

CHAPTER ONE

1.0. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Throughout the Bible, believers are called to pray. In the book of Psalms 39:12, the Psalmist appeals to God to hear his cry and hear his prayer. But what is prayer? What does it mean to "pray without ceasing?" And does prayer really make a difference? The "Lord, teach us how to pray." Luke 11:1 "After Jesus said this; He looked toward heaven and prayed." John 17:1, "They all joined together constantly in prayer." Acts 1:14, and pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests." –Ephesians 6:18. Pray continually. 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

Let's start with the second part. In order to develop a clear idea of prayer, we must first have a clear idea of God. Biblically speaking, God is a personal being. This is critical to prayer because it means that God is a person we can interact with, that He has a will and that we are able to relate to Him on a meaningful level. If He were impersonal, then prayer would not be meaningful. If He were personal, but uncaring and distant, prayer wouldn't serve a purpose.

Not only is God personal, He is also loving (1 John 4:8, 16; John 3:16). This is also important in relation to prayer. If God were personal, but uncaring or unkind, then prayer might do us more harm than good! But God does not only love, He is all loving (omnibenevolent). In relation to prayer, this means that God always desires

the best for us because He loves us. God is also all powerful (omnipotent), meaning that no prayer is beyond His ability to answer, "For nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37). If God were less than all powerful, then we would have no assurance that He could answer or even hear our prayers.

The fact that God is all-knowing (omniscient) is also significant to the concept of prayer. If God were limited, then He would not know all that is happening in His creation. If this were the case, He might overlook our prayers because they might be beyond His knowledge. Fortunately, the Bible is clear that God knows everything (see, for instance, Psalm 139:2-4; 147: 4-5; Isaiah 46:10). In relation to God's omniscience, Jesus said, "Your Father knows what you need before you ask him" (Matthew 6:8).

God is also wise and holy. He knows what is best for us, as well as what will lead us to holiness rather than sin. He is also immanent, meaning that God is active in His creation in a personal way, not only directing greater matters of history, but also involved in the life of everyone. This means that no prayer is too great for Him, but also that no prayer is too small for Him.

While we cannot explore all of God's attributes here, one final one to note, of utmost importance to prayer is God's sovereignty. God is supremely in charge of everything that happens in His universe. Nothing takes Him by surprise and

nothing happens in our lives without the knowledge of God, even though we may not always understand His actions: "'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts'" (Isaiah 55:8-9).

In hearing and responding to our prayers, then, we are assured that God will do so on the basis of His many attributes. His personal nature, love, power, knowledge, wisdom, holiness, immanence and sovereignty all play a role in how we relate to God in prayer and how He relates to us.

1.1. PURPOSE OF STUDY

The sustainability of believers' faith in Jesus Christ is through persistent prayers. Hence, 1Thess. 5:17 encourages believers to pray without ceasing. Therefore, the purpose of this research work is to identify the importance of prayer in church management as it relates to crises.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In recent times, as strategic as the church in spiritual and social development, the church is still bedevil with crises due to poor spiritual management of its structure which some authorities of churches has over time relegated the spiritual enclaves

of Christendom to mere materialistic activities, leading to various spread of conflict among churches and between believers, characterized by ineffectiveness and inefficiency due to long neglect of spiritual (prayer) involvement to word of God. Hence, this study intends to resolve the following challenges in Christendom:

- Attitudes of believers to prayer;
- Impact of prayer in church growth; and
- Methods adopted by churches in handling church crises.

Prayer is the only way ascribed to believers through which we could communicate with the Father.

1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are to be able to examine prayer as means of resolving church crises and enhancement of church growth. The study is aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- To determine the importance of prayer in Christendom;
- To determine method to adopt for effective crises management;
- To determine role of prayer in administration and development of a church;
- To ascertain whether prayer can forestall church crises;
- To recommend prayer as the best “panacea” for church growth.

I.4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is on the effect of prayer in the management and prevention of church crises with a view to energise church growth, while enhancing spiritual growth of believers.

1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study will largely examine and relied heavily on quantitative and qualitative primary and secondary sources of data base on content analysis as it regards existing literature on the efficacy of prayer, the impact to church crises management as further examined in chapter four.

a. RESEARCH QUESTION

In order to effectively answer the research question and present an empirical study

I have formulated a few empirical questions:

- Is prayer a catalyst for managing church conflict?
- What role does prayer play in ensuring spiritual growth in Christendom?
- Could the existence of skill managerial competency improve current challenges in churches?

b. RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS

To adequately carry out the research work, the following propositions are made:

- Prayer is the key to prevent and resolve church challenges;
- The current strategic methods of prayer employ by most 20th churches in have not been effective in resolving crises in Christendom;
- Is to allow effective prayer network of intercessors, backed up with administrative competency that can impact growth in churches

16. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The significance of this study is anchored on the following:

- The study will exposed various method to be adopted in prayer network;
- The study will open up further area of concern and principles for church management;
- The need to appraise existing causes of crises in churches and how to proffer solutions.

17. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study is as a result of the following limitation:

a) TIME

Time is one of the problems encountered in the course of carrying out this study.

This study was initiated concluded within a few months, a period short enough to hamper the adequate procurement of relevant data;

b) LACK OF COOPERATION

Most of the respondents have not been cooperative and compromising to the researcher as it ought to be in facilitating the sourcing of relevant data, and this affected the study in a way. Notwithstanding the above limitations, the good “good texture” of this study is not impeded.

1.8. ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

This study is subdivided into five chapters. Chapter one entails the introduction, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, statement of the problem and the entire organization of the study. Chapter two elucidates relevant existing literature on subject matter. Chapter three is based on biblical and theological perspective of

men of God who succeeded through prayers, attitude of believers to prayer, administrative responsibilities of church leaders to church crises management.

Chapter four is on the prayer lifestyle of prophet Nehemiah and impact of managerial skill on church development. Finally, chapter five summarizes the entire study accompanied with findings and recommendation.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. INTRODUCTION

Prayer is a relationship, wherein we humbly communicate, worship, and sincerely seek God's face, knowing that He hears us, loves us and will respond, though not always in a manner we may expect or desire. Prayer can encompass confession, praise, adoration, supplication, intercession and more.

Having clearly understood God's nature in prayer, it may be tempting to delve right into a definition of prayer. But first let's take a brief look at what prayer is not (this is by no means an exhaustive list):

- Prayer is not magic. We cannot summon God as though He were a genie, waiting to grant our wishes without regard for our circumstances or the consequences.
- Prayer does not make demands. While we can make requests of God in prayer, we dare not make demands. God is the Creator of the universe and does not take orders from us.

- Prayer is for our benefit, not God's. We need a relationship with God, available to us through Jesus Christ and engaged primarily through prayer, because we were made to function best when we are in a proper relationship with our Creator.
- Prayer is not a guarantee against suffering. "In this world you will have trouble" (John 16:33); "Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed" (1 Peter 4:12-13).
- Prayer is not an opportunity for us to show off. "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men" (Matthew 6:5).

In addition, our attitude in prayer is important. We must not be haughty, but humble (Ephesians 4:2; James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6, etc.). Seen in this light, to "pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17) means, in one sense, that we must always strive to have a prayerful attitude. Our prayers must come often and regularly, not from legalistic duty, but from a humble heart, realizing our dependence on God in every aspect of our lives.

