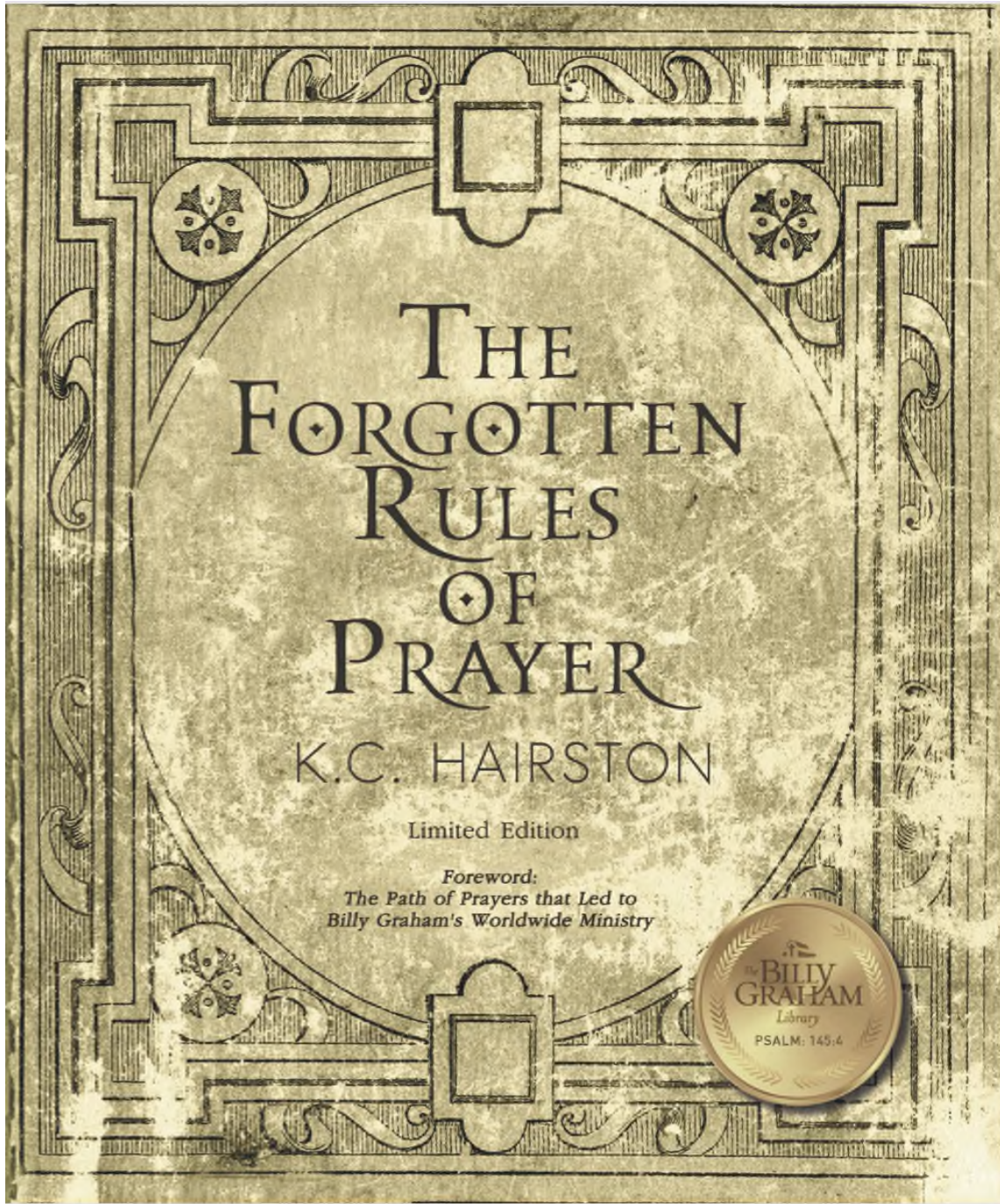


Teacher's Guide



To Learning The 28
Forgotten Rules of Prayer

Class Structure

This study guide is structured for a seven class series. Each class covers four forgotten rules and an illustrative prayer from the Bible to demonstrate how each of the covered four forgotten rules works.

This study guide can be altered to cover the 28 forgotten rules in more or less classes.

CLASS 1

Rule 1

- Ask, Don't Demand -

Scripture Reading:

1. 1 John 5:14: “**If** we **ask** for anything according to God’s will, **He hears us.**”
2. Mathew 26:39: “My Father, **if** it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me, **yet not as I will, but as You will.**”

Discussion Points:

- We must ask, not demand, that God answer our prayers.
- As servants of God, we have no right to demand that God act according to our will.
- Why does the Bible not instruct us to “tell” God what we want?
- 1 John 5:14 shows that there is a connection between “asking” and God “hearing us.”
 - Why is this verse in the Bible?
 - If we don’t ask according to God’s will, does He not hear us?
 - Or, does following this verse just make our prayers more effective?
- Example provided by Jesus as seen in Mathew 26:39.
- Jesus asked that God spare Him from death on the cross, only if it was in accordance with God’s will.
 - Jesus understood, that even in the prayer for His life, that He should only pray for things in accordance with God’s will. In other words, you should ask, not demand – even for the important things.
- In order to follow this rule, it is helpful to prepare our hearts and minds before praying to ensure that our prayers are request and not demands.
- The wording of our prayers can also be important.
 - “if you are willing...” – see examples shown in Jesus’ prayers.
- *Important*: Sometimes God’s will differs from ours. So, when asking for God’s will, we must be prepared to accept it. It is important to remember, however, when God chooses not answer our prayers in the way that we wish, God will provide us with the strength needed to accept His answer. For example, when God choose not to answer Jesus’ request that He be spared from death on the cross, the Bible states “that an angel from heaven appeared to Him and strengthened Him.”
- *Also important*: If we know that God will give us whatever we ask according to His will, then if we ask for things that we know are in accordance with God’s will, we know that we will receive them (i.e., more faith, for God to be with us in a particular situation, etc.).

