Right throughout scripture God promises to answer the prayers of believers and fulfil His promises in their lives (CP Psa 34:15-17; 145:18-19; Pr 15:8,29; Mt 7:7-11; 18:19; 21:21-22; Mk 11:22-24; Jn 14:13-14; 15:7; 16:23-26; Eph 3:20; He 11:6; Jas 1:5-8, 17; 1Pe 3:12; 1Jn 3:21-22; 5:14-15). *According to the power that worketh in us* in Eph 3:20 means by, or as a consequence of, God's power at work within us. We need to be in total agreement with what these scriptures teach, otherwise we will have little chance of ever having any of our prayers answered. We learn from the scriptures that there are no limitations whatever on what we may ask of God in line with His will - His word, the Bible. What we know of God's word, the Bible, is what we know of His will, and what we know of His will determines the success of our prayer life. It is imperative that believers are thoroughly acquainted with God's word, and do it, for their prayers to be answered (CP Josh 1:8). This is the guaranteed secret of success in our Christian walk: being grounded in God's word (CP Psa 1:1-3). It is as much God's will for us to prosper materially as it is for us to prosper spiritually if we are abiding in His word. The closer we live to Christ through His word abiding in us as Jn 15:7 teaches, the more effective our prayers will be.

Christ's word abides in us in the measure it governs our lives, and in the measure we act upon it. That is what John means when he said in 1Jn 3:21-22, "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God and whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are right in His sight." And also when he said in 1Jn 5:14-15, "and this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." Believers walking in fellowship with the word will never ask for anything outside of God's will, and this ensures that the answer will always be yes (CP 2Cor 1:19-20). Every one of God's promises are still valid for today. There is not one promise that is no to a believer in Christ in line with His word. God is glorified in His promises being fulfilled in our lives. That is what V20 teaches. Providing we abide in Him and His word abides in us there are no limitations on what we may ask for: salvation for our families and others; our own good health, and healing for others; our financial needs to be met, etc. We can ask what we will and it will be done for us, or else scriptures are meaningless. If our prayers are not being answered we need to know why and remedy it immediately. The fault lies with us, not God. He does not capriciously stop answering prayer - we ourselves are the problem. We are not complying with the conditions God has laid down; there are no promises in the Bible without conditions applying.

We cannot plead ignorance of the word - scriptures do not allow for that. After all, we have been commanded to study it day and night in Josh 1:8 and if we have not been studying it we are in sin for disobeying God. Scriptures clearly teach that unanswered prayer is the result of some form of sin in our life. Anything not of faith even is sin (CP Psa 66:18; Ro 14:23b; 1Cor 11:27-32; 2Cor 13:5; He 11:6). This is not said to condemn but to challenge us to look to ourselves. It is never God who is at fault, but us (CP Ro 3:3-4). Some might say but what about Job and Paul? They were not in sin yet their prayers were not answered. Firstly, Job's prayers were only ever to complain about his circumstances, and to seek relief from them. He did not pray to be healed (CP Job 7:11-21; 9:15-10:22; 14:13-22; 17:1-15; 23:1-17). Job accepted all the calamities that befell him in the mistaken belief that they were from God anyway. He did not know it was the devil afflicting him, and because he did not have a complete revelation of God, Job made two statements about God at the onset of his trials that have been perpetuated by most Christians ever since, yet both are incorrect (CP Job 1:13-22; 2:7-10). What a stark contrast these are to the real revelation of God (CP Jas 1:17). Job's statements about God are used by many to illustrate how God chastens His children. A lot of Christians believe it, and because they do, they do not look to themselves for the reason why their prayers are not being answered. They think God is chastening them like Job whereas Job really illustrates the New Testament truth that believers undergoing persecution and fiery trials must remain steadfast in faith (CP Jas 1:2-4; 1Pe 5:8-10). Job's patience and steadfastness enabled God's purpose to prevail over Satan and that is the main teaching in the book of Job (CP Jas 5:10-11).

