me give you a definition of prayer. Prayer is the Holy Spirit finding a desire in the heart of the Father, putting that desire into your heart, and then sending it back to Heaven in the power of the cross, or in the power of Jesus' name. I know you didn't remember all that so I'm going to give it to you again. Prayer is the Holy Spirit finding a desire in the heart of the Father, putting that desire into our heart, and then sending it back to Heaven in the power of the cross for the glory of God. "For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things." And when we learn to pray that way we're going to pray as Jesus prayed and we're going to see God do some wonderful things in prayer.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. If you're not certain that you're saved, would you like to be saved, would you? Would you like to know that you really do have life? Jesus said, "I've come that you might have life." Could I lead you in a prayer? We'll call this prayer the sinner's prayer. And you can pray and accept Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. You can do it right now. Would you pray this prayer? "Dear God, I know that You love me. Thank You for loving me. And I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me and You promised to save me if I would trust You. Jesus, I do trust You. I believe You're the Son of God. I believe you paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And now I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Come into my life. Take control of my life and begin today to make me the person You want me to be. And Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. Help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen."



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