

FIVE PRAYER STRATEGIES TO USE WHEN DEALING WITH UNSAVED CHILDREN

BY PERRY STONE

NOT

ALL PRAYERS ARE THE SAME. Paul wrote for believers to be “Praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit” (Eph. 6:18). The meaning of this statement can refer to praying in the Spirit on *all occasions*, and praying various types of prayers that are in line with the Holy Spirit’s wishes. In the New Testament, there is a prayer of *agreement* where two or three persons focus on the same specific thing (Matt. 18:19). There are prayers of *thanksgiving* (Phil. 4:6), the prayer of *binding and loosing* (Matt. 16:19), and the *prayer of faith* (James 5:15). One of the New Covenant prayers includes praying “in the Spirit” and “praying with our understanding” (1 Cor. 14:14-15), or praying in the prayer language of the Holy Spirit. This demonstrates there are different *types* of prayers for different *types* of situations.

In scripture, there are examples of what I call *crazy prayers* or *crazy prayer requests*. When Moses asked Pharaoh, “when do you want me to ask God to remove the frogs out of Egypt?” the king answered, “tomorrow!” Oddly, Pharaoh chose one more night with the frogs (Exod. 8:7-10). When a group of youth mocked Elisha, calling him a “baldhead,” commanding him to “go up,” Elisha cursed the entire group. Immediately, two female bears appeared from out of the woods and devoured 42 mockers (2 Kings 2:23-25). Peter requested that Christ give him the ability to walk on water while everyone else was content to remain in the boat (Matt. 14:25-30). One of the oddest requests was when a demon called “Legion” requested Christ to send him and



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several thousand fellow demons into the bodies of two thousand pigs, driving the wild swine insane as the pigs ran down a cliff, eventually drowning in the sea (Mark 5:13).

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I want to give you five very direct and specific prayers that, when offered to God in faith, has brought great results among those desiring a spiritual breakthrough for an unconverted friend or family member.

1. PRAY FOR THEIR SOUL AND SPIRIT TO BE AWAKENED

Years ago, in the early 1990s, I was ministering on a Sunday morning in a rural church just outside of Cleveland, Tennessee. That morning, my Israeli tour guide, Gideon Shor, was visting our

home and attended the service with us. At the conclusion of my message, I began with an altar invitation. For a brief moment, I began to “pray in the Spirit,” which is praying in the prayer language of the Spirit. The altar service, as we say, “broke loose” and concluded with spiritual results for the Kingdom of God.

Afterward, my guide Gideon commented, “I understood the words you were saying when you were praying in that other language. You said, *“Awake, wake up, people. It is time to awaken and get up.”* Picking up his Hebrew Bible, he said it reminded him of the words of the female judge, Deborah. Running his finger from right to left, he read from the sons of Deborah, “Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise” (Judg. 5:12).

We pray for someone to be “awakened” because they are slumbering, spiritually sleeping, or mentally sluggish. I have sat in churches, observing the youth, and it seems that there are two different groups of youth sitting in church. One group is at the front of the church, hands lifted, singing and worshipping, and others are sitting back, arms folded, slumped in a pew, counting the minutes on their iPhone, antici-

pating the twelve-noon final prayer so they can get out of service and back on social media. The enemy thrives off of sleeping saints. In the New Testament parable of the sower sowing the seed of the word, a man’s field was planted with good seed. However, while he *slept*, the enemy snuck in and planted tare seeds that later matured, choking out the good wheat (Matt. 13:24-27). When Samson fell asleep in Delilah’s lap, she cut off the source of his covenant, which was a Nazarite vow (Judg. 16). The spiritual slumbering in our youth must be broken.

Karen Wheaton is the spiritual mother and director of the Ramp, now in Cleveland. Years ago, the parents of a young man struggling with addictions requested Karen to come to their house, to their son’s room, and pray for his deliverance. The young man was at work. The parents knew the fellow would resent direct prayer if he were at home. I was with Karen on this occasion and heard her pray these words, *“Awaken, awaken his spirit by the Spirit of God. Cause his spirit to come alive in your presence and bring him out of the darkness.”* I had never heard a person pray for another person’s spirit to be awakened. Yet, this

is exactly what was needed, and eventually, the prayer was answered.

