

Kenneth E Hagin on

Prayer



Kenneth E. Hagin

Authority in Prayer

In teaching on prayer for so many years, I always take two particular Bible texts. The reason I choose these two for my main texts is because I don't believe there are any better. These two texts will cover anything you want to teach on the subject of prayer. The first text I use is Ephesians 6:18, in which Paul is writing to the believers at Ephesus. The second text is John 15:7, which says, "If ye abide in me [Jesus], and MY WORDS abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

This verse is all-inclusive, because Jesus said "My words." Therefore, any word the Bible teaches on the subject of prayer is covered by John 15:7.

If Jesus had just said, "If you abide in Me," we Christians would automatically have it made because we all abide in Him as believers. But Jesus added, "And My words abide in you."

Have you ever noticed that many of God's promises are conditional? If you want answers to your prayers, follow the instructions that have been given to you: If you abide in Jesus, and His Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you.

I believe in receiving answers to prayer, all right. But there are conditions that have to be met in order for our prayers to be answered: "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you..."

I want to look at a passage in the Old Testament that teaches us something further on prayer. Isaiah 43:25 and 26 gives us insight into the authority we have in prayer.

ISAIAH 43:25,26

25 I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

26 Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.

God, through the prophet Isaiah, spoke this passage to Israel, but it applies to us because we are now God's children (Rom. 8:16). And Hebrews 9:12–14 explains how the blood of Christ has blotted out our transgressions!

Notice that God made the statement, "... I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake..." (v. 25). I used to think that He blotted out my transgressions for my sake and that for my sake, He wouldn't remember my sins. But that's not what the Scripture says. God did it for His sake! One reason He did it for His sake was, He wanted to bless us. And He couldn't bless us if He didn't blot out our transgressions and forgive our iniquities.

Look at verse 26 again.

ISAIAH 43:26

26 Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.

What does God mean when He says, "Put Me in remembrance"? In other words, He's saying, "Remind Me." Now, if God tells me to remind Him of something, I'm going to remind Him!

Well, God said for us to put Him in remembrance. And He tells us what to remind Him of: "I am He that blots out your transgressions, and I will not remember your iniquities [sins]."

God doesn't forget His Word or His promises, so why does He tell you to put Him in remembrance? When you remind Him, you also remind yourself.

It's important to remind yourself of God's forgiveness, because when you go to God in prayer, the devil will try to bring all of your past failures and sins up before you. If you entertain the thoughts the devil brings, you will begin to think, There's no use for me to go to God; He's not going to hear me. I've messed up too badly.

No, put God and yourself in remembrance, saying, “Yes, I’ve failed. I’ve missed it and have fallen short. But thank You, God, You said in Your Holy Word that You blot out my transgressions and will not remember my sins. Thank You, Father, that I can come into Your Presence as though the sin never existed.”

How does He keep from remembering your sin? Well, He’s God! You and I aren’t God, so it’s hard for us to keep from remembering. But God said, “I’ll not remember your iniquities.” In other words, He won’t remember that you did anything wrong. And if He doesn’t remember, why would you want to want to remember?

Bringing up past sin is a ploy of the devil to defeat us. He wants to keep us thinking about how we’ve missed it and how far short we’ve come. But that kind of thinking is not scriptural, and it robs us of the blessing that God has for us.

Isaiah 43:25 and 26 removes our guilt over past mistakes. Say it out loud, “Lord, I put You in remembrance. You’ve blotted out my transgressions. You’ve forgiven my sins. I stand in Your Presence as though I’ve never sinned.”

That Word gives you faith and confidence in prayer. Not only can you put God in remembrance of that passage, but if you abide in Him and His Words abide in you, you can put Him in remembrance of all His promises concerning prayer.

Charles G. Finney, a lawyer and renowned preacher, knew his authority in prayer. He had authority because of the Word of God, and he exercised that authority by putting God in remembrance of His Word.

I once read that Finney went to Rochester, New York, in 1828 to hold a crusade. Nearly every person in town got saved and started going to church. The only theater in town closed because no one went anymore. The only beer joint in town closed too.

And that happened wherever Finney went, time and time again. One of the secrets to Finney’s evangelistic success was his prayer life. Finney prayed from 4 o’clock in the morning until 8 o’clock in the morning—every morning.

