

PRAYER AND ITS IMPACTS ON THE GOSPEL  
MINISTRY: A CASE STUDY OF THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST

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BY

ADETOKUN ADEKUNLE EMMANUEL

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## Abstract

This work examined Prayer and its impacts on the Gospel ministry by using the life and ministry of Jesus Christ as a case study. Jesus is the epitome of prayer. His life and ministry began in prayer, continued in prayer and consummated in prayer. He prayed as a way of life and never talked to man about God before He talked to God about man. Jesus is the Bridegroom of the Gospel ministry that is, the Church and if prayer was the fulcrum of His ministry on earth, the Church which is His Bride can do but not without prayer. The Church is commissioned to preach the gospel and evangelize the world for Christ, but is the Church really committed to prayer which is the pivotal weapon she has especially now that there are various attacks against her? Of course, there would be many answers in response to the above question. This essay intends to stress the impacts of prayer on the Gospel Ministry. It was discovered that Jesus prayed as a way of life. He did not do anything without prayer and especially to take a crucial step in the ministry. Jesus built His ministrations on prayer and the gospel ministers must follow His footsteps. The research was conducted by sampling opinions of pastors and Church members through questionnaire format. From their responses, it was found that prayer has positive impacts in soul winning of the Church and serves as an effective weapon which the Church can use to combat the wiles of Satan and opens the floodgate of heavenly blessings upon her members and the world at large. Church is therefore encouraged not to give up in praying but to pray and pray more because there lies all she needs to fulfill the Great commission and other responsibilities of her ministry. They are to make their prayer spiritually motivated, not to spend much of their time praying for mundane things. People tend to spend much of their time asking for mundane things in prayer at the expense of asking for grace and power to illuminate the darkness of the world and to live for God irrespective of their circumstances. We should pray for everything but hang seriously on the will of God. Relationship with God is the most important thing.

## 5.2. CONCLUSION

Jesus prayed as a way of life. Prayer was the first business of the Lord, very early in the morning, while it was still dark, the Bible says Jesus went off to a solitary place where he prayed (Mark 1:35). He decided not to see the face of man before he had seen the face of his father, and not to talk to men about his father until he had

talked to his father about men<sup>107</sup>. Jesus could not do anything without prayer and especially to take a crucial step in the ministry. He branded his ministry with prayer. Luke 6: 12-13. The ministers of the gospel must follow this example in taking any step in their life and ministry. Smith notes that such prayer is crucial for success during important turning point in life and ministry<sup>108</sup>.

Severally, Jesus retreated to mountain mainly for prayer. (Luke 9: 28-29, Mark 6; 45- 46, Matthew 26: 36-39, Luke 23: 34, 46). His disciples could not resist his passion for prayer, they were so impressed and left with no option than to ask him to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1ff). They can't deny the evidences of answered prayer. The church members cannot abandon their pastors if their needs are met in prayer. The gospel ministers should not be lazy in prayer, he should know that the success of his ministry is in the hand of God and without receiving from him in prayer he cannot be fulfilled.

The gospel ministry is to evangelize the world for Christ. This is the heart beat of God. As significant as evangelism in the gospel ministry, it is too challenging to do without the support and empowerment of prayer. If the church in our contemporary time could be mobilized for prayer, the kingdom of God will be expanded and the church would be channels of blessing to the world, provided every Christians should be baptized into a passion of prayer. Christians must spend most of their time on their knees pleading with God for the lost in the world (Acts 6:4). It is high time for Christians to pray without ceasing to combat the influence of evil in the church and external attacks against the church.

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<sup>107</sup> T. F. Zacharias, "The Way of Victorious Praying", (New York: Vintage Press 1998). 7.

<sup>108</sup> R. A Smith, Keep on Praying! [WWW.Smithra.org](http://WWW.Smithra.org). (Accessed on Monday Sept.14,2015).

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering prayer and its impacts on the gospel ministry in line with the prayer life and ministry of Jesus, the writer recommends some prayer concepts and practices to the gospel ministry and ministers cum church members.

#### 1. Prayer as a way of life

Christians must take prayer as a way of life. Prayer is not something or a practice to be serious with only during the time of problem, or just to make requests and petitions. Prayer is a fellowship, a communion with a Triune God. Zacharias notes that Jesus' prayer was first of all, not a matter of asking and receiving, it was a communion, fellowship, it was enjoying God<sup>109</sup>. Christians should not mess up with their prayer life and step it up only when they are in problem. Such prayer may not be answered because the relationship has been broken. (Isaiah 55:6).

#### 2. Pray a prevailing prayer.

There is nothing more important than this. Jacob, you remember wrestled with God in prayer. We do little wrestling today. We get up in the morning, fall down before our bed and mumble off a few words of prayer and then hurry off to our work. Then at night, when we are weary, tired and exhausted, we do the same again and climb into bed. That, for the most part is all that prayer means to us.

But that was not the way Jacob prayed. He wrestled all night and then he exclaimed, I will not let you go except you bless me. (Gen.32:26). Some have never learned how to wrestle in prayer. Therefore, they do not know how to prevail. Not until we prevail with God will we prevail with men, and to prevail with men we must learn how to travail<sup>110</sup>.

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<sup>109</sup> T. F. Zacharias, "The Way of Victorious Praying", (New York: Vintage Press 1998). 7.

<sup>110</sup> J. Smith Oswald, "The Man God Use", (Lagos: Bride of Christ Publication, 1983). 21-22.

Jesus knew what it was to travail in prayer. He spent the whole nights in prayer. Again and again his disciples find him alone with God in some solitary places, pouring out his soul in agonizing praying. You and I know but little of that kind of praying; but until we have learned how to get alone with God and travail in prayer, we will not be able to accomplish much. Not until then will he (God) commence to use us, to answer our prayers and to glorify himself in our ministry<sup>111</sup>.

### 3. Pray according to God's will

Some Christians had forgotten that God answers prayers in accordance with his will. Jesus Christ acknowledged this while he was praying at Gethsemane "My father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will" (Mathew 26: 39). The simple lesson that Jesus taught us was that God's will is superior to our will. God our maker responds to our needs to manifest His glory. James even condemned those who boast and brag in their requests. "Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that". (James 4:15).

The understanding of the primacy of God's will in our prayers will stop Christians from running pillar to post looking for solutions to their problems in the places of prayer. Some even think that God had forgotten them in which God is very much with them telling them that he knows his plan for them. Some have backslidden for they thought their prayers had not been answered forgotten that the will of God for his children a times looks unpleasant and quite meaningless but when behold with faith one will easily understand that what God intends for his children is always good (Jer.29:11).

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<sup>111</sup>Ibid. 22.