The first type of prayer to pray on behalf of a backslider, or a family member who is living in spiritual darkness, bound by their own lust and desires, is to pray for their mind and spirit to awaken to the things of God and to His Word. Paul wrote it this way, “*That the eyes of your understanding be enlightened*” (Eph. 1:18). He also wrote:

“Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light.”
– Ephesians. 5:14

This awakening theme was considered a part of the Jewish custom of sounding the shofar during the Sabbaths, New Moons, and Festivals, including the Day of Atonement. Maimonides surmise that the call of the trumpet was designed to signify a special call to repentance, especially in the month Tishri, in which the great day of Atonement occurred. It means, “You who sleep, arouse from your slumbers; search and try yourselves; think on your Creator, repent, and attend to the salvation of the soul” (*Source: from Barnes’ Notes*). The voice of an intercessor who stands in the gap becomes the bridge of prayer between heaven and hell, becoming a mighty shofar, piercing the darkness, and splitting the veil that is blinding the understanding of the sinner.

2. PRAY FOR A CHANGE IN THE PERSON’S DESIRES

All people have *desires*, a word carrying many meanings, including “*to wish for, wait, long for, or to express a request or a petition.*” However, in this instance, we are alluding to a passion or desire that is contrary to the Bible or a habit harmful to the body, soul, and spirit of a person. For example, all habits have a desire behind the motivation to perform that habit. Many habits impact the reward neurons in the brain, triggering a stronger desire to maintain the habit.

Years ago, Nancy Regan, the wife of President Ronald Regan, began an anti-drug campaign called “Just say no to drugs.” I remember seeing commercials on television, billboards, and radio ads encouraging the youth to “just say no.” Years later, evidence showed that the campaign did little or nothing to prevent or slow down drug use. It was noted that just telling people no is not a strong motivator to prevent taking drugs since peer pressure is greater, and the feeling received from the act is a stronger motivator than saying no. In one study, several athletes were told just say no to steroids while another was taught the danger of taking steroids. A year later, it was found that the athletes who were exposed to the danger of taking steroids took fewer drugs than those told to resist them by saying “no.”

People are visual and respond to *images* more than just *information*. In 1987, one effective commercial campaign by Partnership for a Drug Free America was a man holding an egg saying, “This is your brain.” The egg is cracked and put in a hot frying pan while the voice comments, “This is your brain on drugs.” It ends with the words, “Any questions?” The commercial was named one of the top one hundred ever produced by T.V. Guide. The image stuck in the minds of the viewers.

Perhaps you saw one of the most effective anti-smoking commercials ever made, starring a woman from North Carolina named Terrie Hall. Terrie was a heavy smoker whose voice box had been removed after she was diagnosed with oral and throat cancer. The ad showed her putting on a wig and false teeth while covering a hole in her throat with a scarf, warning people about the dangers of smoking. The ad was aired on television and received 2.8 million views on YouTube. Terrie died in September 2013 in a hospital in Winston Salem, N.C., at age 53. According to USA Today, her very graphic and shocking video may have accomplished more in getting people to stop smoking than any

single advertisement or campaign.

For a person to stop their habits or change their dangerous lifestyles, there must come a change in their *desires* or cravings. People become as passionate about their habits and bondages as some are their relationships with their companions. Look at the men and women who have given up their families, including children, to sustain a drug-alcohol habit. The second prayer to pray is that God will completely change the harmful or carnal desires of the person. On a few occasions, I was asked to pray for a person who wanted to quit smoking but was having difficulty. I would fervently pray for the Lord to take away the *desire* for nicotine (the root cause for the craving), and if they smoked again, to allow the smoke to make them uncomfortable or even sick. On numerous occasions, the prayer brought results and freedom for the seeker.

3. BINDING THE STRONGMAN

In Matthew 12:29, we read, “*Or how can one enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.*” It is impossible for a person to enter a house and seize possessions (spoil) if the house is being guarded by a *stronger person* than the *invader*. In this verse, the strongman is Satan and his demonic hordes that are intent on possessing, controlling, and eventually destroying the house—or the body of a person they are controlling. Strong spirits construct *strongholds*, like castles with bars, preventing the person from getting *out* and outside help from getting *in*.

Christ imparted authority to the individual believer. This authority is the same as if Christ Himself were speaking, praying, or commanding. We cannot exercise authority if we choose to be at peace with a negative situation. In Mark 5, a man from the area of Gadara became possessed with at least two thousand individual spirits. When Christ addressed the chief demon, the spirit identified itself as “legion,” saying, “we are many.”

This spirit was the “strongman” in charge of the other spirits. It was this strong spirit that petitioned Christ not to send the entire army of demons out of the region. After his request, we read, “All the demons besought him, saying, Send us into the swine that we might enter into them” (Mark 5:8-12).

Many times, evil spirits will attempt to hide their presence and identities until confronted by the presence of the Lord. Just as the religious Pharisees became cantankerous when Christ taught evil spirits become agitated when God’s anointing to break yokes is manifest. Using spiritual authority, believers must “bind” the opposing spirits. This Greek word bind is used when reapers bind tares in bundles, casting them into a fire (Matt. 13:30). It is used when the king’s servants bind the man without a proper wedding garment and cast him into outer darkness (Matt. 22:13). Rabbini- cally, to *bind is to forbid*, thus binding the strongman is to forbid the adversary to take up room and residence, driving him out through prayer.