"The Availability of Prayer" explains how prayer is always available to us and, as such, is a wonderful spiritual resource we should turn to regularly, not just in times of crisis. "Learning from the Prayer Life of Jesus" explores the many prayers of Jesus, emphasizing the Lord's Prayer, as well as some of Christ's habits of prayer and how we can learn from his example.

"Probing the Problems of Prayer" looks at some challenges and difficulties in relation to prayer, addressing questions such as, "Should we pray for our enemies?" and "If God is sovereign, why do we need to pray?" As we journey together in understanding the nature and purpose of prayer, Prayer can make a profound difference in our world. But it is up to us to offer our prayers humbly and regularly.

Bruce Wilkinson (2000), viewed prayer as a radical and spiritual petition about anything that threatens the peace of believers, approaching to throne of grace for divine intervention. According to John Olaiwola (2009), posited that, prayer is an integral part christen growth and for any believer to be able to waged war against powers of darkness, such believer must exercises his/her strength in the alter of prayers. Daniel Olukoya (2008), that believer sources for power and authorirty from God through aggressive prayer. That there is no height one can't attain in the spirit when you are fervent in warfare prayer.

Benson Idahosa (1981), stated that, prayer and faith energies uncommon miracles. Prayer is the platform upon which faith is exercised in God. Modern Christianity suffers from two basic deformities: our inability to develop saints and our inability to transform sinners from darkness to light. Kenneth Hagin once refers to the church as a place where there are many converts but fewer births in Christ. This is as a result of prayerless in the churches of today. When the discussion on prayer is said, one man in 1930 great revival stands out. That is, Apostle Joseph Babalola, noted, and has been quoted by Moses Oludele (2007), revival is a divine intervention in the normal course of spiritual things through vigorous prayers.

Benson Idahosa (2002), expressed his experience while praying for the sick and the dead to come back to life:

I prayed for that dead eight years old boy, and he also rose up from the dead. A few days later, my gate was taking over by the sick, the blind, the lame, the deaf, all looking for healing for their bodies and the God that can give power to ordinary men to raise the dead back to life.

However, there is nothing a believer does without talking it over with the Father in prayer. Whether expected break through, healing, deliverance, etc. when we talk

about the mantle of power, we are talking of an outward manifestation of the power of God which is energized by or through prayers, Daniel Olukoya (2012).

A prayerless church or believer is crises individual church where Satan has the upper hand in the activities of the individual or the church. In the light of the foregoing, the need to also x-ray the role of management in the study is of great importance.

According to Wigmore & Rouse (2013), he analyses Crisis management as the application of strategies designed to help an organization deal with a sudden and significant negative event. A crisis can occur as a result of an unpredictable event or as an unforeseeable consequence of some event that had been considered a potential risk. In either case, crises almost invariably require that decisions be made quickly to limit damage to the organization. For that reason, one of the first actions in crisis management planning is to identify an individual to serve as crisis manager. Other crisis management best practices include:

- Planning in detail for responses to as many potential crises as possible.
- Establishing monitoring systems and practices to detect early warning signals of any foreseeable crisis.
- Establishing and training a crisis management team or selecting an external crisis management firm with a proven track record in your business area.

- Involving as many stakeholders as possible in all planning and action stages.

The field of crisis management is generally considered to have originated with Johnson & Johnson's handling of a situation in 1982, when cyanide-laced Tylenol killed seven people in the Chicago area. The company immediately recalled all Tylenol capsules in the country and offered free product in tamper-proof packaging. As a result of the company's swift and effective response, the effect to shareholders was minimized and the brand recovered and flourished.

The predicaments besieging the church is adduced to lack of effective prayer activities and lack of spiritual developmental programs that will develop the people spiritually. It is regretted that churches that supposed to be identified by the society as the life-wire of the society, has been besieged by myriads of predicaments ranging from crisis in faith, problem of leadership, class struggle for power and clash of interest among believers. Also seen are corruption, prayerlessness, nepotism, oppression, and arrogance ascribed to the offices of church founders and church polities, etc.

Explanation of the position of prayer in leadership and crisis management in the church, referral could be adduced from the book of Acts chapter 6 and 7 where similar crisis came up. And the Apostle decided to manage the situation by appointing those who would attend to the oppressed among believers for equity

sake while attend to prayer and the work of the gospel. Paul's teaching on leadership 1Tim. 4:12 also addresses such problems.

Any failure of leaders to pay debt ears to this phenomenon would be a grave and dangerous omission by the church. To disregard the persistent and sometimes aggressive functions of prayer anywhere in the world, and the refusal to meet the spiritual demands for spiritual exercise, way invite disaster. This is because in any society, state or church, that those not give priority to prayer, may face stronger spiritual opposition from the devil through crisis.

The church as both people of God and communion is composed of clerics, religious and laity. The clerics are the Bishops, Priests, Pastors, Ministers, Leaders and Deacons, while the religious are drawn from both the clergy and the laity but marked with unique identity, vows or promise of evangelical counsels of obedience, poverty and chastity and the laity are those who are not clerics. According to Dodo (1998), believers and unbeliever (mix multitudes) members are those who constitute church. The church, through spiritual programs (fasting, prayers, praise and worship), enjoys the assemblies of one another in the presence of God. All members, clergy, religious, and laity are called to the vineyard of the lord, although, at different times and for different functions but for one unique prize, eternal life and union with God. For the gospel cannot become deeply rooted in the mentality, life and work of a people without the active presence of lay down

prayer network among believers. Therefore, from the foundation of the church, very special care must be taken to build spiritually and Holy Ghost filled believers, who know the importance of prayer and the management of a church as spiritual organization, and those who can stand against the wild of the devil through Holiness, Righteousness and violent prayer network.

There is no place for absolutism or dictatorship but rather solicitude and service. The exercise of authority must be within the framework of the pastoral finality and the supreme law of the church which is the salvation of souls, and to be exercised for the good of the community of faith, i.e. for common good and not for private aggrandizement. According to Monroe (1992), “this authority requires cooperation, collaboration and solidarity. Church Leadership is compared to Pastoral Epistles “to aspire leadership as an honorable ambition” (I Tim 3:1). Paul in his letter to the Corinthians exalted leadership as one of the myriads of the gifts which the one Holy Spirit bestows on the members of the people of God for the stability of the physical body of Christ-Church (I Cor. 12:28). Leadership is a vocation, as Obiefuna (2004) remarks, Leaders are, therefore, to spiritually feed the people of God (John 21:15-19), to direct and lead them by word of mouth and practical examples, convinced that theirs is divine assignment, they are expected to brace themselves for war in prayer against the problems of self, those around them and contemporary times. Convinced too, that they did not struggle to get to the position

of leadership and honour as the sons of Zebedee wanted (Mk 10:34-45, matt 20:20-23), or to be the greatest (Mk 6:19-24), and that they did not take the honour upon themselves but were called by God (Heb 5:4) they know they share in the biblical dictum of Luke 10:16; “whoever listens to you listens to me; whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me”. They are therefore to be the examples others will follow. They are not to lead others astray. Leadership is therefore the ability to show the way, to influence people, to command respect and followership and more so to effectively harness the human and material resources for the achievement of the cooperate goals of a given community or organization. Furthermore, spiritual leadership entail effective prayers “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (Jam. 5:16), Ojo and Nwadike (1990).