Point of Lesson: The Bible shows us that there is a connection between “asking” for God’s will in our prayers and God’s willingness to hear them. To increase the effectiveness of our prayers, we should ask not demand. This is accomplished by preparing before we pray and by carefully wording our prayers similar to the way that Jesus prayed.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Leper's Prayer to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 1

Rule 2

- Don't Put God to a Test -

Scripture Readings:

Deuteronomy 6:16: “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”

Matthew 4:5-7: “Then the devil took Him to the holy city and had Him stand on the highest point of the temple. ‘If you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘throw yourself down.’ For it is written: ‘He will command His angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’ Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

Discussion Points:

- Our prayers should not be used as a means to test God.
- According to the Bible, Jesus memorized this rule (from Deuteronomy 6:16) and applied it in His own life (See Matthew 4:5-7). This shows us the importance of memorizing and applying this rule in our own lives.
- Because the Bible shows us that God has granted requests for signs, it is important to distinguish the difference between testing God and asking Him for a sign.
 - If a request is because we have a lack of faith in God’s ability, then it is a test and is forbidden.
 - If a request is to clarify God’s purpose, or to help interpret what God wants us to do, then it is a request for a sign and is permitted.
 - Example: In Judges 6:15-22, Gideon asked God to show him a sign that it was really God’s purpose that Gideon take his weak army to fight the Midianites. God granted Gideon’s request, which shows that requests for clarification are permitted – if done for the right reasons.
- *Important*: Satan is always there and wants us to test God.
- *Also Important*: Determining whether a request is a test or for a sign may take some consideration before a prayer is made.

Point of Lesson: Testing God through our prayers is forbidden, however, our prayers can be used to clarify God’s purpose for our lives. The question is whether our request is based on a lack of faith or a need for clarification.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Leper’s Prayer to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 1

Rule 3

- Believe in the Power of Prayer -

Scripture Readings:

1. Mark 11:23-24: “All things you ask in prayer, **believing**, you shall receive.”
2. James 1:6-7: “But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. **For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord.**”
3. Mathew 21:22: “If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”
4. Hebrews 4:26: “Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”

Discussion Points:

- The Bible tells us that we will receive when we believe, and that we will not receive when we don't. There is no gray area here. To increase the effectiveness of our prayers we have to believe in the power of prayer.
- Because God is all knowing and is aware of our doubts, it is important to prepare before praying.
 - The test: A good question to ask ourselves in order to see if we are mentally ready to pray is whether we really believe our prayer can be answered.
 - We should remove our doubts first and then pray.
- Example: In Mark 11:20-25, Jesus provides an illustration of the power of prayer and specifically notes that a person can move mountains by believing in the power of prayer. What are the mountains in our own lives? These mountains can be dealt with by believing in the power of prayer.

Point of Lesson: We must believe in the power of prayer. God knows our doubts and sees when our prayers are based upon little faith. It is important to remove our doubts before praying. The Bible states that we should expect nothing if our prayers are based on doubt.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Leper's Prayer to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 1

Rule 4

- Be Humble -

Scripture Readings:

2 Chronicles 34:27: “**Because** you humbled yourself before Me and tore your robes and wept in my presence, **I have heard you** declares the Lord.”

2 Chronicles 7:14: “**If** My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, **then I will hear** from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

James 4:10: “**Humble yourselves** before the Lord, and He will exalt you.”

James 4:6: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the **humble**.”

1 Peter 5:6: “**Humble yourselves**, therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.”

Discussion Points:

- What are central themes of the Bible? (grace, love, righteousness, etc.). Humility is a central theme of the Bible.
- Our level of humility should be in line with someone that is about to approach their master, Lord and Creator.
- We should not casually approach God in prayer like we would anyone else.
- Today’s society tries to portray Jesus as a buddy.
 - Do any bumper stickers or t-shirts come to mind?
 - Jesus is a friend, but He is our God first (Similar to the way we would treat a parent that’s also a friend).
 - We lessen our relationship with Jesus when we treat Him as we would other friends.
- We should conduct a “soul search” before praying to make sure that we are approaching God with the correct level of humbleness.
- Getting on your knees before you pray is one way of creating humbleness. In the early 1900’s it was common for people to kneel when they got called on to pray. Today, when people get called on to pray what do they do? They stand. It is important for us to get back to the lost habit of approaching God with humbleness.
 - When we approach God with a humble spirit, it allows God to exalt us.
 - Example: Luke 18:10-14. This story of the tax collector illustrates how much God opposes the proud, and how we gives grace to the humble.

Point of Lesson: The God stated “because” you have humbled yourself “I have heard you.” He also stated “If” my people will humble themselves then “I will hear from heaven.” The Bible shows us that there is a direct connection between approaching God with humble spirit and His willingness to hear our

prayers. It is important to make sure before we pray that our level of humbleness is in line with someone who is about to approach their God.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Leper's Prayer to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 1:

Past Prayer that Worked #1

- The Prayer of a Leper -

Scripture Reading:

Mathew 8:2-3: When He came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed Him. A man with leprosy came and knelt down beside Him and said “Lord, if you are willing, You can make me clean.” Jesus reached out His hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” He said. “Be clean!” Immediately, he was cured of his leprosy.

Review: Can you tell how each of the first four forgotten rules are illustrated in the Prayer of the Leper?

1. Ask, don't demand.

- “if you are willing”
- If the leper would have worded his prayer as a demand would it have been as effective? Would it have still been answered?

2. Don't put God to a test.

- Because the leper believed that God could heal Him, his prayer was not a test. The leper stated “if You are willing, You can make me clean.”
- If the leper would have stated “if You are God, You can make me clean” would his prayer have been as effective? Would it have still been answered?

3. Believe in the power of prayer.

- “You can make me clean.”
- If the leper would not have conveyed his belief in Jesus' power to heal him, would his prayer have been as effective? Would it have still been answered?

4. Be humble when you pray.

- “A man with leprosy came and knelt down beside Him.”
- If the leper would have walked up to Jesus and stood face to face with Him, and asked Jesus to heal him would his prayer have still been as effective? Would it have still been answered? Or did the fact that the leper knelt down before Jesus in a humbling manner result in more effective prayer?

CLASS 2

Rule 5

- Be Persistent -

Scripture Readings:

1. Luke 18:1: “Then Jesus told His disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and never give up.”
2. Luke 18:2-8: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with a plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’ For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually wear me out with her coming!’ And the Lord said, ‘listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to Him day and night? Will He keep putting them off? I tell you, He will see that they get justice, and quickly.’”
3. Luke 11:5-8: “Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.’ From inside he answers and says, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs. So, I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you, seek, and you shall find, ask, and it shall be given to you, seek, and you shall find, knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened.”

Discussion Points:

- The key is not to knock on the door once and the stop, but rather we are to keep knocking.
- Jesus used the stories of the *widow seeking justice* and the *friend seeking bread* to clearly illustrate that we are to be persistent in our prayers.
 - It is important to note that if the widow seeking justice and the friend seeking bread had not been persistent, their requests would probably not have been answered.
 - There is an old wise-tale that stated, “if you ask for something more than once, then you are not trusting God.” This old saying conflicts the very teachings of Jesus as seen in the two stories provided above.
 - Should this also be applied in our prayers for forgiveness. The general belief is that it should not. This is because when we ask for forgiveness for a particular sin, there is nothing left to pray about – because the sin has been forgiven.