Finney once said, “I had some experiences in prayer that indeed alarmed me. I’d find myself saying to the Lord, ‘Lord, You don’t think we’re not going to have revival here, do You?’ And I found myself quoting scripture after scripture to the Lord, putting Him in remembrance of all that He had said concerning revival and prayer.”

How could Finney be so bold? He understood his authority and covenant rights in prayer.

Today, we Christians live under the New Covenant (Heb. 8:6; 12:24), and thank God for it. But even in the Old Testament under the Old Covenant, God heard and answered prayer. (Of course, now we ought to be able to do more because we’re living under a better covenant with better promises.)

In Genesis chapter 18, we read that God intended to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of their great sin. But Abraham—who understood his covenant rights in prayer—intervened on behalf of the two cities, and made a deal with God!

GENESIS 18:22–25

22 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the Lord.

23 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?

25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

Abraham realized he had covenant standing with God; the two of them had a covenant with each other. That covenant provided both parties with certain rights. And Abraham knew he had covenant rights in prayer. Abraham knew he had rights and privileges that gave him legal standing with God. So we hear him speak plainly, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right” (v. 25).

If you continue to read the story, you find that the Lord answered Abraham every time he went to the Lord with a proposal. I believe that if Abraham had asked, “Will You spare the city for Lot’s sake alone,” the Lord would have said, “Sure, I will.”

Throughout the Old Testament, we find people who understood and took their place in their covenant with God. Joshua opened the Jordan River. He also prayed and the sky stood still. Elijah brought fire out of Heaven to consume the water-soaked offering and altar. David’s mighty men were shielded from death time and time again as long as they remembered the covenant. Practically all the prayers of the Old Testament were prayers by God’s covenant people. They had to be answered!

Thank God, we’re under a New Covenant and a better covenant, established on better promises (Heb. 8:6). And if there are better promises, that means better rights and privileges—better authority!

Even though we may have failed, we can enter the Presence of God as though our sin never existed. Why? We have a legal standing with God. We have His Word on it! God said, “I, even I, am he that blot out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins” (Isa. 43:25). Say it out loud again, “God has blotted out my transgressions. He doesn’t remember that I did anything wrong.”

Isaiah 43:25 was spoken to Israel, but it also applies to the Church today! The New Testament believer has authority and covenant rights in prayer just as believers in the Old Testament had covenant rights in prayer. We’re to put God in remembrance of His Word! When it comes to having authority in prayer, we are to remind God of what He has said concerning prayer! Throughout church history, the mighty men and women of prayer have been those who reminded God of His promises.

The rest of Isaiah 43:26 says, “...Let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.” Let us plead together! Declare thou! Another translation says, “Put forth your cause that you may be justified.” That’s a challenge from God for us to lay our case before Him. When you stand before the Throne of God, plead your case as a lawyer would. A lawyer is continually bringing law and precedence to

bear. What are our law and precedent? The Word! We bring what God has said.

Love: The Foundation for Successful Prayer

Everyone wants his or her prayers to be answered, but not everyone is willing to walk in love. Many people will love their friends and those who are kind to them, but few are willing to love their enemies. However, we must learn to love the way God loves for our prayers to be successful.

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. — **Ephesians 3:19**

Love—the God-kind of love, “agape”—is the first prerequisite for a successful prayer life. And if you are a child of God, you have this kind of love.

ROMANS 5:5

5 . . . the love [agape] of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

When you were born again, God became your Father. You are born of God, and God is love (1 John 4:8), so you are born of love. The nature of God is in you. And the nature of God is love. You are a love child of a love God!

Ours is a love family. Everyone in the family of God has God’s love shed abroad in his or her heart, or else that person is not in the family. He or she may not be exercising that love. He or she may be like the one-talent man who wrapped his talent in a napkin and buried it (Matthew 25:14-30). But the Bible declares that the Holy Ghost has shed the love of God abroad in our heart. That means the God-kind of love has been shed abroad in our spirit.

This is a love family. Love is the basis for all the activity of the Body of Christ in the earth.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:9

9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

The love law of the family of God is expressed in the following verse.