Now, about Paul: Paul had a thorn in the flesh, but it was not sickness as so many Christians believe. It was a messenger from Satan - a demon - sent to buffet him, lest he be overtaken by pride because of what he had seen and heard in heaven. The demon caused hardships virtually beyond endurance to befall Paul, but Paul was not sick. Nowhere in the Bible does it teach that Paul was ever sick. He knew the empowering he had in Christ over sickness (CP Ac 28:1-10). Sickness had no power over Paul, and he never ever prayed to be healed of sickness. He prayed that God would remove the demon from him, but of course God would not because He had instigated its presence in the first place (CP 2Cor 12:1-10 with 2Cor 11:21-31). How could Paul labour more abundantly than the false teachers he had to contend with at Corinth if he was always sick, as so many believe (CP 2Cor 11:23). The argument that Paul was sick and that God would not heal him causes believers to abandon the very promises of God that are meant to give us faith that it is God's will to heal us, and it means that faith does not come by the word of God alone as scriptures teach (CP Ro 10:17), but that it comes by praying until a special revelation comes to us that it is God's will to heal us. Paul's thorn did not hinder the faith of Publius or the others on the Island of Melita from getting healed, and neither should we

let it hinder ours. That should settle the question of Paul's thorn in the flesh for us, but we still need to understand that God cannot answer our prayers if we are not complying with His word, so whatever it is that hinders our prayers, it must be effectively dealt with and our life re-ordered in God.

As this study progresses some of the hindrances to answered prayer will be highlighted, which should encourage us all to determine to know God even better than we do now for His perfect will to be done in our lives (CP 1Th 5:17). To pray without ceasing does not mean we have to abstain from everything else and be praying in unbroken continuity, but it means we are to be in a constant attitude of dependence upon God and pray whenever an opportunity presents itself; do not let the opportunity to pray go past us. It also does not mean we have to keep bringing the same petition before God over and over again, persisting with it until the answer has manifested itself, as many believers think scriptures teach (CP Lu 18:1-8).

This is the parable we know as the unjust judge and the persistent widow. This is one of the parables used by some in the Church to teach that when we bring a petition before God we should persist in praying for it like the widow persisted with the judge, until God answers us, like the judge answered the widow. That is not what the parable teaches at all. If it does then we are putting a just and a holy God in the same category as an unjust and an unholy judge. The parable does not compare the two, it contrasts them. The parable does not teach about prayer in general, but prayer pertaining to the Lord's second coming - intercessory prayer. It is the concluding part of a fairly long discourse by Jesus about His second coming in Luke 17. It is a call to believers to persevere in prayer against the works of the devil until Jesus comes back (CP Lu 17:20-18:8). The widow's adversary in the lawsuit before the judge is the equivalent to our adversary the devil in the earth. The parable teaches us that we are not to be passive spectators in the kingdom of God but to persist in faith and persevere in prayer for God's will to be done on earth in spite of continued opposition and rejection, which is what the unjust judge portrays in the parable. This is what Jesus means when He says that men ought always to pray and not faint. He wants us to keep praying the kingdom in and not give up, even though His second coming may not be immediate. That is why He questions whether the Christians then remaining when He does come back will still be faithfully pressing in for the things of the kingdom and persevering in prayer, as portrayed by the widow in the parable, or will they have given up hope and lost their faith. Jesus then contrasts the unwilling and uncaring judge's tardiness in vindicating the widow, to God's willingness and readiness to vindicate His children (CP Lu 11:1-10).

Here we have the Lord's prayer and the parable of the friend at midnight. This parable is also used to teach the necessity of persisting in prayer for a request to be granted but once again that is not what the parable teaches at all. In the Lord's prayer Jesus is teaching the disciples to pray, and He then illustrates for them by the parable of the friend at midnight that they can expect their prayers to be answered. The man in the parable got what he asked for because although it was midnight, he boldly and unashamedly went to his friend, knocked on his door and asked for it. In V9-10 Jesus promises that we can do the same with God. All we have to do is what the man in the parable did: ask, seek and knock. The word *importunity* in this parable means shamelessness, boldness, impudence, audacity. It does not mean persistence, as so many teach. It might be used to mean persistence in other settings, but not here, and this is the only place in the Bible where it is used. To summarise this parable, it teaches quite simply that, as the man who shamelessly dared to ask his friend got his request, so those who through prayer shamelessly ask, seek and knock will also get their requests from God (CP Mk 11:12-14, 20-24)

Notice here that Jesus only spoke to the fig tree once and it withered up and died. Then He tells us that if we have faith in God we can do the same thing. He goes on to say that all we have to do is believe that what we say or pray will come to pass, and it will (CP Php 4:6-7). We only have to make our requests known to God once, and if we have asked in faith, doubting nothing but believing we have what we ask for then we can rest assured that God has granted our request, and from then on we just keep thanking Him until the answer manifests itself (CP Jn 14:12-14). This teaches us that God is glorified in answered prayer. That is why every promise of God is yea and amen in Christ as we learned earlier in 2Cor 1:19-20. While we do not have to persist in praying for the same need over and over, we do have to persist in faith, and keep believing that God will meet our needs, and as they arise keep on petitioning Him for them, even though the answer may not immediately manifest itself (CP Nu 23:19; Psa 89:34; Isa 46:9-11).