Point of Lesson: As instructed by Jesus, we should be persistent in our prayers. This means that we should continue to pray until we get an answer.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Hannah's prayer for a child to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 2

Rule 6

- Be Specific -

Scripture Readings:

Mathew 6:7-8: “For they suppose that they will be heard by their many words. Therefore do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.”

Ecclesiastes 5:2-3: “God is heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.”

Discussion Points:

- Being specific adds sincerity and indicates intent.
- For example, if you run into a friend at a store and say “Let’s get in touch with each other and maybe we can go to lunch one day” there is probably little chance that the offer will be taken seriously, and the offer will probably never be thought of again. However, if you run into a friend and say “I’ll call you tomorrow at your work number, and maybe we can have lunch next Monday” this offer will probably been taken seriously by both people and followed up on at a later date. In the same way being specific in our prayers adds sincerity and indicates intent.
- This forgotten rule applies to all aspects of our prayers:
 - When we thank God, we should thank Him for specific things.
 - When we ask for forgiveness, we should ask for forgiveness for specific sins (this is harder than it appears).
 - When we praise God, we should praise Him for particular attributes.
 - When we pray for others, we should pray for them by name and for specific reasons.
 - Are there other types of prayer that should be specific?
- In order to pray specifically, it is helpful to maintain a prayer journal to keep track of the details.

Point of Lesson: The Bible clearly instructs that we are to be specific in our prayers. This forgotten rule applies to all aspects of our prayers. Being specific adds sincerity and indicates intent. Keeping a prayer journal is a must in order to apply this rule.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Hannah’s prayer for a child to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 2

Rule 7

- Husband and Wife Rule -

Scripture Readings:

1 Peter 3:7: “Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect...and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, **so that nothing will hinder your prayers.**”

Ephesians 5:25: “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her...”

Colossians 3:19: “Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.”

Discussion Points:

- Apostle Peter could have listed any consequence for deteriorated spousal relationships, but he chose to say “so that nothing will hinder your prayers.” This shows us the importance of maintaining a good relationship with our spouse and the heightened value Apostle Peter placed on prayer – although there are clearly numerous negative consequences for a degraded marriage, this was the devastating result that he was focused on and concerned about.
- A constant theme in the Bible is loving others and being kind to one another. However, the spousal relationship is the only love that is compared to Jesus’ love for the church. According to Ephesians, there is something sacred about a spouse’s love.
- In Mark 10:9, Jesus states the following regarding marriage, “what God has joined together, let not man separate.” According to Mark 10:9, each marriage is bound by the hand of God, and actions taken against the marriage are actions against the will of God.
- If you believe that your prayers are being hindered, the spousal relationship is an area that should be examined.
- Because of the ability to impact prayer power, does this make marriage a focal point for the devil’s attack?

Point of Lesson: According to the Bible, a deteriorated spousal relationship will hinder our ability to communicate with God. Therefore, this will be a point of attack for the devil. The Bible instructs us to treat our spouses with respect and to be considerate of one another. If you feel that there is a breakdown in your communications with God, this area of your life should be exemplified as the potential cause.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Hannah’s prayer for a child to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 2

Rule 8

- Don't Use Meaningless Repetition -

Scripture Readings:

Matthew 6:7: “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition.”

Jeremiah 29:13: “You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.”

Discussion Points:

- What are some famous memorized prayers? Can they be prayed with meaning and not just pure repetition?
- What are ways to avoid meaningless repetitions prayers? Prayer journals, etc.?
- Is Jesus clear in Mathew 6:7 that he does not want meaningless repetitious prayers? (i.e., “do not use”)
- How would you define meaningless repetition? Is it chanting? Mantras?
- Does Matthew 6:7 forbid all repetitious prayers? Or just Meaningless repetitious prayers?
- Why are meaningless repetitious prayers not an effective way to communicate with God? See Jeremiah 29:13.

Point of Lesson: Jesus clearly instructed us to not use meaningless repetition. Christians routinely encounter repetitious prayers during the practicing of their faith – such as the Lord’s Prayer. Therefore, it is important to apply meaning to these prayers and not just chant them as meaningless repetition. For example, you can put meaning behind the Lord’s Prayer in the following ways:

Our Father who art in heaven, Hollowed be thy name.	We can start off the prayer by approaching God humbly as His Children.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven,	We can pray that God’s will be done, not ours.

Give us today our daily bread.	Convey trust in God – not worried about tomorrow. Think of things going on in your life that require trust in God.
And forgive us our debts,	Think of <u>specific</u> sins that need to be forgiven.
As we have forgiven our debtors.	Think of <u>specific</u> forgiveness that you have given others.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.	Think of <u>specific</u> temptations that you need to be protected from.
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.	Convey Praise – think of <u>specific</u> attributes to praise God for.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Hannah’s prayer for a child to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 2

Past Prayer That Worked #2

- The Prayer for a Child -

Scripture Reading:

The Prayer for a Child: 1 Samuel 1:1–1

“There was a certain man from Ramathaim, a Zuphite from the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah. . . . He had two wives; one was called Hannah and the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none. Year after year this man went up from his town to worship and sacrifice to the Lord Almighty at Shiloh, where Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were priests of the Lord. Whenever the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice, he would give portions of the meat to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters. But to Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her, and the Lord had closed her womb. And because the Lord had closed her womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her.

This went on year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the Lord, her rival provoked her till she wept and would not eat. Elkanah her husband would say to her, ‘Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don’t you eat? Why are you downhearted? Don’t I mean more to you than ten sons?’

Once when they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on a chair by the doorpost of the Lord’s temple. In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the Lord. And she made a vow, saying, ‘O Lord Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant’s misery and remember me, and not for-get your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.’

As she kept on praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk and said to her, ‘How long will you keep on getting drunk? Get rid of your wine.’ ‘Not so, my lord,’ Hannah re-plied, ‘I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the Lord.

Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief.’

Eli answered, ‘Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of Him.’ She said, ‘May your servant find favor in your eyes.’ Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast. Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the Lord and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah lay with Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her. So in the course of time Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, ‘Because I asked the Lord for him.’”

Review: Can you tell how Forgotten Rules 4 through 8 are illustrated in Hannah’s prayer for a child?