2.1. CONCLUSION

From the above scenario, prayer remains the only determinant factor for spiritual growth and church development. Churches must enshrine the efficacy of prayer in order to impact spiritual awareness on its members with a view to understand the workings of Christ and be able to contend with the powers of darkness.

2.2. BOOKS/MATERIALS:

- Bruce Wilkinson (2000), The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life,
- Benson Idahosa (1981), Fire in His Bones.
- Benson Idahosa (1990), If I Be A Man of God.
- Daniel Olukoya (2008), Pray Rain,
- Daniel Olukoya (2012), How to Receive the Mantle of Power.
- John Olaiwola (2009), The Foundation of Prayer.
- Moses Oludele Idowu (2007), The Great Revivalist of 1930: The Origin of Modern day Pentecostalism in Nigeria. Published by Divine Artillery

CHAPTER THREE

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES OF PRAYER

3.0. INTRODUCTION

The Old and New Testaments gave credence and showcased the importance of prayers to Prophets of Old and Apostles of Christ. This chapter will make an attempt to analysis effect and impact of prayer in their calling in God.

3.1. THE ATTITUDE OF PROPHETS OF OLD TO PRAYER

- **PROPHET NEHEMAIH**

The prophet Nehemiah was a distinguished man who accomplished a great work through. He was one of the last of the prophets, was supposed to be contemporary with Malachi, and perhaps his book was one of the last of the Old Testament books that was written. He might have known Daniel, for he was a young man in the declining years of that very eminent and godly statesman. We are sure of one thing

at least, he was a man of sterling worth. Although he was brought up in the Persian court among idolaters, yet he had a character that has stood all these centuries.

He prayed in which he made confession of Israel's apostasy from God. The men who have had power with God in prayer have always begun by confessing their sins. Take the prayers of Jeremiah and Daniel. You find Daniel confessing his sin, when there isn't a single sin recorded against him; but he confesses his sin and the sins of the people. David confessed his sins and what power he had with God. Nehemiah, had passion for his country Israel and he love God. like a patriotic man, he began to inquire about his people and about the city that was very near to his heart, Jerusalem. He had never seen the city. He had no relations back there in Jerusalem that he knew of. Nehemiah was not a Jewish prince, although it is supposed he had royal blood in his veins. He was born in captivity. It was about one hundred years after Jerusalem was taken that he appeared upon the horizon. He was in the court of Artaxerxes, a cupbearer to the king, and held a high position. Yet he longed to hear from his native land. When he heard of the current situation of his country and people, that his people were in great want and distress and degradation, and that the walls of the city were still down, that the gates had been burned and never restored; his patriotic heart began to burn. We are told he fasted and prayed and wept, and not only did he pray for one week, or one month, but he kept on praying. He prayed "day and night." Having many duties to perform, of

course he was not always on his knees, but in heart he was ever before the throne of grace. It was not hard for him to understand and obey the precept, "Pray without ceasing." He began the work in prayer, continued in prayer, and the last recorded words of Nehemiah are a prayer. The first chapter of Nehemiah prayer is:

"I beseech thee, O Lord God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments: let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned. We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commanded thy servant Moses. Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commanded thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: but if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there. Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand. O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be

attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."

However, as at moment of his prayer, Nehemiah never thought he would be the one to rebuild Jerusalem. His persistent prayers brought back the nation of Israel to assemble in their native land Israel, Dwight .L. Moody (2014).

- **PROPHET ELIJAH**

Elijah is preeminently the elder of the prophets. The crown, the throne and the scepter are his. His garments are white with flame. He seems exalted in his fiery and prayerful nature, as a being seemingly superhuman, but the New Testament places him alongside of us as man of like nature with us. Instead of placing himself outside the sphere of humanity, in the marvelous results of his praying, it points to him as an example to be imitated and as inspiration to stimulate us. To pray like Elijah, and to have results like Elijah, is the crying need of the times.

Elijah had learned the lesson of prayer, and had graduated in that divine school ere we know him. Somewhere in the secret places, on mountain or in plain, he had been alone with God, an intercessor against the debasing idolatry of Ahab.

Mightily had his prayers prevailed with God. How confidently and well assured were the answers to his praying.

He had been talking with God about vengeance. He was the embodiment of his times. Those times were times of vengeance. The intercessor was not to be clothed with an olive branch with its fillet of wood, the symbol of a suppliant for mercy, but with fire, the symbol of justice and the messenger of wrath. How abruptly does he come before us in the presence of Ahab! Well, with holy boldness does he declare before the astonished, cowering king his message of fearful import, a message gained by his earnest praying, "in praying he prayed that it might not rain," and God did not deny his prayer. "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years but according to my word."

The secret of his praying and the character of the man are found in the words, "Before whom I stand." Just as angel Gabriel's words to Zacharias, informing him of the coming of a son to him and his wife in their old age: "I am Gabriel that standeth in the presence of God." The archangel Gabriel had scarcely more unflinching devotion, more courage, and more readiness of obedience, and more jealousy of God's honor, than Elijah. What projecting power do we see in his prayer! "And it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months." What omnipotent forces which can command the powers of nature! "Not dew nor

rain." What man is this who dares utter such a claim or assert such a power? If his claim be false, he is a fanatic or a madman. If his claim be true, he has stayed the benevolent arm of Omnipotence, and put himself, by God's leave, in God's place. The accursed and burnt-up land and the fiery, rainless and dewless days and nights, attest the truth of his saying, and prove the sternness, strength, firmness and passion of the man who holds back the clouds and stays the blessed visitation of the rain. Elijah is his name, and this attests the truth of that name, "My God is Jehovah."

His prayers have the power to stay the benignant course of nature. He stands in God's stead in this matter. The sober, passionless, unimaginative James, the brother of our Lord, in his Epistle, says to us: "See what prayer can do, by Elijah! Pray as Elijah prayed. Let the righteous man put forth to its fullest extent the energy of prayer. Let saints and sinners, angels and devils, see and feel the mighty potencies of prayer. See how the prayer of a good man has power and influence, and avails with God!"

No sham praying was that of Elijah, no mere performance, no spiritless, soulless, official praying was it. Elijah was in Elijah's praying. The whole man, with all his fiery forces, was in it. Almighty God to him was real. Prayer to him was the means of projecting God in full force on the world, in order to vindicate His name,

establish His own being, to avenge His blasphemed name and violated law, and to vindicate His servants.

Instead of "prayed earnestly," in James 5:17, the Revised Version has it, "In his prayer he prayed," or "with prayer he prayed." That is, with all the combined energies of prayer he prayed.

Elijah's praying was strong warfare prayer, insistent, and resistless in its elements of power. Feeble praying secures no results and brings neither glory to God nor good to man.

Elijah learned new and higher lessons of prayer while hidden away by God and with God when he was by the brook Cherith. He was doubtless communing with God while Ahab was searching all lands for him. After a while he was ordered to Sarepta, where God had commanded a widow to sustain him. He went there for the widow's good as well as for his own. A benefit to Elijah and a signal good to the widow were the results of Elijah's going. While this woman provided for him, he provided for the woman. Elijah's prayers did more for the woman than the woman's hospitality did for Elijah. Great trials awaited the widow and great sorrows too. Her widowhood and her poverty tell of her struggles and her sorrows. Elijah was there to relieve her poverty and to assuage her griefs, Edward M. Bounds (2014).