Do not give up on God. He cannot, and He will not refuse to fulfil His own word. We have the absolute assurance of that in those scriptures (CP 1Ki 8:56). Not one of God's promises has ever failed (CP Ro 3:3-4; 2Ti 2:13). This is the measure of God's faithfulness. Even if we do not believe God, His promises are still in place waiting to be appropriated so we need to restate here that the only hindrance to prayers being answered is ourself (CP Mk 11:25-26). We cannot afford to harbour unforgiveness in our heart toward anyone at all, regardless of the reason, if we want our prayers answered. God will not answer our prayers, and worse still neither will He forgive us our sins, so we are in grave danger of forfeiting our salvation if we do not forgive others. Jesus teaches us here that God's forgiveness, though freely given to repentant sinners, nevertheless remains conditional, according to their willingness to forgive others (CP Mt 6:14-15; 18:21-22). Unforgiveness, anger,

bitterness, jealousy, envy, backbiting, murmuring, hatred and murder are all related sins, and unless dealt with, will not only stop our prayers being answered but will, as with all other unconfessed or unrepented sins damn us for eternity (CP Mt 18:21-22; Eph 4:31-32; He 12:14-15; Jas 3:6; 1Pe 3:8-12). When Jesus told Peter in Mt 18:21-22 that he had to forgive others 490 times Jesus was simply underlining the fact that believers cannot ever afford not to forgive others, irrespective of how many times they offend (CP Mt 18:23-35). This says it all. The judgement the king pronounced on the unforgiving servant is the equivalent of eternal damnation upon unforgiving believers, because the servant could never repay his debt to the king just as believers can never repay their debt to God. It is a sobering thought is it not? But it is one we all need to know (CP 1Ti 2:1-4).

Believers are to pray for all men - even those who misuse us and insult us (CP Lu 6:28). We are to pray for those in Government and other high places and all positions of authority notwithstanding that they may enact or enforce laws that directly oppose God's law. We can refuse to obey laws that oppose God's law, but we must still pray for the lawmakers, and those authorised to enforce the laws (CP Ga 6:2-5). At first glance here V2 and V5 appear to contradict each other. In V2 we are told to bear each other's burden whilst in V5 we are told that every man shall bear his own burden. There is no contradiction however. These verses are referring to two different burdens. The burden of V2 is a spiritual burden: a heavy burdensome weight pressing on the heart as a consequence of sin whereas in V5 the burden is one's own responsibility toward God and our fellow man; it is our individual responsibility or duty which we are not to shirk. Bearing one another's burden means helping a fallen brother or sister come back to their place in God. In so doing we will be fulfilling Christ's law of love for each other. We are not condoning what they have done, but we do not browbeat or condemn them. We sympathise with them and show them mercy and love, and pray them back into the kingdom (CP Jas 5:14-18).

Here again we see that if there has been any sin committed it needs to be confessed for prayers to be answered and healing to take place. Then when the prayer of faith is prayed and the name of Jesus Christ invoked, the Lord will raise up the sick and forgive them their sins. We also learn here that effective, accurate prayer is characterised by earnestness, fervency and energy (fervency is zeal, enthusiasm). James illustrates for us the power of fervent prayer by a righteous man. He uses Elijah as an example to teach us that all righteous men are equal before God, and to encourage us to pray for miracles and expect them, as Elijah did (CP 1Ki 17:1; 18:1, 41-46). We can do all Elijah did in those scriptures if we are earnest and fervent in prayer, whether it be for healing, or stopping and starting up rain. This is another confirmation of God's precious promises to answer the prayers of His children and we should never sit under any teaching that could undermine our faith in these promises (CP Psa 34:15-17). This is what Peter quoted in 1Pe 3:12, but if we read from V7 in 1Pe 3 we will find fifteen commands concerning Christian relationships that must be first observed to ensure answered prayers (CP 1Pe 3:7-12).

