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THE IMPACTS OF EFFECTIVE PRAYER IN THE MINISTRY OF JESUS AND  
ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MINISTERS.

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## ABSTRACT

This work examined the impacts of effective prayer in the ministry of Jesus and its implications for the contemporary Christian ministers. The writer observed that many ministers neglect their responsibilities in prayer either for themselves or their congregation which is having negative effects on their lives and ministries. This thesis set out to look at the prayer life of Jesus and the impacts of prayer on his ministry and how the contemporary ministers can emulate his prayer life for effective performance in life and ministry. The writer used literary research approach. He used published materials such as the Bible, books, periodicals, dictionaries and lectures that are related to this study to carry out the research. The contribution of this research is for the ministers to know that effective prayer will help their lives and ministries and will empower them to expand the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ through the preaching of the living Word of God. It encouraged the contemporary ministers to emulate the prayer life of Jesus for their success in life and ministry. It convinced them that relationship with God is more important than working for God. Thus the following recommendations were made. Ministers should not allow the modern day technology, computer, cable Tvs, internet, etc to take their place of prayer. They must not allow church programmes and activities to take their place of prayer. Relationship with God is the most important thing. Church work and counseling are good and important, but should not replace their hours of prayer. They are to create secluded places for their prayers and not stay where they will be disturbed by family members, visitors or parishioners. They are to make their prayer spiritually motivated, they are not to spend much of their time praying for the mundane things of this world. They are to take time to listen to God during their prayers since prayer is communication or dialogue with God. They are not to grow weary in prayer, when the prayer seems delayed or unanswered, they are to persist till they get answers to their prayers.

## 5.2 CONCLUSION

Prayer is paramount and cannot be done away with in the lives and ministries of ministers. Their prayer life will definitely reflect in their ministry. If ministers have sound prayer life their ministry will definitely grow. The praying ministers will influence the prayer life of their congregation. Many churches are dead spiritually because of the prayerlessness of the ministers which have affected the church. When ministers are prayerful, they will grow praying congregations. The church members will learn the praying habit from them and be prayerful.

Ministers must remember that the efficacy of their preaching largely depends on the number of hours they spend during their prayer. Since it is much easier to study the commentary and browse on the computer than to pray, ministers should not be carried away by using all their time reading and preparing for the sermon without having enough time to pray. It is their prayer life that will determine the effectiveness of God's word in their mouth.

Ministers' lives are always vulnerable to attack from the power of darkness. The enemies of the gospel will make all attempts to silence them, especially if their preaching is having a negative effect on their work. Ministers will be able to fight all the darts of the devil through fervent prayer. Because of prayerlessness on the part of some ministers, they have been silenced, maimed and some even killed before the right time.

Smith asserted that the ministers of Christ need to pray because their work is arduous, their weakness is great, their foes are furious, and their hindrances are many. They have to pray for prayer has power with God, and brings down great and invaluable blessings. The prayer influences the preaching of ministers, and no minister should ever expect to preach successfully, or to people souls' profit — except he spends much time in prayer. Ministers therefore ought to pray — as to bring down gifts and grace on their lives. No minister can get on well, except prayer is made without ceasing to God by him. ( 104)

It's worth noting that ministers should spend enough time to pray for the congregation they minister to, that they may be well established in the love of God. Many preachers today are not having enough time to pray for those they are ministering to and that is why the preaching of the minister is not having any

meaningful impact in their lives. They are to pray for the people as a congregation and individually.

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Ministers should understand that as rifle is important to a soldier so is prayer important to their success in life and ministry.

Ministers should not allow modern day technology like computers, phones, Cable TVs, etc to replace the time they should spend in personal relationship with God. Hours should be spent on personal prayers and supplications. The hours of studying commentaries and e-books should not take the time of prayer which is paramount for success of any minister.

Gospel ministers should know that activities and programmes like crusade, revivals, retreats and conference meetings should not replace the time of prayer. Many ministers have been carried away with activities and meetings; therefore, neglect their fervent prayer life. They should remember that Jesus always withdrew into the wilderness to pray despite his tight schedule in ministering to people.

Church work and counseling should not serve as an hindrance to ministers. They should not rely on the fact that some people or members are praying for them. They should give time for personal prayer. Most times, people that ministers think they are praying for them do not do so. They are more concerned about their own wellbeing either physically and spiritually than that of the ministers.

Ministers are to determinedly create a secluded place for their praying periods. Many ministers' praying hours have been interrupted through visitors, church members even members of the family because they do not make it private. As the

Lord Jesus would always go to the solitary places for his prayers the ministers are to do the same.

It is required of the ministers that their prayer should be spiritually motivated and not carnal. A minister should not be spending his time praying for the mundane things of this world but, like the heroes of old, pray for the endowment of the power of the Holy Spirit upon their ministry. The truth of the matter is that when anointing comes every other carnal thing as houses, cars, money etc will follow. They should also make their prayer intercessory. That is to say, they should pray for their members if they are church pastors. The evangelists and itinerant ministers are to pray for their converts and the people they minister to during their revivals and crusades.

They are not to grow weary in prayer. Though sometimes, the requests may be delayed, but persistence is the key. It is the way out. Jesus encourages it. Even when their prayers seem to be unanswered, they are to labour on in prayer and God will surely answer if they can persist praying and pleading.

It is also very vital that ministers should take time to hear from God when praying. Since prayer is “dialogue” or “communication with God”. They should not just be praying but care to listen. Truly, many spend hours in praying over their ministry but do not give God attention to speak to them over their requests. Most times, the answers to ministers’ prayers are embedded in their hands possibly in taking certain steps as led by the Holy Spirit; but since they don’t have enough time to listen to his voice, it definitely causes delay over the answers to their prayers.

Prayer is work. Therefore, it requires deliberate preparation. Someone once said consistent daily prayer is easier to start but difficult to sustain. One of the greatest challenges of pastors is the ability to sustain their prayer life. They must determine that no one and nothing should take away their prayer period which is their communication with God.