JOHN 13:34

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

We are also commanded to love our enemies:

MATTHEW 5:44–45

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

The reason we can do this—love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them which spitefully use us and persecute us—is because of the manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us.

1 JOHN 3:1

1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. . . .

This agape love—this God-kind of love—involves the choice of your will. That love is inside your spirit if you are born again. But you are the one who must will to put it into practice. You have to choose to let that love loose from within you.

We can choose to love all people—even our enemies. Almost anyone can love those who love them, but the Bible tells us to love our enemies.

God loved us while we were yet sinners and sent Christ to die for us (Rom. 5:8). We are to love the same way. John 15:13 says, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Jesus gave His life for us, and we are to give our life for others.

One of the ways we give our life for others is by giving ourselves to prayer. Prayer involves sacrifice. It involves laying down our own desires for the benefit of mankind. There is sacrifice in giving up your own will and time to pray for others.

To sacrifice and give of one’s self requires compassion. How do we know this is so? Because God so loved the world that He gave Jesus. And Jesus so loved us that He gave Himself for us.

And in Jesus’ earthly ministry, again and again we see compassion.

As we look at that wonderful truth, remember that Jesus said, “. . . he that hath seen me hath seen the Father . . .” (John 14:9). If you want to see God, look at Jesus. Jesus is the will of God in action. Jesus is the

love of God in action. And in His earthly ministry, Jesus was moved with compassion.

MATTHEW 9:36–38

36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few.

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

Jesus asked us to share His compassion for people by praying that laborers would be sent into the harvest field.

Jesus' compassion also moved Him to heal the sick:

MATTHEW 14:14

14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

Jesus' compassion led to the feeding of the four thousand:

MATTHEW 15:32

32 Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

In His compassion, Jesus healed the blind:

MATTHEW 20:34

34 So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

Compassion led to the healing of the leper in Mark chapter 7.

MARK 1:40–41

40 And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

In His compassion, Jesus healed every one who came to Him and asked to be healed.

Jesus' compassion also led Him to grieve with those who were grieving. Sympathy says, "I'm sorry you feel how you feel." But

compassion says, “I feel how you feel.” Compassion also brings deliverance to the hurting.

JOHN 11:33,35

33 When Jesus therefore saw her [Mary] weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled. . . .

35 Jesus wept.

But Jesus didn't just weep with Mary; His compassion caused Him to act. He delivered Mary and Martha from their sorrow by raising their brother Lazarus from the dead.

Jesus' compassion brought deliverance. If we have the divine compassion of Jesus, there will be deliverance. But I think too much of the time we've tried to bring deliverance without God's divine compassion. That's where prayer and intercession come in.

Weeping by unction of the Holy Spirit with them who weep brings deliverance (Rom. 12:15).

Dr. John G. Lake is known for his ministry that was well marked with apostolic ideals. He did an amazing work in South Africa just after the turn of the century.

So many healings took place in his tabernacle in Johannesburg, report of them reached the leaders of the nation. Some of the top government people sought him for help on behalf of the wife of a certain government official.

When Lake went to her home, he found her bedridden with terminal cancer. He determined that she was a Christian. Then he began to give her Scripture to teach her about divine healing and to get her faith activated.

She made a decision to trust God for her healing. The doctors had given her up to die and were only giving her pain relievers to keep her comfortable. But she decided to stop all drugs.

She said, “If I am going to trust God for my healing, and I am, then I’m going to throw myself completely over on His mercy.”

“This woman was in so much pain,” Lake said, “that one of the ministers of the church and I stayed at her bedside around the clock, praying. As we prayed, she would get relief.”

One morning, after having prayed all night, Lake went home just long enough to bathe and shave. Then he started back.

“When I came within two blocks of the house,” Lake said, “I heard the woman screaming in pain. At the sound of those screams, somehow I seemed to enter into a divine compassion. . . .”

Lake entered into the sufferings of Jesus. He began to feel just like Jesus feels. For Jesus can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities (Heb. 4:15).

Lake said, “I found myself running those last two blocks without even thinking what I was doing. Without thinking, I rushed into the room, sat down on the edge of the bed, picked up that emaciated body in my arms like I would a baby, and began to weep. While I was weeping, she was perfectly healed.”