3.2. THE NEW TESTAMENT APOSTLES' PRAYER

- **Apostle Paul**

The apostle Paul was a great man who intercedes for his people in prayer. He prayed "without ceasing" for the Roman Christians. To the Corinthian church, he wrote: "I thank my God always on your behalf"(1 Corinthians 1:4). Similarly, to the Ephesians: "I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers" (Ephesians 1:16). The same assurance was written to Philippi: "Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy" (Philippians 1:4). And to the Colossians: "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you" (Colossians 1:9). "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers" (1 Thessalonians 1:2).

Apparently every church except those in Galatia received this assurance from the apostle. He also prayed constantly for his personal disciples, Timothy and Philemon. "Without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day" (2 Timothy 1:3). "I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers" (Philemon 4).

Paul also preached what he practiced. "Pray without ceasing," he commanded in his first-written epistle; "In everything give thanks" (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18). "Continuing instant in prayer" (Romans 12:12). "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Colossians 4:2). "Giving thanks always for all things" (Ephesians 5:20). Henry M. Morris (2013).

- **Apostle Peter**

Now, coming to Peter's prayer itself, and suggesting that it is a suitable prayer for all who are able to pray at all, my first observation upon it is that it was a very brief prayer. There were only three words in it: "Lord, save me." I believe that the excellence of prayer often consists in its brevity. You must have noticed the extreme brevity of most of the prayers that are preserved in Scripture. One of the longest is the prayer of our Savior recorded by John, who would, I suppose, have occupied about five minutes; and there is the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, which may have taken six minutes. Almost all the other prayers in the Bible are very short ones; and, probably, in our public services, we pray far longer than all of them put together. Peters Prayer Was A Very Personal One: "Lord, save *me*."

Peter did not blink of anybody else just then; and when, a soul is under concern about, its eternal interests, it had better at first confine its thoughts to itself, and pray, "Lord, save me." Yes, and in the Christian's after-life, there will come times when he had better, for a while, forget all others, and simply pray, "Lord, save me." Again, Peter's Prayer was a very urgent one: "Lord, save me."

Another characteristic of Peter's prayer was that "it was a very sound-doctrine prayer": "Lord, save, me." Peter does not appear to have had any idea, of saving himself from drowning, he does not seem to have thought that there was sufficient natural buoyancy about him to keep him afloat or that he could swim to the ship; but, "beginning to sink, he cried, "Lord, save me." One of the hardest tasks in the

world is to get a man to give up all confidence in himself, and from his heart to pray, "Lord, save me." Instead of doing that, he says, "O Lord, I do not feel as I ought; I want to feel my need more, I want to feel more joy, I want to feel more, holiness." You see, he is putting feelings in place of faith; he is, as it were, laying down a track along which he wants God to walk instead of walking in the way which God has marked out for all who desire to be saved. Another man is seeking to reform himself, and so to make him fit for heaven; and he prays in harmony with that idea, and of course gets no answer. I like to hear such, a prayer as this, "O Lord, I cannot save myself, and I do not ask thee to save me in any way that I prescribe; Lord, save me anyhow, only do save me! I am satisfied to be saved by the precious blood of Jesus. I am satisfied to be saved by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. I know I must be born again if I am ever to enter heaven; quicken me; O thou ever-blessed Spirit! I know I must give, up my sins. Lord, I do not want to keep them, save me from them by thy grace, I humbly entreat thee. I know that only thou canst do this work; I cannot lift even a finger to help thee in it; so save me, Lord, for thy great mercy's sake!" This is sound doctrinal truth, salvation all of grace, not of man, nor by men; "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;" salvation according to the eternal purpose of God, by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit, through the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ. When a sinner is willing to accept salvation on God's terms, then the prayer shall ascend acceptably to the: Most High, "Lord, save me."

He did not say, "Lord, come to-morrow, or "Lord, save me in an hour's time." He was "beginning to sink; and immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him," and so saved him. There are many people who would like Jesus to save them, but when? Charles Hadden Spurgeon (1910).

- **Jesus Prayer Lifestyle**

Christ, when He saw that He must die, and that now His time was come, He wore His body out: He cared not, as it were, what became of Him: He wholly spent Himself in preaching all day, and in praying all night, preaching in the temple those terrible parables and praying in the garden such prayers, as the seventeenth of John, and "Thy will be done!" even to a bloody sweat.

The great eras of His life were created and crowned with prayer. What were His habits of prayer during His stay at home and His toil as a carpenter in Nazareth, we have no means of knowing. God has veiled it, and guess and speculation are not only vain and misleading, but proud and prurient. It would be presumptuous searching into that which God has hidden, which would make us seek to be wise above that which was written, trying to lift up the veil with which God has covered His own revelation.

We find Christ in the presence of the famed, the prophet and the preacher. He has left His Nazareth home and His carpenter shop by God's call. He is now at a transitional point. He has moved out to His great work. John's baptism and the baptism of the Holy Ghost are prefatory and are to qualify Him for that work. This epochal and transitional period is marked by prayer.

"Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus, being also baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened.

"And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

Jesus Christ loved all men, He tasted death for all men, He intercedes for all men. Let us ask then, are we the imitators, the representatives, and the executors of Jesus Christ? Then must we in our prayers run parallel with His atonement in its extent. The atoning blood of Jesus Christ gives sanctity and efficiency to our prayers. As worldwide, as broad, and as human as the man Christ Jesus was, so must be our prayers. The intercessions of Christ's people must give currency and expedition to the work of Christ, carry the atoning blood to its benignant ends, and help to strike off the chains of sin from every ransomed soul. We must be as praying, as tearful, and as compassionate as was Christ.

The praying of Christ was real. No man prayed as He prayed. Prayer pressed upon Him as a solemn, all-imperative, all-commanding duty, as well as a royal privilege in which all sweetness was condensed, alluring and absorbing. Prayer was the secret of His power, the law of His life, the inspiration of His toil and the source of His wealth, His joy, His communion and His strength.

Christ's prayer occupied no secondary place, but was exacting and paramount, a necessity, a life, the satisfying of a restless yearning and a preparation for heavy responsibilities. Closeting with His Father in counsel and fellowship, with vigour and in deep joy, all this was His praying. Present trials, future glory, the history of His Church, and the struggles and perils of His disciples in all times and to the very end of time, all these things were born and shaped by His praying.

The dispensation of the Person of Jesus Christ was a dispensation of prayer. A synopsis of His teaching and practice of prayer was that "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." As the Jews prayed in the name of their patriarchs and invoked the privileges granted to them by covenant with God; as we have a new Name and a new covenant, more privileged and more powerful and more all-comprehensive, more authoritative and more Divine; and as far as the Son of God is lifted above the patriarchs in divinity, glory and power, by so much should our praying exceed theirs in range of largeness, glory and power of results.

Jesus Christ prayed to God as Father. Simply and directly did He approach God in the charmed and revered circle of the Father. The awful, repelling fear was entirely absent, lost in the supreme confidence of a child.

Jesus Christ crowns His life, His works and His teaching with prayer. How His Father attests His relationship and puts on Him the glory of answered prayer at His Baptism and Transfiguration when all other glories are growing dim in the night which settles on Him! What almighty potencies are in prayer when we are charged and surcharged with but one inspiration and aim! "Father, glorify thy name." This sweetens all, brightens all, conquers all and gets all. "Father, glorify thy name." That guiding star will illumine the darkest night and calm the wildest storm and will make us brave and true. An imperial principle it is. It will make an imperial Christian.