5. Be Persistent.

- Hannah's answered prayer illustrates the importance of several of the forgotten rules discussed in this book. First, Hannah prayed persistently (Forgotten Rule #5: Be persistent).
- Year after year, Hannah's family made an annual trip to worship and pray in the sanctuary at Shiloh. At the sanctuary, Hannah would pray for a child. During these trips, Hannah was taunted by her husband's other wife for her barrenness.
- Specifically, the Bible states that "her rival provoked her till she wept and would not eat." Despite these years of anguish and torment, Hannah was persistent, and, in God's timing, she was blessed with a son.
- Why God made Hannah wait can only be speculated—because the Bible does not state why God delayed His answer. In Hannah's final prayer for a son, however, she did reach a point where she stated that if she were given a son, she would dedicate his complete life to God. Maybe this is the attitude God was waiting for. In the same way, God sometimes makes us wait for an answer until He has accomplished His entire purpose for granting our request—but during this time, like Hannah, we are to pray persistently and not give up.

5. Be specific.

- Hannah's prayer was very specific (Forgotten Rule #6: Be specific). Hannah did not just ask God to grant her a child, she specifically asked that God bless her with a son.
- Hannah also told God exactly what she would do with a son—she would give him to the service of God. Hannah did just as she had promised. While Samuel was still a toddler, Hannah took him back to the sanctuary in Shiloh, dedicated him to the service of God, and left him with Eli the priest. Hannah was specific in her prayers, and God honored them.

6. Husband & Wife Rule.

- The compassion, respect, and love that can be seen between Hannah and her husband, Elkanah, were also important because their marriage relationship had the ability to hinder the power of Hannah's prayer.
- According to the Bible, Elkanah was very generous, compassionate, and encouraging to his wife. This type of husband/wife relationship results in powerful prayer.
- As discussed in Forgotten Rule #7: Husband and Wife Rule, not having the proper husband/wife relationship can hinder the power of prayer.

7. Do Not Use Meaningless Repetition.

- Hannah's prayer was also powerful because Hannah did not use meaningless repetition. Rather, the Bible states that Hannah was praying with her heart.
- The Bible goes on to state that her lips were moving, but no words were coming out of her mouth. Hannah herself referred to her prayer as "pouring" her soul out to the Lord.
- This is a perfect illustration of how all of our prayers should be—not thoughtless repetitions of memorized prayers, but prayers that are full of thought and pour from our souls (Forgotten Rule #8: Don't use meaningless repetition).
- The Bible states that after she prayed, "the Lord remembered her" and gave her a child.

CLASS 3

Rule 9

- Don't Let Selfishness Create Wrong Motives -

Scripture Readings:

James 4:3: “When you ask, **you do not receive**, because you ask with the wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”

1 Chronicles 28:9: “the Lord **searches** every heart and **understands every motive** behind our thoughts.”

Philippians 2:3: “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself.”

Psalm 66:18: “If I regard iniquity in my heart, **the Lord will not hear me.**” [As declared by King David.]

Discussion Points:

- Prayer is a powerful privilege that should not be abused.
- According to James 4:3, if we have a prayer that goes unanswered, one possible reason could be the motive behind it. Therefore, we should always be conscious of our motives before we pray.
- Effective prayers are prayers made for the right reasons.
- Which is more important: the content of our prayers or the motives in our hearts?
- Motives are an important aspect of our prayers and have a direct effect on God's willingness to answer them.
- How can we protect against wrong motives? Pause before you pray? Pray about motives?
- If there is a potential for wrong motives, sometimes it is helpful to first pray for God to assist you in having the right motives. After we are comfortable with our motives, it is only then that we should pray.

Point of Lesson: Having the right motive is a must for powerful prayer! Good things happen when our motives are not selfish.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Solomon to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 3

Rule 10

- Pray for Your Enemies -

Scripture Readings:

Matthew 5:44: “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

Matthew 4:46: “If you love those who love you, what reward have you?”

Luke 6:28: “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, **pray for those who mistreat you.**”

Discussion Points:

- In Matthew Chapter 5, Jesus explained why we are to love and pray for our enemies. Jesus stated that we are to treat our enemies no differently than we treat our friends - because that is what God does. By treating one's friends and enemies the same, a person can grow closer to God's challenge: “You are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Matthew 5:48) Jesus further explained that God causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good and that He sends the rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. Jesus posed the following question: “If you love those who love you, what reward have you?” (Matthew 4:46)
- Not only did Jesus instruct us to love and pray for our enemies, He also carried out these instructions in His own life. Jesus even prayed for the people who betrayed Him the most - the people who tortured and ultimately killed Him. As Jesus was hanging on the cross, moments away from dying at the hands of His enemies, He prayed, “Father forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34)
- Is it possible to pray for your enemies without forgiving them? Is this tied to forgiveness. Had Jesus forgiven His enemies before He prayed for them? Is there some aspect of letting go required?

Point of Lesson: Jesus repeatedly provided us with examples and clear instruction that we are to pray for our enemies. Praying for our enemies is an important element of powerful prayer; it adds an aspect of unselfishness, and it is needed to offer God a “complete prayer” according to His instructions.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Solomon to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 3

Rule 11

- Pray Continuously -

Scripture Readings:

1 Thessalonians 5:17: “Pray without ceasing.”

James 4:8: “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.”

Exodus 33:17: “I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I **know you by name.**”

Philippians 4:6: “Be anxious for nothing, but in *everything by prayer* and supplication with thanksgiving **let your request be made known to God.**”

Discussion Points:

- It is often tempting to only pray when we find ourselves in a time of need. As we are all aware, it is not uncommon for someone to go days, weeks, months, even years without praying. By doing so, we are only expecting God to be there for us when we need him - expecting Him to answer our prayers after we have practically extinguished Him from our lives.
- The Bible is clear, however, that answered prayer is directly related to our closeness to God. If we expect God to be close and hear our prayers during our times of need, according to James 4:8, we should draw near to Him during all periods of our life, not just the low points.
- Similarly, God told Moses, “I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I *know you by name.*”²⁰ It is important for God to know us by name. One way to ensure this fact is to pray to God continuously.
- In addition, at all times it is important that we *convey* our thoughts and needs to God. The Bible states “Be anxious for nothing, but in *everything by prayer* and supplication with thanksgiving *let your request be made known to God.*”²¹ In other words, although Jesus is all knowing and knows our thoughts, needs and desires, we should still convey our thoughts, needs and desires to Him in prayer before they can be answered.
- One of the great misconceptions about religion is the idea that because God is all knowing, and because He already knows our needs, God will adequately provide and there is no need to re-convey such requests to Him. However, the exact opposite is true. All requests should “be made known to God.” No matter how simple or obvious our wants and needs may be, our instruction is clear – “everything by prayer.”

Point of Lesson: Put simply, one of the rules of prayer is to pray - even for the obvious things - during the good times, bad times, and even those in between.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Solomon to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 3

Rule 12

- Be Righteous -

Scripture Readings:

James 5:16: “The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”

Psalm 34:15: “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their cry.”

Psalm 34:17: “The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; He delivers them from all their troubles.”