The prayer of a righteous man also draws him near to God (CP He 7:25); opens the way to a spirit filled life (CP Lu 11:13; Ac 1:14); brings him the Holy Spirit's empowering for service (CP Ac 1:8; 4:31; Eph 3:20); builds him up spiritually (CP Jude 20); helps him overcome Satan (CP Eph 6:12-13, 18); clarifies the will of God for him (CP Psa 32:6-8); enables him to receive spiritual gifts (CP 1Cor 12:31; 14:1); brings him into fellowship with God (CP Jn 7:37); brings him grace, mercy and peace (CP Php 4:6-7; He 4:16); brings him deliverance from trouble (CP Psa 34:4-7). There are many more accomplishments from prayer in scripture, but these will suffice for now.

God watches over His word to perform it. If we hold His word up to Him in prayer - if we confess His word over our situation - He will bring it to pass (CP Isa 55:10-11; Jer 1:12). God has given unto us the right to bring Him to remembrance of His word (CP Isa 43:26; 45:11). But as with all His promises, it is only to the extent that God's word lives in us that we are able to bring Him to remembrance of His word and have Him perform it in our lives. We learned that earlier on in Jn 15:7: if we abide in Him and His word abides in us we can ask what we will and He will do it for us, because God is glorified in His word being fulfilled in our lives (CP Jn 15:7-8; 2Cor 1:19-20). That is why it is so important to encourage new Christians and those weak in the faith to thoroughly immerse themselves in the word. It is only prayer based on His word that will prevail with God. We learned this earlier on too (CP 1Jn 5:14-15) but it does us no harm to go back to scriptures - that is the only way they can end up abiding in us. It is only by constantly meditating on, and hearing the word that faith builds up in our hearts to energise our prayers, and make them fervent before God (CP Mt 12:34-37). Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, and if our hearts are filled with faith then our prayers will be faith filled and assured of God's answer.

We must never forget that the law of sowing and reaping applies to every aspect of our Christian walk, and especially our prayer life (CP Php 4:19). It is important that we understand the correct teaching behind this verse. It is often taken out of context in the belief that it is God's promise to unconditionally meet the needs of every professing Christian, but that is not correct. It only applies to those who give into the work of God, as the Philippian Church did (CP V15-19). The Philippian Church had supported Paul financially when he started up the Church in Thessalonica and Paul was assuring them that as they gave so liberally to fulfil his need so God would also give liberally to fulfil

theirs. This illustrates for us the law of sowing and reaping which is highlighted right throughout scripture. We need to know some of these scriptures (CP Psa 41:1-3; Pr 21:13).

God has a special concern for the weak and the helpless. They are very important in God's plan of redemption and He blesses those who help them. If we share God's pity for those in need, we can confidently expect God to deliver us if ever we are in trouble ourselves (CP Pr 19:17). There is no clearer evidence in scripture than this of how God identifies with the plight of poor people. The help we give them becomes God's own debt to us. We should consider this the greatest privilege in life: to be able to lend to God (CP Pr 22:9; 11:24-25). God blesses those who are generous, whether it be in their finances or in the giving of themselves. We are all stewards of God's gifts and we must use them for His cause, and for the benefit of those in need. Pr 11:24-25 teaches us that what you give you gain, and what you keep you lose (CP Ecc 11:1-6).

We must always be willing to be generous and helpful, and not withhold from anyone for nobody knows when they may need help themselves. V3 illustrates the certainty of blessing - just as surely as nature is unfailing, so then whoever helps others in need will themselves be blessed in due course. V6 is a similar teaching to Ga 6:9 (CP Ga 6:9). God's law of sowing and reaping dictates that blessings will always be returned for generosity (CP Lu 6:38). Notice here that Jesus first said "Give, " then He said "and it will be given unto you." It clarifies for us how giving and receiving go together in God's order. If we do not give we will not receive, yet many Christians expect to receive the kingdom benefits without giving anything into the kingdom. How can God bless us with all the fullness of His blessings for giving if we do not obey His command to give in the first place, and how can His kingdom be extended if Christians do not support it financially. Giving in the Old Testament was to support the Levitical priesthood and the work of God in general. Giving in the New Testament is to support those who minister the word to us and to extend God's kingdom on earth (CP 1Cor 9:1-14). Paul was pointing out to the Corinthian Church that while he was entitled to be kept by them, it was his choice not to. The point is made though that it is the responsibility of the Church to ensure that those who minister the word live off the word. Once a Church is established the ones pastoring the Church should not have to work outside the Church for a living (CP Ga 6:6-10). Just as surely as everything in nature reproduces after its own kind, so everyone will reap what they sow and be responsible for their own eternal destiny. Withholding from God is meanness, and the awful finality of meanness is the judgement of God upon those who practise it (CP Mt 25:31-46).

