



## CELL GUIDE

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**TOPIC** Prayer

**SPEAKER** Rev David Ravenhill

**THEME** Values for Living - The Beatitudes

**DATE** 05 & 06 Aug 2017

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## MESSAGE SUMMARY

### DO WE ONLY COMMUNICATE IN A CRISIS?

How would you describe the relationship between a husband and wife if they only communicate during a crisis or emergency, but would otherwise never talk to one another? Is there even a relationship to speak of?

Sometimes, as Christians, our own relationship with God might remind us of such a situation. For e.g., when we are too busy to speak to Him unless we need something, or when we pray only when all other avenues have failed. We forget that God should be our first resort, and not our last.

We forget that it was a great joy, delight and honour for the high priest to enter into God's presence in the Old Testament, and now that we have been blessed by Christ to enter daily into His presence, we take it for granted and no longer approach it with the same joy and reverence that the Israelites did.

In 1 Sam 13, the Bible describes how the Philistines systematically removed weapons from the hands of the Israelites so that they would not be able to fight. Our enemy is likewise working to remove our weapons from us; weapons that are made mighty through God for pulling down strongholds (2 Cor 10:4). Prayer is one such weapon.

Let us turn to God in prayer to restore the weapons that have been given to us.  
Let us touch heaven to change earth.

### TOUCHING HEAVEN

In order for us to restore our prayer life so that the power of God can move, we first need to be convinced of three things:

#### 1. THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Firstly, we need to be convinced that God is present when we pray and that He hears our prayers. We know that God is all-knowing. He knows when we sit down and when we rise up. He discerns our thoughts from afar and knows even before a word is on our tongue.

We are also reminded that there is a privilege that comes from being in the presence of God. Just as Israel's high priest had access to God, our great high priest Jesus has promised us that the temple veil has been torn and that we have been granted access into the presence of the Father.

## 2. THE PASSION OF GOD

Yet being in the presence of God is of little use if He does not love us, is not interested in us, or is unconcerned about our situation. In this, Scripture is also clear that the Father will love those who love Jesus. That is, if we observe Jesus' commands and keep them, we will be loved by Jesus and the Father.

We may not always feel this way. Our sin might wreck us with guilt or shame and we may feel unworthy of the Father's love. Yet we should remember that the heart is deceitful above all things, and we would do well to trust more in the word of God, than our own fragile feelings.

## 3. THE POWER OF GOD

Finally, God's presence with us and His passion for us is of little use if He did not have the power to answer our prayer. His promises would hold little weight if He could not deliver on them. It is useful to have not only the witness of Scripture, but the testimonies of our friends, and even of our own testimonies of His goodness.

## CHANGING EARTH

Jesus himself shows us a model of prayer (Matt 6, Luke 11) to remind us of the **person** we are praying to and His relationship to us. His **position**, **pre-eminence** and **power** allows Him to do all that He has promised. His **purpose** and **pattern** is that we might align our prayers to Him, along with His **provision**, **pardon** and **protection** that we might give Him thanks and praise!

Perhaps we do not pray so often because we have not been convinced of the presence, the passion, or the power of God when we pray. If so, be encouraged that Scripture assures us of His presence with us, His passion for us, and His power to help us. Be encouraged to pray, to rebuild the weapons that the enemy would keep from us, to touch heaven so that we might change earth.

There is power available to us. Power to pull down strongholds in our lives, and power to change the world as we pray.

# QUESTIONS

**What are some aspects of prayer that the speaker mentioned which you enjoy the most?**

**What are some aspects of prayer that you do not enjoy or that you struggle with and why?**

**Who are some people in your life, or what are some situations in your life that God is calling you to pray for? What are some practical steps you might take in the coming week to grow your prayer life and how can the group pray for you?**