Psalm 37:28: “The Lord loves the just and will not forsake the faithful ones.”

Psalm 37:25: “I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging for bread.” [Declared by King David]

Psalm 1:6: “The Lord watches over the way of the righteous.”

1 John 3:22: “Anything we ask, because we obey His commands and do what pleases Him.”

Proverbs 15:8: “The prayer of the upright is pleasing to the Lord.”

Proverbs 15:29: “The Lord is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.”

Discussion Points:

- One way to increase the effectiveness of our prayers is to live our lives as God has instructed - be righteous. As discussed later in this book, having sin in our lives can annul the power of our prayers.
- The Lord hears the prayers of the righteous.
- In Psalms 37:25 King David points out that God listens not only to the righteous, but also to their children. During David’s life, he was fascinated by the difference in the way the Lord treated the righteous and the unrighteous. The Bible shows us that the righteous and their children will receive special attention from the Lord.

Point of Lesson: These verses illustrate an important point: praying effectively is more than just saying the right words – it’s also based upon who is praying them.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Solomon to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 3

Past Prayer That Worked # 3

- The Prayer of Solomon -

Scripture Reading:

1 Kings 3:5-13

At Gideon the Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, 'Ask for whatever You want me to give you.' Solomon answered, 'You have shown great kindness to Your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to You and righteousness and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day.'

'Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a child and do not know how to carry out my duties. Your servant is here among the people You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. So give Your servant a discerning heart to govern Your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of Yours?'

The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. So God said to him, 'Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for both riches and honor - so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings.'

Review: Can you tell how each of the first four forgotten rules are illustrated in the Prayer of Solomon?

9. Don't Let Selfishness Create Wrong Motives.

- The main theme behind this answered prayer is that we should not let selfishness create wrong motives. In answering Solomon's prayer, God stated that He was granting the prayer because of Solomon's unselfish spirit. As noted in **Forgotten Rule #9:** "Don't let selfishness create wrong motives," James 4:3 states, "when you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with the wrong motive." Here, just the opposite occurred - Solomon asked with the right motives and was given more than he requested. This prayer illustrates the importance of soul-searching before we pray to ensure that our prayer requests are premised on the right motives.

10. Pray For Your Enemies.

- God also specifically stated in answering King Solomon's prayer that He was pleased because Solomon did not ask for the death of his enemies. As noted in **Forgotten Rule #10**: "Pray for your enemies," Luke 6:27-28 tells us that Jesus Christ stated, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those that mistreat you."
- When we pray, God does not want us to pray for the demise of our enemies, but for their protection - as seen in God's answer to King Solomon's prayer, negative attitudes toward our enemies can hinder God's willingness to answer. Rather, we should pray for them like we would a friend or family member. Praying for our enemies is not only required of us by God, but it also includes an unselfish aspect to our prayer, both of which add power to our communications with God.

11. Pray Continually.

- This prayer also demonstrates the importance of praying continually as discussed in **Forgotten Rule #11**: "Pray continually." Despite being someone who had everything and being at a high point in his life, Solomon still turned to God for further wisdom. Solomon, son of King David and Queen Bathsheba, enjoyed every possible luxury while growing up in the royal palace.
- Solomon's continued dedication to prayer resulted in him praying even during these good times, which enabled him to focus on others and not himself. God not only granted Solomon's prayers for others, but God also found ways to bless Solomon personally - even though Solomon did not ask for personal blessings. All of this occurred because Solomon was a man of continued prayer - praying during the good times and the bad.

12. Be Righteous.

- The righteousness of Solomon and his desire to live the type of life God had instructed did not go unnoticed by God. The Bible states that Solomon specifically prayed that God would help him distinguish between right and wrong. As noted in **Forgotten Rule #12**: "Be righteous," James 5:16 states "the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." After Solomon's prayer, God stated, "if you walk in My ways and obey My statutes and commandments...I will give you a long life."²² Solomon's righteousness and his desire to be righteous resulted in powerful prayer. In the same way, our righteousness can strengthen our prayers.

CLASS 4

Rule 13

- Don't Worry – Trust God -

Scripture Readings:

Matthew 6:25-27: “Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?”

1 Corinthians 10:13: “God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”

Psalms 46:10: “Be still, and know that I am God.”

Discussion Points:

- Prayer is often reserved by today's society for times of need, and such times naturally breed worry.
- Can you worry and trust God at the same time?
- We can't stop worrying altogether, but we can try to not live a life of worry.
- Behavioral Modification Experts teach people to postpone worry.
- Practice turning burdens over to the Lord (and leave them there).
- Jesus instructed us in Matthew 6:25, “do not worry about your life.”
- God is in control.
- Motto: Don't worry, Pray.

Point of Lesson: God does not want us to worry, but to trust Him after we pray. When we pray, we are turning our concerns and problems over to God - and that is where we should leave them. Take your burdens to the Lord and leave them there.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Jonah to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 4

Rule 14

- Give Thanks (for the Good and Bad) -

Scripture Readings:

1 Thessalonians 5:18: “Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

Psalms 92:1: “It is good to give thanks to the Lord.”

Colossians 4:2: “Devote yourself to prayer, **being watchful and thankful.**”

Philippians 4:6: “**With thanksgiving,** present your request to God.”

Discussion Points:

- A vital part of prayer is giving thanks to God “in all circumstances” (good or bad) that He allows to take place in our lives. Although it is easy to praise and thank God for the good, it can be difficult, and even awkward, to praise God for the bad. But, there is a reason to praise God for the bad.
- It is important to understand that God does have a purpose behind allowing the “bad” in our lives. James 1:2-4 says, “whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be stronger in character and ready for ANYTHING!”
- God puts trials in our lives to create opportunities for us to grow. By thanking God for these trials, we demonstrate to Him that we trust Him and understand that He has a higher purpose.
- As the Bible instructs, we should not only be watchful for things to pray for, but we should also continually watch for things to be thankful for. Every day, we take for granted so many things that God has provided. God wants to be acknowledged as the provider of all the things we take for granted, and prayer is one of the best ways to let Him know.

Point of Lesson: “Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Jonah to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 4

Rule 15

- *Include Praise* -

Scripture Readings:

Psalm “Praise the Lord.”

Hebrews 13:15: “Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise.”

Psalm 147:1: “How good it is to sing praise to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise Him.”

