

CAYA Series – “Understanding the Purpose and Power of Prayer”

CHAPTER 1 - “DOES PRAYER REALLY WORK?”

INTRODUCTION

- Unanswered prayer is a major obstacle that stands in the way of a life of true faith
- Confusion about prayer affects those who are committed Christians
 - Does it make a difference
 - Being weary of not having their prayers answered
 - It is just a religious exercise
 - Not very important to everyday life, doesn't apply to the real world
- Prayer is not a priority for us – other activities seem more exciting and fruitful
- Doubts about certain aspects of prayer: what should I ask for and how long should I continue to pray

CONSEQUENCES TO UNANSWERED PRAYER

1. Abandonment and isolation from God, imagining that He doesn't care about our problems
2. We question God's character and integrity
3. We feel as if our lives are very unsettled and unstable
4. We come to premature conclusions about ourselves and our prayers
5. We doubt our calling as God's intercessors

THE MISUNDERSTOOD ART OF PRAYER

- Prayer is communion and communication with God that touches His heart
- Prayer is meant to be one of the most exciting aspects of a life of faith. It has the power to transform lives, change circumstances, give peace, and perseverance in the midst of trial, alter the course of nations, and win the world for Christ.
- Prayer is the inheritance of the believer

THE PATHWAY TO PRAYER

1. When prayer does not bring results, it is an indication that something is wrong.
 - a. Note, answers to our prayer will not always be immediately manifested. (Example: Daniel's prayer took 21 days for the answer to come)
 - b. God answers as soon as we ask, and He reveals those answers in His timing
2. God is faithful to answer prayer – **Mark 11:24**
3. God's will and Word do work when they are understood and put into practice.

True Prayer will:

- Build intimacy with God
- Bring honor to his nature and character
- Cause respect for His integrity
- Enable belief in his word
- Cause a trust in His love
- Affirm His purposes and will
- Appropriate His promise

Prayer is meant to be answered or else God would not ask us to pray! **John 11:41-42**

You can have an effective prayer life that will overflow into all other areas of your life.

PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, You have said, "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know" (**Jeremiah 33:3**). Based on this promise, we call to You and ask You to show us great and unsearchable truths about prayer that You have set forth in Your Word. Forgive us for leaning on our own understanding when it comes to prayer. Heal us from the spiritual and emotional effects that unanswered prayer have worked in us. Give us open minds and hearts to hear Your Word and to allow the Holy Spirit to teach us Your purpose and truth. We pray this in the name of Jesus, our Wisdom and our Strength. Amen*

Dictionary defined Principles as:

- Fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behavior or for a chain or reasoning
- A moral rule or belief that helps you know what is right or wrong and that influences your actions: a law or fact of nature that explain how something works or why something happens

What questions/reflections came to mind as we reviewed the summary?

[Individual/Small Group Activity]

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BREAKOUT QUESTIONS

What information presented in Chapter 1 impacted/influenced each member of your team the most? *(It could be a principle, revelation, understanding, insight or obstacle, etc.)*

Team Member

Team Member

Team Member

Team Member

- ***Did you identify any obstacles that are causing you not to spend time in prayer? If so, what are they?***

- ***When was the last time God answered one of your prayers and what was it? How did you pray?***