

COVENANT CONNECTION

“To you, Yahweh, do I lift up my soul.” (Psalm 25:1, WEB)

“Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.” (Psalm 25:22, ESV)

Prayer is the next area I want to discuss now at another level than we did in chapter five. It is very important in cultivating our covenant confidence. It is essential in our covenant confirmation. Now we are going to look at some covenant prayer secrets. Interestingly enough, Psalm 25 begins with petition and ends with intercession. Prayer is our daily *connection* with the God of the covenant. Jesus has opened the way for us to communicate with God. The covenant people are those who really can say they have “connections.” The connection we have is with God, through Christ, by the Holy Spirit. This is the *covenant connection*.

We are able to connect with God because of the covenant. We are connected. We have union with God through Christ. However, many believers do not walk in the constant communion that is available through the covenant. Covenant confidence grows as we walk in constant communion with the Father and the Son by the Holy Spirit. This was impossible in the old covenant but is now made available to every believer (John 14:20).

THE SECRET PLACE

The secret place of the Most High was in the tabernacle where the presence of God dwelt behind the curtain (Psalm 91:1-2). David longed to dwell in God’s presence (Psalm 84:1-2). He took shelter in God’s presence (Psalm 27:5). He loved God’s house.

In the new covenant, we can enter into the secret place in prayer without leaving our present location. Jesus has opened the way into the very presence of God for us (Hebrews 10:20). We are encouraged in the scripture to draw near to God. He is only a whispered prayer away. We can know Him intimately and experience His presence. We should find a place where we can be alone with Him and know Him in secret (Matthew 5:6). As we wait on Him our hope is strengthened. Being invited into His presence is one of the greatest joys of the

new covenant. We can go into the secret place of prayer with confidence.

CONFIDENCE IN PRAYER

“¹¹For your name’s sake, Yahweh, pardon my iniquity, for it is great... ¹⁶ Turn to me, and have mercy on me, for I am desolate and afflicted. ¹⁷The troubles of my heart are enlarged. Oh bring me out of my distresses. ¹⁸Consider my affliction and my travail. Forgive all my sins.” (Psalm 25:11, 16-18, WEB)

PRAYING FOR YOURSELF

Repentance is not just for unbelievers coming to Christ. It is for believers also. Jesus tells the churches to repent in His letters to them in the Book of Revelation, chapters two and three. We should live a life of repentance before God. Make this a regular part of your interaction with God. Remember His holy nature. Keep a clean slate.

Prayer is coming before the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16). Ask for His grace and mercy. Don’t be shy about this. We need it. I need lots of it. “Oh, God, please pour upon me all of the mercy and grace I can stand.” That’s my prayer.

My troubles mean something to God. He cares. I have a High Priest in heaven who is touched by my problems. “Oh, thank God!” “Jesus, thank You.” “Lord, have mercy.” Tell Him all about it. David said, **“For I am lonely and afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged; bring me out of my distresses. Consider my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all my sin”** (Psalm 25:16b-18, ESV). Let us be confident that Jesus hears what we pour out of our souls to Him. I believe He listens and is sympathetic toward us (Hebrews 4:15). I believe He will bring us out of our distresses. Can you say, “Amen?”

“¹⁴Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.” (1 John 5:14-15, NKJV)

In the new covenant we can pray with confidence. Praise God! God will give us anything that we ask Him for that is in His will. It doesn’t necessarily say that He will give us things that are in His will that we do not ask for. Therefore, ask.

For the most part, I am convinced that we do not pray more because we really

don't believe in the power of prayer. If we would ask more and more we would likely receive more and more answers to our prayers (Matthew 7:7-8, James 4:2).

Stop and think about those words in 1 John 5:14. He says our confidence is that if we ask ANYTHING according to His will He will hear it and grant it. Wow! That is covenant confidence. What a glorious covenant connection this is! The covenant is revealed in His, "Last Will and Testament," the Holy Bible. He has died to enact everything *The Will* promised us (Hebrews 9:16). It is ratified in His blood. We should search the will and ask according to its promises.

PRAYING FOR OTHERS

¹⁶If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *which does not lead to death*, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not *leading to death*. There is sin *leading to death*. I do not say that he should pray about that. ¹⁷All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not *leading to death*." (1 John 5:16-17, NKJV)

This is a continuation of the scripture passage we were just considering. This is what we can pray confidently about. If we see a brother sinning, we should pray for him. Ask God to help him. Pray for the people of God.

"Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles." (Psalm 25: 22, ESV)

David prayed for his people. Oh, that we would pray for those who are God's people all around us who are living in sin. It breaks the heart of God. He wants us to pray for them. He has chosen to work through our prayers. Our prayers may be the only thing keeping some folks from disaster. Pray that believers will see and walk in the covenant Christ has died to give (Ephesians 1:17). Pray for the brethren!

"Redeem," (pâdâh) above means, to *ransom*, to *release*, and to *preserve*.ⁱ That's what we should pray for those around us. "Oh, God, release my friends." "Keep them by Your power and grace." "Don't let sin dominant my brothers and sisters." "Send us a renewal and refreshing of Your Holy Spirit." "Help our churches repent during this time" (Luke 13:3, Revelation 2:19). "Revive us again, O Lord." "Don't let Your people drown under their troubles." "Oh, Father,

don't let Your people love the world and the things of the world so much that they forget You."

"I exhort therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and givings of thanks, be made for all men: ²for kings and all who are in high places; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and reverence. ³For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; ⁴who desires all people to be saved and come to full knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:1-4, WEB)

Also, let us pray for this lost world. Satan has blinded the minds of those who are outside of the covenant of God (2 Corinthians 4:4). When you witness to folks and they are unreceptive, don't stop there. Pray for them. Ask God to remove the blinding power of Satan over them. They are children of the devil (John 8:44). They are under his authority (Acts 26:18). They are spiritually blind.

Unless that power is broken over them by prayer we will see little results from our witnessing. In fact, everything we say to them is foolishness to them (1 Corinthians 2:14). Paul told Timothy above to pray for "**all men**." God desires all people to be saved. He is showing us that praying for all men is a necessity for this to come to pass.

This is our number one priority. He says, "**first of all**" pray for them. New Covenant believers are a part of the Holy Priesthood of God put into this world to intercede for the lost (1 Peter 2:9). I don't believe we can proclaim light with any effectiveness without "first" interceding for those in darkness. He tells us to pray that "**all men**" will come into the knowledge of the truth. He says, do this "**first of all**." Therefore, it seems we must not expect many to come into the truth unless we are first praying for them. I believe this kind of prayer is pleasing to God. We can be confident He will hear and answer our pleas for the salvation of others.

HELP THROUGH PRAYER

"Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known." (Jeremiah 33:3, ESV)

The fact of the matter is, we often don't know what to pray for or how to pray. We need God's help. We can rely on the Holy Spirit to help us in our prayer. We can expect everything to turn out according to the will of God when He intercedes through us (Romans 8:26-28).

He reveals things to us in prayer. He doesn't give us revelation that is contrary to His truth in scripture, but He gives us the revelation we need nonetheless. It does not contradict what He has revealed already, but it may certainly shed light on things we have not seen before. We need this revelation. We need God to show us His ways. We should trust the Covenant Counselor to give us covenant counsel. Prayer is a vital part of this.

“Show me your ways, Yahweh. Teach me your paths. ⁵Guide me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation, I wait for you all day long.” (Psalm 25:4-5, WEB)

Notice that the verses above is something David is praying to the LORD. He is asking God to do these things in his life and to him. God will teach us in prayer. We must learn to stay with it and learn from Him. Deep calls to deep. We must be spiritually influenced in this way (1 Corinthians 2:14).

“Make me to know Your ways.” “Lord, do what You have to do to teach me.” “Show me Your truth.” “Lead me.” “Give me the confidence I need to walk through this life bringing glory to You.”

God answers the prayers of those who seek Him. The glorious truth of this book is that you can know God for yourself. This is the covenant promise. Dear friend, if you have never called upon Him for salvation then please do it now. You can walk through the rest of your life confident that you know God. This relationship with Him awaits you now.

“¹⁰For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days,” says the Lord; “I will put my laws into their mind, I will also write them on their heart. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ¹¹ They will not teach every man his fellow citizen, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all will know me, from their least to their greatest. ¹² For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness. I will remember their sins and lawless deeds no more.” (Hebrews 8:10-12, WEB)

¹ <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/poly/h6299.htm>. (accessed on October 5, 2014).