Discussion Points:

- Put simply, prayer is communication with God, our Master, our Creator; we are praying to Him as His followers, His servants and His creation.
- Accordingly, when we approach God in prayer, He *expects* us to praise Him. As our Creator and Master, God has every right to be disappointed in us when we approach Him in prayer, and rather than praise Him, we bombard Him with additional requests. Although God wants to be gracious to us, we must still approach God as God and give Him more than just requests. God wants to hear more from us than our needs—He already knows them. For our prayers to be complete they must include several required items—one of these is praise.
- When we praise God in our prayers, we should praise Him for specific attributes and for the specific things He has done in our lives. To truly accomplish this level of detail, it is important to think of specific areas to praise God for prior to going to Him in prayer. A great way to accomplish this task is to keep an ongoing journal of the things we have to praise God for. In addition, praise is *not* something we are to give God in our prayers on a periodic basis.
- When we pray with the right attitude, we will automatically desire to praise God. As King David declared in For us, it should also be pleasant and fitting when we go to God in prayer with praise.

Point of Lesson: We are instructed in the Bible to continually praise God. We are instructed to praise God in all that we do. Therefore, every prayer should include an element of praise. It should be as common as the “amen.”

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Jonah to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 4

Rule 16

- Be Careful What You Promise to do in Your Prayers -

Scripture Readings:

Ecclesiastes 5:4-5: “When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it.”

Deuteronomy 23:21-23: “If you make a vow to the Lord your God, do not be slow to pay it, for the Lord your God will certainly demand it of you and you will be guilty of sin. But if you refrain from making a vow, you will not be guilty. Whatever your lips utter you must be sure to do, because you made your vow freely to the Lord your God with your own mouth.”

“Let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no.’”

“This is what the Lord commands: When a man makes a vow to the Lord or takes an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he must not break his word but must do everything he said.” [Moses reminded the heads of the tribes of Israel of this in 15th century B.C.]

“Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them.” [An instructed by Asaph, a friend of King David and witness of the Ark of the Covenant in 10th century B.C.]

Discussion Points:

- We should not make empty promises in our prayers. In order to avoid this danger, careful thought should go into every promise we make to God.
- It is often tempting to promise God that we will do something for Him if He answers a particular request or meets a specific need for us. For example, we often pray that if God does X, we will do Y in return.
- Before making promises in our prayers, we should remind ourselves that our promises will be treated as *vows to God that should not be broken!* Similar to the importance of writing our prayer requests down before we pray, we should also write down the promises that we make to God after we pray. This will remind us of our vows to God—which is the first step to keeping them.
- We are permitted to make promises to God in our prayers, but we must fulfill them and fulfill them in a *timely* manner.

Point of Lesson: The bottom line is that God expects us to do what we say. As Jesus instructed, If we tell God we are going to do something, we should do it. Prayer is not a time to remove yourself from reality and make promises you know you cannot keep.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Jonah to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 4

Past Prayer That Worked # 4

- The Prayer of Jonah and the Whale -

Scripture Reading:

Jonah 2:2-10

According to the Bible, thousands of years ago a man named Jonah was thrown overboard from a ship and swallowed by a whale. While struggling to escape, he prayed the following prayer:

In my distress I called to the Lord, and He answered me. From the depths of the grave I called for help, and You listened to my cry. You hurled me into the deep, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all Your waves and breakers swept over me. I said, 'I have been banished from Your sight; yet I will look again toward Your temple.' The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head. To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath me in forever. But You brought my life up from the pit, oh Lord my God. When my life was ebbing away, I remembered You, Lord, and my prayer rose to You, to Your holy temple. Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit their grace that could be theirs. But I, with a song of thanksgiving, will sacrifice to You. What I have vowed I will make good. Salvation comes from the Lord.

After praying this prayer, it is written that *"the Lord commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land."*

Review: Can you tell how each of the first four forgotten rules are illustrated in the Prayer of Jonah and the Whale?

13. Don't Worry – Trust God.

- Jonah began his prayer by assuring himself that God really did have the power to answer his cry for help. Jonah specifically envisioned, “in my distress I called to the Lord, and He answered me.” Similarly, Jonah stated: “The engulfing waters threatened me, seaweed was wrapped around my head. To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath me in forever. But You brought my life up from the pit, oh my Lord.” Despite being deep under the sea, wrapped in seaweed and in the belly of a whale, Jonah prayed as though there was absolutely no doubt that God would answer his prayer. Throughout his prayer, Jonah conveyed to God that he was not worried and that his prayer was based upon trust. In **Forgotten Rule #13:** “Don't worry—trust God,” it is noted that when we pray, we are turning our concerns over to God and—as Jonah's

prayer illustrated—that is where we should leave them. Jonah's prayer is a prayer that acknowledges trust in the Lord. Like Jonah, to achieve powerful prayer, we should also convey our trust to God when we pray.

14. Give Thanks (for the good and the bad)

- Jonah also used his prayer to convey his thanks to God. Although Jonah was stuck in a whale, he still had the desire to be thankful towards God. According to the Bible, Jonah prayed, “When my life was ebbing away, I remembered You, Lord, and my prayer rose to You, to Your holy temple.”
- Jonah acknowledged in his prayer that God placed him in the belly of a whale, but Jonah was not angry at the Lord. Instead, in the prayer for his life, Jonah took the time to tell God that he would offer a “song of thanksgiving.” Jonah was thankful to God even for the bad.
- Similarly, we should include thanksgiving in our own prayers, for everything -the good and the bad. As noted in **Forgotten Rule #14**: “Give thanks (for the good and the bad),” 1 Thessalonians 5:18 instructs us to “give thanks in all circumstances.” This is exactly what Jonah did, and it added power to his prayer.

15. Include Praise:

- Jonah’s prayer was also powerful because it was a prayer of praise. Throughout Jonah's prayer, he repeatedly praised God for His power and for being there during his time of need. Jonah knew that God was with him and could save him—and he praised God for it. Similarly, our prayers should also include an element of praise. In **Forgotten Rule #15**: “Include praise,” it is noted that we are to praise God continually—which means in every prayer and for everything. Without praise, our prayers are not complete.

16. Be careful what you promise to do in your prayers.

- Jonah also realized another important aspect of prayer—the importance of keeping the vows that we make to God. After envisioning God saving him, Jonah promised to offer God a sacrifice with a song of praise. Jonah recognized the seriousness of making this vow to God. So, directly after offering God his vow, Jonah stated “what I have vowed, I will make good.” In **Forgotten Rule #16**: “Be careful what you promise to do in your prayers,” it is noted that it is better not to make a vow than to make a vow and break it—to do so is a sin. Like Jonah, we should not make vows to God unless we are sure we have the confidence, power and self-control to keep them.

CLASS 5

Rule 17

- Don't Pray to Anyone but God -

Scripture Readings:

Exodus 20:3: “You shall have no other gods before Me.” (First Commandment)

Deuteronomy 6:14: “You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the people who surround you, for the Lord your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the Lord your God will be kindled against you and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.”