4. PRAY FOR GOD TO BRING CONFUSION TO BAD RELATIONSHIPS

Numerous men and women sitting in a pew, enjoying the sermon and the voices of the choir, found a redemptive covenant after a personal crisis. There are other people who are like moldy bread; the longer they hang around, the more fungus they spread to those closest to them.

Years ago, one of our youth became burdened for her sister who was living on the west coast in an alternative lifestyle. The soul tie between her sister and this other woman was like chains around her sister, and the emotional attachment to the woman was unbreakable. Our youth came and said, “How should I pray when she is choosing to live this way, and I cannot pray to counter her will when she wants to live this way?”

I had a sudden inspiration come to me that we should come into agreement

that there would be division and confusion rising up in this unbiblical and dangerous relationship. We came into agreement that there would be no peace in the relationship, and confusion would break out, leading to separation. The prayer took 18 months to answer, but the sister began losing a desire to be with the other woman and eventually broke off the relationship and moved to begin a new life.

5. PRAYING AGAINST SEED STEALERS

In Christ’s parable of the farmer planting seed (a parabolic analogy for planting God’s Word in your heart), the failure and success rate is not upon the strength of the seed — as the seed of God’s Word is incorruptible. It is in the condition of the receiver’s heart, the one within whom the seed has been planted. For a spiritual transformation to occur, the scriptures, biblical teachings, and words from God must take root in the heart and begin to grow. In the parable, the ultimate job of the enemy is to prevent the seed (of God’s Word) from taking root in the heart of the person who hears the Word.

This significant parable reveals the four main conditions of the human heart that is encountered when the Word of God is preached, or the seed of God’s Word is planted into the minds of the audience:

The Ground	The Condition of the Heart	The Result to the Person
The wayside ground	...is the hardened heart	...results — no spiritual life
The stony ground	...is the rootless heart	...results — a superficial life
The thorny ground	...is the worldly heart	...results — a strangled life
The fruitful ground	...is the righteous heart	...results — a successful — fruitful life

Some hear the preached Word and the message “goes in one ear and comes out the other.” Others sit under powerful biblical preaching and yet become offended at the teaching. Thus, what is being taught produces resentment instead of revival. Occasionally in my own ministry, I watched people walk out of a service when they disagreed with a point in the message. Others became excited for a short period, but eventually, worldly distractions and the cares of life overwhelmed them to the point of choking the strength from their spiritual progress. Soon, they are working overtime to pay bills, attended church very little, and seldom, if ever, support God’s work through tithe or offering. The fourth group hears, receives, and acts upon the Word in faith. These 25% (or one in four according to the parable) are the believers who will receive a return (harvest) on their spiritual investment, some thirty, some sixty, and some one hundred.



After posting a special YouTube video on infants in Heaven, we received hundreds of requests to tape a more detailed study on what happens to a miscarried infant's spirit at death. This teaching was so detailed that it required two CDs. If you have ever lost a child before or after birth or know someone who has, this will be the most encouraging teaching you will hear. We also discuss predestination, foreknowledge, and the question, "did our spirit pre-exist with God in the beginning, or does it come into existence at conception?"

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These Scriptures on sowing the seed are often quoted when a minister is receiving an offering in a local church or encouraging believers to "plant a financial seed" into a project. The "soil" is considered their ministry. However, in the truest sense of interpretation, the soil is the condition and receptivity of the person's heart, receiving the seed of the Word. When a truth is read from Scripture or released from the pulpit, the hearer must plant the revelation being taught in the chambers of their mind, heart, and spirit. If this heart is not guarded, the persecution, pressure, circumstance, and negativity of people will rip out what was planted.

Throughout my ministry, I cannot count the times when a young person from a nominal mainline church would attend a conference and receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. The moment they informed a friend or their pastor, they were told what they received was not real, and they must not go back to the meeting or return to the church. Some would return, but others would not. The difference was some did not have any depth of teaching on the Holy Spirit, accepting some theological interpretation — *based on unbelief* — from their friends. Others had good seed planted that had already taken root, and no one could convince them that the transfor-

mation in their lifestyle, the peace, and joy in their spirit was not from the Lord.

If you have children that are High School teens or college-age students, peer pressure from the opinions of friends will begin reaching in to rip out the seed you have planted in their spirits from an early age. You must pray against the seed eaters, the people, and spirits assigned to weaken the soil of their heart, preventing the Word from taking root.

These prayers strategies, when combined in faith, have broken yokes and released the lost to salvation. Never cease in your prayer for the salvation of those you love. 