The profound reverence in this. relation of paternity must forever exclude all lightness, frivolity and pertness, as well as all undue familiarity. Solemnity and gravity become the hour of prayer. It has been well said: "The worshipper who invokes God under the name of Father and realises the gracious and beneficent love of God, must at the same time remember and recognise God's glorious majesty, which is neither annulled nor impaired, but rather supremely intensified

through His fatherly love. An appeal to God as Father, if not associated with reverence and homage before the Divine Majesty, would betray a want of understanding of the character of God." And, we might add, would show a lack of the attributes of a child.

Patriarchs and prophets knew something of the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God to God's family. They "saw it afar off, were persuaded of it, and embraced it," but understood it not, in all its fullness, "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

"Behold he prayeth!" was God's statement of wonderment and surprise to the timid Ananias in regard to Saul of Tarsus. "Behold he prayeth!" applied to Christ has in it far more of wonderment and mystery and surprise. He, the Maker of all worlds, the Lord of angels and of men, co-equal and co-eternal with the Everlasting God; the "brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person"; "fresh from his Father's glory and from his Father's throne." "Behold he prayeth!" To find Him in lowly, dependent attitude of prayer, the suppliant of all suppliants, His richest legacy and His royal privilege to pray -- this is the mystery of all mysteries, the wonder of all wonders.

Jesus Christ was always a busy man with His work, but never too busy to pray. The divinest of business filled His heart and filled His hands, consumed His time, exhausted His nerves. But with Him even God's work must not crowd out God's praying. Saving people from sin or suffering must not, even with Christ, be substituted for praying, nor abate in the least the time or the intensity of these holiest of seasons. He filled the day with working for God; He employed the night with praying to God. The day-working made the night-praying a necessity. The night-praying sanctified and made successful the day-working. Too busy to pray gives religion Christian burial, it is true, but kills it nevertheless.

In many cases only the bare fact, yet important and suggestive fact, is stated that He prayed. In other cases the very words which came out of His heart and fell from His lips are recorded. The man of prayer by pre-eminence was Jesus Christ. The epochs of His life were created by prayer, and all the minor details outlines and inlines of His life were inspired, colored and impregnated by prayer.

The prayer words of Jesus were sacred words. By them God speaks to God, and by them God is revealed and prayer is illustrated and enforced. Here is prayer in its purest form and in its mightiest potencies. It would seem that earth and heaven would uncover head and open ears most wide to catch the words of His praying who was truest God and truest man, and divinest of suppliants, who prayed as never man prayed. His prayers are our inspiration and pattern to pray, Edward M. Bounds (2013).

3.3. CONCLUSTION

From the above study, it is obvious that prayer remain the only key to solving problems and a means of communicating with the Father. Prayer is also a weapon used by believers to demystify the activities of the devil a nd belivers must see prayer as norm and value of Christianity.

3.4. BOOKS/MATERIALS

Charles Hadden Spurgeon (1910), Peter's Shortest Prayer

Dwight .L. Moody (2014), **Men of the Bible**

Edward M. Bounds (2014), Elijah, the Praying Prophet.

Edward M. Bounds (2013), Jesus Christ an Example of Prayer

Henry M. Morris (2013), Paul's Prayer Life,

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULT

(PRAYER LIFESTYLE OF PROPHEPHET NEHEMIAH)

4.0. INTRODUCTION

From the above scenario, Nehemiah is one of the outstanding Prophets of Old who through vigorous prayer liberated himself and other Jews to return for the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. This chapter is going to analyse the personality of Nehemiah.

4.1. PROPHET NEHEMIAH'S EXPLOIT

Few people are familiar with the Biblical figure Nehemiah, and yet he was instrumental in the rebuilding and reestablishment of Jerusalem in the fifth century B.C. following the Babylonian exile. Although there is no consensus about the relative chronologies of the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah (the Biblical dates are unclear), Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem probably preceded Ezra's by a couple

years.* Both men worked together to restore the city and rededicate its people to God.

Nehemiah was a high official in the Persian court of King Artaxerxes I at the capital city of Susa, which lay 150 miles east of the Tigris River in what is now modern Iran. Nehemiah served as the king's cupbearer (Nehemiah 1:11), which evidently put him in a position to speak to the king and request favors from him. After hearing about the sad state of affairs in Judah, Nehemiah acquired the king's permission to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the city and its fortifications. He is even given letters from the king to ensure safe passage and to obtain timber from the king's forest for the gates and walls of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem in 445 B.C. as the provincial governor of Judah/Yehud. He immediately surveyed the damage to the entire city on his well-known night journey around the walls (Nehemiah 2:12–15). He enlisted the help of the people to quickly repair the breaches in the wall. He also urged them to set up guards to defend against the constant threat of those who opposed their efforts, including the armies of Samaria, the Ammonites and the Ashdodites.

As governor, Nehemiah says that he didn't take advantage of food and land allotments that were allowed him due to his office, because there was already such

a great burden on the people of his province (Nehemiah 5:14–19). He also made the other nobles and officials forgive all outstanding debts and ordered them to return all land and money that had been taken as taxes so the people would be able to feed them and their families.

The hurried work of repairing and rebuilding Jerusalem's walls and gates was completed in just 52 days (Nehemiah 6:15). Another of Nehemiah's accomplishments was to make a record and genealogy of all the nobles, officials and people who were then living in Judah.

The Book of Nehemiah is usually read together with the Book of Ezra as one long book. Nehemiah 8–10 is considered part of the so-called "Ezra Source" (which includes Ezra 7–10), while Nehemiah 1–7 and 11–13 are from a separate source that scholars call the "Nehemiah Memoir." The Nehemiah Memoir is written in the first person and recounts details of Nehemiah's life, his deeds and his administration of the province, probably meant to serve as an official record of his accomplishments to be deposited in the Temple archives. The accounts are punctuated by prayers to God, such as "Remember for my good, O my God, all that I have done for this people" (Nehemiah 5:19).

The following text is the first portion of the Nehemiah Memoir (1:1–7:4) from the New Revised Standard Version. In it, Nehemiah describes his efforts to rebuild the city, even in the face of hostile neighbors, Dorothy Resig Willette (2014).

4.2. MANAGING CRISIS IN THE CHURCH

The pastor's initial task in any crisis is to pave a way for the individual(s) to see and experience hope. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word translated "hope" is *istiqvah*. It means "a longing or an expectation." The primary root is *qavah*, which means "to wait for." In Psalm 62:5, David experienced respite as he waited for the Lord to act on his behalf. When conditions for hope are met, individuals feel hopeful. The pastor's role is to supply such hope. "Most of the conditions we commonly speak of as feelings are in reality not feelings at all; but the feeling tones or sensations that accompany those conditions are so powerful that the conditions themselves become identified with the associated sensations. We must choose and act with regard to the conditions, good or bad, and allow the feelings to take care of themselves, as they certainly will."

Initially, pastors can offer hope to those in crisis regardless of the person's situation. Hebrews 6:19-20 notes that hope is the anchor for the soul. Hope enables

action, which evokes feeling. The individual can then begin the journey to healing and growth.