We need to know these scriptures so we can share them with those who do not know them. There are a great many Christians who do not know that their prayers are not being answered and God's promises are not being fulfilled in their lives because they are defaulting on their financial obligations in the kingdom. Isa 55:10-11 teaches us that the power and the effect of God's word can never be cancelled or rendered void. We also learned that in Nu 23:19, 1Ki 8:56, Ro 3:3-4 and 2Ti 2:13. God cannot lie: He has said it, and He will do it. He is faithful to His word even though we might not believe in Him. His word will bring all the salvation benefits Jesus purchased with His blood for those who accept it, or a just judgement upon those who reject it. God's faithfulness is a comfort for those who remain loyal to Him, but a solemn warning for those who depart from the faith. Every time we go to the word we should pray first for God to open the eyes of our understanding of what God has in place for us, like Paul prayed for the Ephesian Church (CP Eph 1:15-23). We can come believing to the throne of grace and obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need any time of the day or night without fear or trepidation while ever we keep God's commandments and pray in accordance with His word (CP Eph 6:11-18).

Putting on the whole armour of God is not meant to be a daily ritual or routine as so many Christians believe. We do not have to put it on first thing every morning. To put on the whole armour of God simply means that we are to be in a constant state of readiness, clothed with all that God provides us with for offence or defence against the forces of Satan in our daily walk. *Put on* is from the same Greek word translated *endued* in Lu 24 (CP Lu 24:49). This is referring to the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Once we are baptized in the Spirit we do not have to be re-baptized every day. We simply pray for further infilling, and we get it, which is what Paul tells us to do in V18 in Eph 6. It does not mean that we are to pray *to* the Holy Spirit but *in* the spirit. The literal English rendering of Eph 6:11-18 according **to Kenneth Wuest's Word Studies in the Greek New Testament** is:

> *"Clothe yourselves with the full armour of God to the end that you will be able to hold your ground against the stratagems of the devil, because our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against spirit - forces of perniciousness in the heavenly places. On this account, take to yourself* ***at once, and once for all****, the complete armour of God in order that you may be able to resist in the day the pernicious one, and having achieved all things, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your loins in the sphere of truth, and having clothed yourself with the breast plate of righteousness, and having sandalled your feet with a firm foundation of the glad tidings of peace; in addition to all these, taking to yourself the shield of faith by means of which you*

> *will be able to quench all the fiery arrows of the pernicious one, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God, through the instrumentality of every prayer and supplication for need, praying at all seasons by means of the Spirit, and maintaining a constant alertness in the same, with every kind of unremitting care and supplication for all the saints."*

Supplication simply means a humble and earnest prayer. It can be a prayer of intercession - concerning someone else - or it can be a petition for a particular need of our own. It is only another name in scripture for a prayer (CP Ro 8:26-27). Here we learn that the Holy Spirit knows our weakness in regard to knowing what we ought to pray for at times, and when we pray in tongues He takes hold with us and helps us pray as we should, and therefore makes our weak prayers effective. It is a joint effort on both our parts. He does not take over from us and pray in our stead, as some teach. The word *helpeth* means to take hold of together with (CP Jas 4:1-3). "Lusts" here refers to all forms of self indulgences and self-gratifying desires. These lead to double-mindedness and spiritual adultery and will eventually cause those who desire them to backslide and destroy their fellowship with God, and will ultimately even lead to their eternal damnation, because they will come to love those things more than the things of God. That is what James is warning us about here (CP V4-10). Believers are in grave danger of forfeiting their salvation if the reasons for their prayers not being answered are not acknowledged and dealt with. We must never be deluded into believing that we are still in God's will while our prayers remain unanswered (CP Eze 33:12-20).