Ezekiel 14:3: “These men have set up their idols in their hearts and have put stumbling blocks before their faces. Should I let them inquire of me at all?”

Discussion Points:

- In order for our prayers to be answered, they must be directed towards the only one who can truly answer them: God.
- If this rule is not kept, then every other forgotten rule in this book is worthless. For example, it doesn't matter if we obey the Husband and Wife Rule, live righteously, repent, etc., unless such efforts are directed toward the one true existing God.
- This does not mean that God will not hear our prayers if they are not directed toward Him. To the contrary, God does hear all of our prayers regardless of who they are directed to. According to Deuteronomy 6:14, “You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the people who surround you, for the Lord your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the Lord your God will be kindled against you and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.” In other words, God hears prayers prayed to idols, but such prayers anger Him and He does not answer them.
- There is only one God and, therefore, only one deity that has the power to answer prayers. There is no other real alternative.
- In Ezekiel 14:3, God noted, “these men have set up their idols in their hearts and have put stumbling blocks before their faces. Should I let them inquire of me at all?”

- What is a idol? Anything that you prioritize before God? Anything we give attention or distracts us from God. Can work be an idol? Money? Family? Phones? Cars? Sports? Online media?
- In a church, Sunday School or Bible Study setting, the focus on this lesson may be more applicable to having idols in our lives, rather than praying to idols. According to Deuteronomy 6:14, having idols in our lives (*i.e.*, something you prioritize before God, makes God angry). And according to Ezekiel 14:3, having idols in our lives impacts the power of our prayers (*i.e.*, “Should I let them inquire of me at all?”)

Point of Lesson: God is the necessary ingredient to all answered prayers—without Him prayers will go unanswered.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Elijah to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 5

Rule 18

- Think Before You Pray -

Scripture Readings:

Ecclesiastes 5:2: “Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything to God.”

Romans 8:26: “In the same way, the spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Holy Spirit Himself intercedes for us...”

1 Peter 4:7: “The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.”

Discussion Points:

- The lesson here is clear: God wants us to prepare before we pray. In preparing for our prayers, it is important that we take time to organize our thoughts so that we can approach God with a purpose focused on specific repentance, thanksgiving, forgiveness, praise, and the need for God in our lives. God does not want us to jump into praying and utter whatever comes to mind. Rather, God wants us to prepare and be specific as pointed out in Forgotten Rule #6, “Be specific.”
- When preparing to pray, however, there will be times when we will not know what or how to pray. During these times of uncertainty, we can simply ask God to let us know how to pray. According to Being able to call on the Holy Spirit when we are unsure how to pray is a powerful privilege and should not be forgotten during our times of need.
- The Bible also instructs us that we should clear our minds from all distractions before going to God in prayer. According to 1 Peter 4:7, “The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.”
- What are ways to clear our minds and to stay focused for prayer? Meditation? Setting a time and place? Prayer Journal?
- **Important Note**: Prayer is like eating. Both are needed to live as God intended. It would be great if we could always eat a full course, healthy meal but sometimes that is not possible and we have to resort to a fast food restaurant or snack food as our meal. Likewise, although God would love to receive an unselfish prayer full of praise, thanksgiving, repentance, that is not always possible. Sometime we have to “cry out to

God” in a certain moment. Although this book provides 28 “Forgotten Rules” of prayer that can be followed to provide God a more complete prayer, the most important aspect of prayer is TO DO IT – no matter words are used.

- When possible, we should prepare before we prayer – and thus you should “think before you pray.”

Point of Lesson: By preparing our minds and hearts, and planning before we pray, our prayers will be more focused and in line with God’s biblical instruction on prayer.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Elijah to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 5

Rule 19

- For Additional Prayer Power Add a Person -

Scripture Readings:

Matthew 18:19-20 (NAS): “Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. For where two or three have gathered in My name, there I am in their midst.”

Discussion Points:

- When two or more people pray together, God is present.
- One of the biblical examples of this forgotten rule occurred at an Israelite festival. At the festival, Jesus’ apostles gathered together to worship and pray after Jesus’ death. At this point, the Bible gives a very vivid account of what happens when two or more people gather to pray in Jesus’ name. The Bible states that when they came together in one place, “suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting...and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.” This was the beginning of the first Christian church. Today, almost 2000 years later, some of us have forgotten that each time we gather together to pray and worship in church, God is there as well.
- Likewise, God is also present when you pray with just one other person—which means there are three participating in your prayer, the third being God. The Bible states that a cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart. When people pray together, powerful prayer results. Jesus stated in Matthew 18:20, “For where two or three gather in My name, there I am in their midst.”
- Referring back to Forgotten Rule #11, “Pray continuously,” we noted that God told Moses that He would give Moses exactly what he asked for, because God was pleased with him and because God knew Moses by name. In other words, when we draw close to God, our prayer is more powerful. With this being said, it is easy to see why having God in our presence as we pray strengthens prayer. Thus, for additional prayer power—add a person.
- In Matthew 18:20, Jesus was clearly instructing His disciples that people should pray together. Why would Jesus want us to pray together?

- Is it good for us be balanced and have prayer with others and alone? Jesus clearly spent time alone in prayer.

Point of Lesson: Jesus does not state that when two or three gather in His name He may be in their midst. Rather, He states that He will be with them.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Elijah to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 5

Rule 20

- Listen to the Needs of Others – And Pray for Them -

Scripture Readings:

James 5:16: “Pray for each other.”

Proverbs 21:13: “If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.”

Luke 6:31: “Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.”

Philippians 2:4: “Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

Discussion Points:

- Not only should prayer be considered a method of conveying our own prayers to God, it should also be used to convey the needs of others. The Bible instructs us to listen to the needs of others and to pray for them.
- In Proverbs 21:13, the Bible goes so far as to say “If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.” In other words, if we do not listen to the needs of others, we should not expect God to answer our prayers. This is simply the Golden Rule. Surely, we should not think that God was excluding Himself when He provided us the instruction in Luke 6:31, “Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.” Accordingly, we are to treat others the same way we want them (including God) to treat us. We are not to be hypocritical by turning our ears from the poor and then demanding that God listen to our needs.
- The key to correctly understanding God’s intent behind Proverbs 21:13 is by looking at the literal meaning of the verse itself. The rule states that we should “listen” to the needs of others. However, if giving would go towards an improper purpose (drugs, abuse, etc.), our prayers are not hindered by a decision not to give. We should be vigilant with the gifts that God give us. If we “listen” to the needs of others, and apply discretion to our giving, our prayers should not be impacted. Just like God does not grant 100% of our requests because he knows what’s best for us, we are not obligated to grant all the request of others - but we should always listen.