Hope comes as the individual chooses to walk through the healing process. In crises, the first defense line of the soul that necessitates care is feelings. As a pastor guides the individual through his emotions, transformation into Christ's image during suffering can occur. Although suffering may challenge the intention of hope, pastors can apply a mind, body, and spirit approach to the care of the individual. This basic approach begins with the individual's thought process, Nancy .A. Walker (2002).

4.3. HOW TO PREPARE FOR UNEXPECTED SITUATION: TREATMENT REFERRAL NETWORKS AND EMERGENCY PLANS DURING CRISIS

The following steps apply in the smaller church, A Proactive preparation tips:

- Have scriptural handouts (depression, anxiety, family) to give to those under your care. A good reference is "Quick Scripture Reference for Counseling" by Kruis.
- Have a reliable suicide-assessment tool with a written plan to follow if someone threatens suicide. Know how to use voluntary/involuntary commitment.

- Familiarize yourself with psychosis, delusion, and hallucination so you can recognize their signs.
- Make contacts to refer individuals to mental health professionals, hospitals, nursing homes, or residential treatment facilities. Community contact and networking are essential for well-rounded care.
- Have emergency numbers and referrals accessible. Establish a treatment referral network with professionals to assist you. Set up advance meetings instituting plans with each professional in your network. Establish professional boundaries with agreed upon conjoint pro-bono and professional care.
- Professionals are often willing to offer *pro-bono* services to churches and ministries.
- Make a public policy explaining how you will provide care to suicidal/violent individuals.
- Plan for alternative care for suicide or traumatic situations (in-person care, counseling, hospitalization, hotlines, classes, support groups, professional groups). Make a local/national contact list of organizations, nonprofits, and hotlines.

- Keep written, confidential documentation of your counsel of individuals in case of incarceration, hospitalization, church and individual safety, ethics, and for legal circumstances.
- While under pastoral care, have the individual sign a consent form noting confidentiality with exception of certain situations. Have consent-to-pastoral-care forms available to all individuals.
- Understand and maintain confidentiality limits within reason of the crisis and your church board policy.
- Read your state's policy on abuse. Have a plan to report and document abuse.

Before an emergency occurs:

- Establish contact with a counselor/psychologist in locality of the individual you are counseling in case he needs in-person mental health care.
- Obtain accurate information including name, location, and permanent address of the individual.
- Obtain backup contact methods, including contacts of several people the individual knows and trusts.

- Obtain contact information of emergency services in locality of the individual. If the individual calls you, you can call for emergency aid, if there is a need.
- Create an agreed-upon emergency plan with at-risk individuals. This can include family members with confidentiality.
- Refer individuals to community/church classes, support groups, and nonprofit organizations to come alongside the individual while under your counsel.

4.4. THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER IN CHURCH GROWTH

Many Scripture speak of evil abounding in the last days. Another stream of Scripture says that in the last days there is going to be a great revival. Some passages describe a terrible falling away, a decline, and things getting worse and then there are many Scripture that say a revival is going to take place. Both are true, and both are more obvious around us now.

Prayer prepares the way for revival. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit came in great power when the believers were praying. Then Peter spoke of Joel's prophecy, 'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,

and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams' (Acts 1:27).

Many young people are sold out to God as a result of prayer. These promises are very powerful. I am sure God has given many people great visions and dreams for the future. I encourage people, young and old, to hold onto these dreams because they come to pass in your life.

We live in marvelous days. People of all ages are part of the move of God in these last days, young and old alike. God wants to do something powerful and dynamic. He is blessing young people, and old, giving them revelations, dreams, visions and gifts. They are going out praying for the sick, ministering in various ways, and souls are being saved all over the world, Andrew Evans (2011),

4.5. BASIC BIBLICAL TYPES OF PRAYER

There are many different types of prayers found in the Bible; some given by name and others by example. There is also variation in how people categorize various prayers in the Bible. Here is a good list to get you started in studying the different types of prayers in the Bible for yourself. I trust these descriptions will help you in your study and that they will encourage you to look for these prayers for many years to come as you study God's Word.

- **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Philippians 4:6 and Colossians 4:2 tell us to pray with thanksgiving. Psalm 95 and 100 tell us to enter into the presence of God with thanksgiving. When Christ prayed, He often gave thanks (Matthew 15:36; 26:26, 27; Luke 22:19). Praying with thanksgiving should be a regular part of our prayer life.

Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 that praying with thanksgiving should be a regular course of communication with God. It is the will of God for us to pray with thanksgiving. This is not something that should be reserved for one special time of year, but we should always have an attitude of thankfulness.

- **Supplication**

Along with being thankful, Paul tells us in Philippians 4:6 that we should pray with supplication. The idea of supplication is that of asking. It isn't just asking God for something on behalf of others (which is an intercessory prayer), but supplication is more a prayer for oneself. We see this prayer often in the Psalms where David is asking God for help in a particular area of his own life.

If you do a search for the word supplication in the Bible you will find almost 60 instances of the word. In almost every case it is talking about the person asking God for something on their own behalf. It occasionally mentions praying in

supplication on behalf of others. The point being that it is not arrogant to pray for your own needs. God welcomes you with open arms when you take your genuine requests for help to Him, David Peach (2014),

Frederick K.C. Price (2012), Prayer can be frustrating if we don't understand God's Word and His ways. Most Christians aren't aware that there are several types of prayer discussed in God's Word, and if you use one type when you should be using another, it won't work. You would be applying the wrong spiritual tool to your needs or request. God intended for each of the six forms of prayer mentioned in the Bible to have different functions, as described below:

- **1The Prayer of Agreement**

In Matthew 18:19, Jesus introduced the prayer of agreement when He said, "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven" (NKJV).

Right off the bat you can see that for the prayer of agreement to work, the people involved in the prayer have to agree! You cannot know what someone else wants—what someone is believing for and God cannot answer your prayer for someone else against his or her will. To use the prayer of agreement, you must be sure that the person with whom you are agreeing is in line with what you are asking for.

If someone asks me to pray in agreement with them, I ask, "What specifically do you want me to pray for?" You absolutely must make sure you are in perfect agreement about what your prayer request is before you join with another believer in the prayer of agreement.

- **The Prayer of Faith**

The prayer of faith, also known as petition prayer, is the prayer that most people think of when they use the term "prayer." Petition prayer is between you and God. It is you asking God for a particular outcome.

The key verse for the prayer of faith is Mark 11:24, in which Jesus says, "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them."

The rule to consider here is when you pray—not after you pray, not when you feel something, not when you see something. When you pray (the moment that you pray) you must believe that you receive what you asked for.

Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Your faith is substance—it is something real, something tangible. It is evidence of things you cannot see.

Notice that Mark 11:24 does not say when you will actually see the result of your prayer. It does not tell you how long it will take for that prayer result to appear, and this is where many Christians get hung up.

God lives in one eternal now. There is no past or present for Him. But we are temporal beings who live in the context of time.

When you pray in faith, God immediately gives you what you prayed for—in the spirit realm. But in the natural world, due to a number of factors, it may take time for the answer to manifest itself.

God answers prayers, and He will answer your specific prayer in line with His Word, but it is your faith that brings that answer out of the spiritual world and into the physical world. How many times in Scripture does Jesus say to someone, "According to your faith"?

He referred to peoples' faith constantly, and even though it was His power that healed them, He always credited their faith with being the catalyst. In fact, when Jesus went to His hometown, we are told that "He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Matt. 13:58).