Somehow, the compassion of Jesus, the love of God, was able to permeate Lake’s heart, his spirit.

Dedicated believers can enter into that area of compassion one way—and you will not get there any other way—and it is by fellowship with God. You cannot fellowship with God, you cannot sit in the Presence of the great God of this universe without His love permeating your being, and without His compassion flowing into you. And it is when you can get into this place that you will be able to do as Jesus said in John chapter 14.

JOHN 14:12

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

The works that Jesus did were born out of love and compassion. The works that believers shall do, including prayer, are products of sharing in Jesus' ministry of love and compassion.

To intercede effectively, you must know the great love God has for all humanity. Since the love of God is in us, and the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts, we are to be kind as God is kind—even to the unthankful and to the evil (Luke 6:35).

Jesus has canceled out the sins of the unsaved. That's how God is kind to the unthankful and to the evil. And He has given us that message, that word of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19).

Yet we have preached, "God is going to get you if you don't watch out. He's after you."

People have trained their children, saying, "Don't do that. Jesus won't love you if you do that."

That's a lie. Jesus may not want them to do it, but He will still love them even if they do.

Telling children, "God won't love you if you do that," causes them to grow up with their minds blinded to the light of His love. And it's very difficult to get that kind of teaching out of people.

God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. When we can get people to see God as He really is, they will want to love Him. It is our responsibility to love people the way that God loves them, to be kind to the unthankful and the evil, to pray for those who persecute us, and to move with compassion in all that we do. Then our prayers will be successful, and we will do the works of Jesus in the earth!

Freedom in Prayer (July 2003)

On August 8, 1934, Rev. Kenneth E. Hagin was healed by the power of God through faith and prayer after lying bedfast for 16 months. In this article, he shares the beginnings of his ministry and his introduction to the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

I soon began my ministry as a young Baptist preacher, and pastored a community church just eight miles from that courthouse square. The first year I pastored, I wore out four pairs of shoes walking to preach. I walked down dusty old roads to preach the Gospel, to tell how Jesus had saved and healed me.

I used to say, "I'll preach from the Red River to the Gulf of Mexico, telling everywhere I go that Jesus saves, heals, and is coming again. And I'll preach it from the Louisiana border to the New Mexico state line." I thought at the time that covering Texas would be covering quite a bit of territory!

Because I believed in divine healing, I began associating with Full Gospel people who also believed and preached divine healing. I liked to go to their services, because I enjoyed the fellowship, and hearing others who believed in divine healing made my faith grow stronger.

They also preached about being filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking in other tongues, something I didn't quite understand or altogether agree with, but I tolerated it in order to have fellowship on the subject of divine healing.

The thing that bothered me the most, however, was when everyone would pray at once. I wasn't accustomed to it and I started to say something a time or two to straighten these people out. Then I heard someone else tell them, "Don't you know God isn't hard of hearing?"

"He's not nervous, either," they replied.

When they invited believers to pray at the altar, I would go forward to pray with them, but I would stay as far away as I could, because their

praying in unison bothered me. I would get off in a corner somewhere and pray quietly.

After a while it occurred to me that these people knew about divine healing and my denomination apparently didn't; therefore, they might know more about the Holy Spirit than I did, too. I decided to read through the Acts of the Apostles to see how the Early Church prayed.

As I read, I couldn't find one place where they called on Deacon Brown or Sister Jones to lead in prayer. I found to my utter amazement that in the Early Church everybody prayed at once. "And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God WITH ONE ACCORD . . ." (Acts 4:23–24).

The thing that cinched it with me was the 16th chapter of Acts, where I read that Paul and Silas were in jail at midnight. Their backs were bleeding. Their feet were in stocks. Yet at midnight they prayed and sang praises to God, ". . . and the prisoners heard them" (Acts 16:25). Until then I had believed in praying to God, but I believed in being quiet about it. But here I saw that Paul and Silas weren't quiet, even in jail.

The next time I went to the Full Gospel service and they invited everyone to the altar to pray, I got right in the middle of them and lifted my voice just like they did. I felt a wonderful release and freedom in prayer. Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). God's Word is truth, and it will set you free.