This scripture underlines the importance of having a daily relationship with God. It emphasises the danger of having any unconfessed or unrepented sin in our life (CP 1Cor 11:31-32; 2Cor 13:5). We need to examine ourselves every day to ensure that we are where we should be in God and judge ourselves for any sins we may have committed that day, and if we have sinned, repent and confess them before God. He will forgive us our sins, and our fellowship with Him will be immediately restored (CP Eph 3:14-21). V20 teaches us that God will do for us not only more than we desire and ask in prayer, but even more than our imagination can perceive, but it is conditional and dependent upon the degree of the Holy Spirit's presence, power and grace outworking in our lives. The word *power* here refers to our faith. Faith is the power of God within us to enable us to reign in life and to receive answers to prayer. The word *worketh* refers to the exercising of our faith to believe God to do it. Faith makes prayers work - it is not prayers that makes faith work (CP Eph 1:15-23). Paul's prayers all reflect God's highest desire for believers; that they might receive more wisdom and revelation concerning God's plan for them, and experience a greater abundance of Holy Spirit power in their lives. This should also be our prayer for our brothers and sisters in Christ. The spirit of wisdom and revelation here is not referring to the Holy Spirit, but to our own spirit - the element of life within us. God wants our spirit to be full of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. Of course that can only come as we become more immersed in Him. We can also pray these prayers for ourselves (CP Php 1:3-11). As we read earlier in Php 4, the Philippian Church was the only Church that supported Paul financially when he started up the Thessalonian Church, and here he offers up thanks unto God for their fellowship and provision for him in his defence of the gospel. He prays for their continuing moral conviction and discernment in their Christian walk (CP Col 1:9-14).

As well as being able to personalise these prayers for ourselves, we also learn from them how to pray for others - our children, friends, other believers, missionaries, Church leaders, etc. We can pray that they may understand God's will, gain spiritual wisdom, live a holy life pleasing to the Lord, bear fruit for Christ, be grateful to the Father, continue in the hope of heaven, experience the nearness of Christ, know the love of Christ, be filled with the fullness of God, show love and kindness to others, discern evil, be sincere and blameless, eagerly await the return of the Lord, and last, but by no means least, pray that God would always count them worthy of His calling and that Christ would be glorified in everything they do (CP 2Th 1:11-12). Jesus Himself is the key to that personal relationship with God that is central to prayer (CP Jn 14:13; 15:16). It is only through Jesus, and because of the cross, that we can come to the throne of God confident that we will receive mercy and find grace in our time of need (CP He 4:14-16; 10:19-22). It is only in the context of a living relationship with the Lord that prayer finds its place. Prayer is a continuous expression of that relationship, and is a meaningless exercise without it. Unless we meet the conditions God has laid down for prayer, our prayers will not be answered.

To summarise this study we learn that prayer essentially is **communion** with God - a desire to enter into conscious and intimate relationship with Him who has saved us from death and has given unto us eternal life (CP Psa 40:1-3; 63:1-8; 73:25-26). Prayer is also **adoration** - the praise of God for His greatness and goodness and for who He is (CP Psa 9:1-12; 33:1-9). Prayer is also **thanksgiving** - the outpouring of gratitude to God for His grace, mercy and loving-kindness (CP Psa 30:1-12; 65:1-3). Prayer is **confession** - the acknowledgement of sinning against God, and seeking His forgiveness (CP Psa 51:1-17; 1Jn 1:7-10). Prayer is **petition** - a plea for personal needs to be met (CP Mt 6:9-15; Php 4:6). Prayer is **intercession** - an appeal to God on behalf of others (CP Ro 10:1; Eph 1:15-19; Php 1:9-11; Col 4:1-4, 1Ti 2:1-4). Finally, prayer is **submission** - the abandonment of self-gratifying desires to allow

God's purpose to be fulfilled in our lives (CP Lu 22:42; 2Ti 2:19-21; He 12:1-11; Jas 4:6-10).

We also learn that for prayers to be answered there are conditions to be complied with. Prayer avails only as sin has been confessed and renounced by the one praying (CP Psa 32:1-7; 66:18; Pr 28:9; Isa 59:1-2; 1Jn 1:5-10). Prayer avails only as it comes from a forgiving heart (CP Mt 6:12-15; 18:21-35; Mk 11:25-26). Prayer avails only as it is made in a context of harmonious human relationships (CP Mt 5:23-24; Eph 4:31-32; He 12:14-15; 1Pe 3:1-12). Prayer avails only as it accords with God's will (CP 1Jn 3:19-22; 5:14-15). Prayer avails only as it is made in faith (CP Mt 17:20; Mk 11:22-24; He 11:6; Jas 1:5-7; 5:14-15). In conclusion, Christians must never think that they have outgrown the need for prayer - the Bible makes it quite clear why: prayer is commanded by God (CP 1Chr 16:11; Psa 32:1-6; 105:1-4; Isa 55:6; Amos 5:4-6; Mt 26:41; Eph 6:17-18; Col 4:2; 1Th 5:17). Prayer is the major outworking of God's redemptive plan from the human standpoint (CP Mt 9:37-38 (Lu 10:1-2); 1 Ti 2:1-4). If we neglect to pray or are indolent in prayer then we sin against God (CP 1Sam 12:23).