There is a simple spiritual explanation for this. God will not do something against your will. God cannot violate free will. If you don't have faith to do something, He won't arbitrarily override your lack of faith.

- **The Prayer of Consecration and Dedication**

In Luke 22:41-42, we see outlined the prayer of consecration and dedication: "And He [Jesus] was withdrawn from them [Peter, James and John] about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, saying, 'Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.'"

He was praying, in effect, "If there is any other way to do this, let's do it that way." But the key for Jesus, and for us, is, "Nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

You pray that God's will would be done when you don't know His will or don't know if an alternative path that appears is equally "correct" or godly. In the absence of direct instructions, the prayer of consecration and dedication says you will allow God to set your direction or make your decisions.

The prayer of consecration and dedication works when you have two (or more) godly alternatives before you, and you are not getting a clear sense at that time about which option God wants you to take. When the direction is unclear—but any

of the options appear to be legitimate, righteous options—that is the perfect time to say, "Lord, if it be Your will, I'm going to go with option A."

Believe me, He will let you know if you are taking the wrong fork in the road.

- **The Prayer of Praise and Worship**

In this prayer, you are not asking God to do something for you or to give you something. You are not even asking for direction and dedicating your life to whatever it is God has called you to do. Rather, you just want to praise the Lord, to thank Him for His many blessings and mercy. You want to tell Him how much you love Him.

A good example of this type of prayer appears in Luke 2:20, which describes the reaction of the shepherds who had seen baby Jesus: "Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, as it was told them."

In Luke 18:43, the blind man who was healed was described as "glorifying God." The verse also says all the people who witnessed the miracle "gave praise to God." They prayed prayers of thanksgiving.

Look at the way Jesus prayed in John 11:41: "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me," referring to His previous prayer regarding Lazarus. In the Lord's prayer,

Jesus told His disciples, "'When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name'" (Luke 11:2).

Paul wrote to the Philippians: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" (Phil. 4:6, emphasis added). This says that even when we pray the prayer of faith, we should always intersperse worship and praise.

- **The Prayer of Intercession**

Intercession means you are interceding—acting in prayer—on behalf of someone else. The person may be incapable of praying for himself. Perhaps he is on drugs or mentally confused by demonic doctrines. Perhaps the person is so sick he can't muster the energy to stay awake, let alone pray.

Intercession involves praying for others. It may involve praying in a general way for such things as the church or the government, or offering up more specific prayers based on your knowledge of a person's need.

In Ephesians 1:15-18, Paul wrote: "Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the

knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

Here Paul makes it plain that he prayed regularly for the church at Ephesus and for the individuals there to receive these blessings. He does not set himself in agreement with anyone, so this seems to be a good example of intercessory prayer.

Likewise, in his greeting to the Philippians, he wrote, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy" (Phil. 1:3-4). The fact that Paul said he made requests for them suggests that this also was an example of intercessory prayer.

- **The Prayer of Binding and Loosing**

This prayer is found in Matthew 18:18-19. Jesus says: "Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven."

There are several important nuggets in Jesus' statements here, the first being that we have authority here on this earth by virtue of our covenant rights through Jesus.

The second thing we notice is the direction of the action. Things do not begin in heaven and come to Earth, but rather the action starts here on Earth. Notice that it says, "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Like all things in God's system, this type of prayer works only in line with God's Word and His laws. You cannot bind things willy-nilly. Binding a team to lose in the Super Bowl won't work anymore than loosing someone to love you.

You can, however, bind foul spirits that are at work in people's lives or loose angelic spirits to work on your behalf in those areas where God has already promised you results. When you pray in this manner, God affirms it in heaven and puts His seal of approval on your prayer. Binding and loosing have to be based on the authority God has granted you in Scripture, not on some desire you have.

God has provided each type of prayer for a specific purpose. Though you may use more than one at any given time, it is important to be clear about which type you are using and why, and to be aware of its limitations. If you follow the examples in the Bible, you'll be sure to use them properly. Frederick K.C. Price (2012),

4.6. BENEFITS OF PRAYER

There are numerous benefits to prayer in our lives. From being healthier to being closer to God, making time for prayer is an essential part of any Christian's life:

- **Brings You Closer to God**

Our prayer time is our time with God. We can spend time in church, we can read our Bibles and even have a pile of devotionals next to our bed, but there is nothing that substitute for good one-on-one time with the Lord. Prayer enhances your relationship with Him so that He is reflected in every other part of your life. After all, think of how close you are to your friends and family. We become close by revealing parts of ourselves. Yet no other human knows you as well as God, and He keeps all of our secrets. He is the One we can reveal all parts of ourselves to, and He loves us no matter what.

- **Brings Divine Help**

God is everywhere and in everything, but sometimes He wants to be asked for help. Prayer can bring divine help into our lives when we need it most - and not just for us. We can pray that others receive the help they need. We can pray for divine peace. God intervening often begins with a prayer of need. Before you pray, think of the people in your life who need God's intervention, including yourself. What are people struggling with in their own lives. Where

does hope seem lost and only God's intervention can redeem a situation. It's amazing how God will move in those situations when we lift them up to Him.

- **Keeps Our Selfishness in Check**

As humans we are selfish. When we pray, it helps to keep our selfishness in check - especially if we remember to keep others in our prayers. Sometimes God allows us to see ourselves more clearly through our prayers. Think about how many times our prayers are only centered on us verses on those we love...or even others in the world. When we add others to our prayers, we find ourselves being less selfish in the other areas of our lives.

- **4. Gain Forgiveness**

When we pray, we open ourselves up to forgiveness. There are no perfect people. There are only those who strive to be the best they can be. So we all slip up from time to time. When we do, it is a great time to go to God in prayer to ask for forgiveness and direction. It is also during that time of prayer that God can lead us to forgiving ourselves. Sometimes we struggle with letting ourselves off the hook when God already has. We can beat ourselves up a little too much or hold on too tightly to the bad things. Through prayer, God can lead us to liking ourselves again.

- **Gives us Strength**

God provides us a great deal of strength through prayer. It helps sometimes to know someone is there for us, especially someone like God. He gives us direction that offers strength. He provides help through other people that gives us strength. Sometimes He just changes our perception of things or directly intervenes. Any way we look at it, knowing that he is there gives us the strength and ability to stand up to anything that comes against us.

- **Improves our Attitude**

Humility is a huge part of our faith, and prayer allows us to be humbled daily. Through prayer we can see the world as the big place that it is, and we realize then how small our problems can be. This is especially true when we pray in gratitude for what we've been given. After all, our daily small problems may seem huge at the time, but when we pray for what others in the world are going through we see them for what they are. Also, when we pray positively, we can find God changing our attitude from something negative to something far more positive.

- **Offers Us Hope**

When we get down in the dumps, prayer gives us hope. Laying all of our problems at God's feet opens us up to trusting Him. When we trust God, we have hope that things will turn out fine. Having hope doesn't always mean things will turn out the

way we want them to, but it can mean that things will turn out how God wants them to, which is sometimes even better than we ever could have imagined. Also, prayer helps us see things clearly, which opens us up to all kinds of opportunities we may never have seen before.

- **Reduces Stress**

When we lay our troubles at God's feet, we can feel the weight of the world come off of our shoulders. When we trust in God to hear our prayers, our stress levels go down. He has a way of bringing calm into our lives, even when we're in the middle of a storm. We live in a pressure-filled world, where we are constantly being bombarded by responsibility and pressure to succeed. No matter how young or old, stress is always there. It comes from different places as we age, but it's still part of our lives. Yet when we turn over those pressures to God in prayer, we find that our stress levels go down.

- **Can Make Your Healthier**

There are a number of studies out there that show a link between prayer and emotional and physical health. Some studies showed a significant decrease in heart disease, emphysema and cirrhosis of the liver for people who attended church once or more a week. Other studies show worship was linked to lower blood pressure and a strengthening of the immune system.

- **Can Give You Better Understanding of Yourself**

When we talk to God, we can hear the way we talk about ourselves. We can hear all the bad things we say about ourselves and all the ways we wish we were better. We can hear our own hopes and dreams and how we want our lives to turn out. God gives us those times to hear ourselves and gain a better understanding of who we are in Him. He shows us our purpose and direction. He shows us unconditional love, and demonstrates that we need to love ourselves more. It is through prayer that we can see the person God sees, Kelli Mahoney (2013).

4.7. CONCLUSTION

From the above analysis, it is definite that prayer is the key and the bedrock upon which progress could be attain in any endeavors or church growth. It also, exposes the efficacy of a praying church towards crises management. If Christ prayer al;l through His earthly ministry, it then mean, that for any spiritual body to achieve much in Jesus, they should take prayer and a major task.

4.8. BOOKS/MATERIAL

Andrew Evans (2011), Church Growth through Prayers.

Dorothy Resig Willetts (2014), Nehemiah “The Man Behind the Wall”.

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Kelli Mahoney (2013), 10 Benefits of Prayer.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

5.O. SUMMARY

The Bible record of the life of Jesus Christ gives but a glance of His busy doing, a small selection of His many words, and only a brief record of His great works. But even in this record we see Him as being much in prayer. Even though busy and exhausted by the severe strain and toils of His ministry, "in the morning a great while before day, he rose up and went out and departed into a desert place, and there prayed." Alone in the desert and in the darkness with God! Prayer filled the

life of our Lord while on earth. His life was a constant stream of incense sweet and perfumed by prayer. These testimonies abound from the gospel of Mathew to John and the first chapter of Acts of the Apostles all showcased the prayer lifestyle of Jesus. Then we must conclude that, to be like Jesus is to pray like Jesus and is to live like Jesus. A serious life it is to pray as Jesus prayed.

5.1. FINDINGS

The range and potencies of prayer, so clearly shown by Jesus in life and teaching, but reveal the great purposes of God. They not only reveal the Son in the reality and fullness of His humanity, but also reveal the Father.

Christ prayed as a child. The spirit of a child was found in Him. At the grave of Lazarus "Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, Father." Again we hear Him begin His prayer after this fashion: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father." So also on other occasions we find Him in praying addressing God as His Father, assuming the attitude of the child asking something of the Father. What confidence, simplicity and artlessness! What readiness, freeness and fullness of

approach are all involved in the spirit of a child! What confiding trust, what assurance, what tender interest! What profound solicitudes, and tender sympathy on the Father's part! What respect deepening into reverence! What loving obedience and grateful emotions glow in the child's heart! What Divine fellowship and royal intimacy! What sacred and sweet emotions! All these meet in the hour of prayer when the child of God meets His Father in Heaven, and when the Father meets His child! We must live as children if we would ask as children. We must act as children if we would pray as children. The spirit of prayer is born of the child spirit.

Paul gives in brief and comprehensive statement the habit of our Lord in prayer in Hebrews 5:7 "Who, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." We have in this description of our Lord's praying the outgoing of great spiritual forces. He prayed with "prayers and supplications." It was no formal, tentative effort. He was intense, personal and real. He was a pleader for God's good. He was in great need and He must cry with "strong cryings," made stronger still by His tears. In an agony the Son of God wrestled. His praying was no playing a mere part. His soul was engaged, and all His powers were taxed to a strain. Let us pause and look at Him and learn how to pray in earnest. Let us learn how to win in an agony of prayer that which seems to

be withholden from us. A beautiful word is that, "feared," which occurs only twice in the New Testament, the fear of God.

5.2. CONCLUSTION

Prayer affects all things. God blesses the person who prays. He who prays goes out on a long voyage for God and is enriched himself while enriching others, and is blessed himself while the world is blessed by his praying. To "live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" is the wealthiest wealth.

Nothing is more conspicuous in the life of our Lord than prayer. His campaigns were arranged and His victories were gained in the struggles and communion of His all night praying. By prayer He rent the heavens. Moses and Elijah and the transfiguration glory wait on His praying. His miracles and teaching had their power from the same source. Gethsemane's praying crimsoned Calvary with serenity and glory. His sacerdotal prayer makes the history and hastens the triumph of His Church on earth. What an inspiration and command to pray is the prayer life of Jesus Christ while in this world! What a comment it is on the value, the nature and the necessity of prayer.

We cannot follow any chronological order in the praying of Jesus Christ. What were His steps of advance and skill in the Divine art of praying we know not. He is in the act of prayer when we find Him at the fords of the Jordan, when the waters of baptism, at the hands of John the Baptist, are upon Him. So passing over the three years of His ministry, when closing the drama of His life in that terrible baptism of fear, pain, suffering, and shame, we find Him in the spirit, and also in the very act of praying. The baptism of the Cross and the baptism of the Jordan, are sanctified by prayer. With the breath of prayer in His last sigh, He commits His spirit to God. In His first recorded utterances, as well as His first acts, we find Him teaching His disciples how to pray as His first lesson, and as their first duty. Under the shadow of the Cross, in the urgency and importance of His last interview with His chosen disciples, He is at the same all-important business, teaching the world's teachers how to pray, trying to make prayerful those lips and hearts out of which were to flow the Divine deposits of truth.

In addition to regular times of concentrated prayer, we should seek to be sensitive, moment by moment, to needs and opportunities for intimate, personal, conversational prayer with our ever-present Lord. Never was there a busier Christian than Paul, yet he somehow always found time to pray.

Let us always pray in just such a way as the Spirit of God dictates to us, and as the deep sorrow and humiliation of our heart naturally suggest to us. Many men who pray in public get into the habit of using certain tones in prayer that are anything but natural, and I am afraid that some even, in private fail to pray naturally. Any language that is not natural is bad; the best tone is that which a man uses when he is speaking earnestly, and means what he says, and that is the right way to pray. Speak as if you meant it; do not whine it, or cant it, or intone it, but pour it out of your soul in the most simple, natural fashion that you can. Peter was in too great peril to put any fine language into his prayer; He was too conscious of his danger to consider how he might put his words together, but he just expressed the strong desire of his soul in the simplest manner possible: "Lord, save me!" and that prayer was heard, and Peter was saved from drowning, just as a sinner will be saved from hell if he can pray after the selfsame fashion.

"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him" (James 1:12). Perseverance, instilling hope, and wise counsel assist individuals on their earthly race to cross that heavenly finish line. The Lord empowers. The pastor evangelizes, disciples, encourages, counsels, directs. Whether you are a pastor of one or many, may you take the above information and implement it to assist your

church and community in the continued growth, development, and healing of individuals in crisis. Restoring hope, instilling healing through mind, body, and spirit counsel, and implementing mental health care for our churches increasingly ministers to an ever-changing society.

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