- Using our prayers to pray for others adds an unselfish aspect to our prayers and as a result it strengthens them. Philippians 2:4 states, “each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

Point of the Lesson: Accordingly, we should not narrow the scope of our prayer to only cover our own needs, but should listen to and pray for the needs of others.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Elijah to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 5

Past Prayer That Worked # 5

- The Prayer of Elijah -

Scripture Readings:

1 Kings 18:25-39

Elijah said to the prophets of Baal... 'Since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire.' So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. 'O Baal, answer us!' they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made. At noon Elijah began to taunt them. 'Shout louder!' he said. 'Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.' So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.

Then Elijah said to all the people, 'Come here to me.' They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, which was in ruins. Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, 'Your name shall be Israel.' With the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs of seed. He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, 'Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood.' 'Do it again,' he said, and they did it again. 'Do it a third time,' he ordered, and they did it the third time. The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench. At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed:

O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and have done all these things at Your command. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so these people will know that You, O Lord, are God, and that You are turning their hearts back again.'

Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, 'The Lord he is God! The Lord he is God!'

Review: Can you tell how each of the first four forgotten rules are illustrated in the Prayer of Elijah?

17. Don't Pray to anyone but God.

- This answered prayer is a perfect example to illustrate Forgotten Rule #17, entitled "Don't pray to anyone but God." In Forgotten Rule #17, we noted that prayers are a waste of time unless they are prayed to the one and only true God. As seen in the Baal prophets' prayers, they were worthless.
- The prophets of Baal prayed from morning till evening, but there was no answer. They shouted louder, but there was no answer. They slashed themselves with swords and spears, but there was still no answer.
- When they stopped praying to Baal, and joined Elijah as he prayed to the one true God, the prayer was immediately answered. At this point, they realized that there was only one God and that their prayers to anyone else were a waste.

18. Think before you pray.

- It is also evident that Elijah put a lot of thought into his prayer before praying to God. Elijah set the scene perfectly by having the Baal prophets pray to a god that he knew did not exist. Elijah knew that after their unsuccessful attempts to pray to the false god—Baal, they would pray the same prayer to the one true God, and their prayer would be answered. After their unsuccessful attempts, Elijah meticulously arranged the altar and even put water on the wood. In addition to arranging everything perfectly, Elijah had also planned and knew exactly what he wanted to pray. Elijah prayed precisely and specifically for God to light the fire so that the prophets of Baal would believe in the one true God.
- As noted in Forgotten Rule #18, entitled "Think before you pray," we are not to be quick with our mouth and utter our prayers hastily to God. To the contrary, Elijah was not quick with his prayer, but carefully planned out the events leading up to the prayer as well as the wording of the prayer itself. As a result, it was an effective and powerful prayer, and God granted it.

19. For additional prayer power, add a person.

- Elijah's prayer with the Baal prophets also illustrates the power of praying with others. As discussed in Forgotten Rule #19, entitled "For additional prayer power, add a person," when we pray with others, God is in our midst. In the same way, God was present when the Baal prophets assisted Elijah in preparing the sacrifice and stood listening as Elijah led them in prayer.
- This is evidenced by God's immediate presence and answer. For example, right after they prayed, "the fire of the Lord fell" and burned up the altar that Elijah had built. From the immediacy and the manner of God's reply, there is no doubt that God was present when

the Baal prophets and Elijah prayed. Similarly, God promises to be with us when we pray with others.

20. Listen to the needs of others, and pray for them.

- Lastly, as noted in Forgotten Rule #20, entitled “Listen to the needs of others, and pray for them,” we are to pay attention to the needs of others and use our prayers to provide for their needs. This was Elijah’s sole reason behind his prayer. Elijah’s prayer was not for his own gain, but so that others could know the one true God.
- God loves it when we come to Him with an unselfish prayer, and one way to ensure that this element is in our prayers is to pray for others.

CLASS 6

Rule 21

- Some Prayers Require Fasting -

Scripture Readings:

Matthew 17:18-21: “And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, ‘Why could we not cast it out?’ And He said to them ‘because of the littleness of your faith...But this kind does not go out except by **prayer and fasting**.’”

Mark 2:18-20: “John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they came and said to Him, “Why do John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?” And Jesus said to them, “While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom cannot fast, can they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.”

James 4:8: “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.”

Proverbs 23:1-3: “When you sit down to dine with a ruler, consider carefully what is before you; and put a knife to your throat, if you are a man of great appetite. Do not desire his delicacies, for it is deceptive food.”

Philippians 3:18-19: “For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.”

Matthew 6:16-18: “**And whenever you fast**, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance in order to be seen fasting by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face so that you may not be seen fasting by men, but your Father who sees in secret will repay you.”

Discussion Points:

- What is the primary objective of fasting? To grow closer to God. In Mark 2:18-20 Jesus told His disciples that they did not need to fast when they were with Jesus.
- When fasting and prayer are combined, they make for very effective communication with God. The question is why? While the Bible does not provide us with all of the explanations, one explanation is clear—fasting allows us to draw closer to God. As

pointed out in Forgotten Rule #11 entitled “Pray continuously,” the Bible states, “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.” In Mark 2:18-20, Jesus told his disciples that someday when He was gone, they would need to use fasting to get close to Jesus. Through fasting we can create a closeness to God.

- We are warned in the Bible that our appetites can be idols and can take the place of God in our lives. Hunger can often become the center of our focus. Philippians 3:18-20 states that when we focus on food, we are setting our minds on earthly things. The Book of Proverbs also warns of the temptation of food. Specifically, Proverbs 23:1-3 states, “When you sit down to dine with a ruler, consider carefully what is before you; and put a knife to your throat, if you are a man of great appetite. Do not desire his delicacies, for it is deceptive food.” Proverbs 23 talks about the "desire" and "deception" of food, and as such, it has the ability to take our focus from God. In other words, our appetite can become an idol—the center of our attention—a substitute for God.
- When we fast, hunger becomes a greater distraction and creates the opportunity for us to choose God over a heightened temptation. Therefore, when we fast, every moment that we resist the temptation to eat is a recurring sign that we have the power to choose God over all other earthly things. This is full dependency on God—at this point we are closest to God and our prayers are the most effective.
- A second reason why fasting increases the effectiveness of our prayers is that it allows us to humble ourselves before God. In the Bible, King David talked about humbling himself through fasting. As noted in Rule #4, entitled “Be humble when you pray,” 2 Chronicles 34:27 states, “Because you humbled yourself before Me and tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you, declares the Lord.” Fasting can be a humbling experience because we are forced to strip ourselves of one of our greatest earthly dependencies and surrender our full dependence to God.
- Similar to a forgotten rule that is discussed later regarding the importance of praying in private, the Bible also instructs us to fast in private. Matthew 6:16-18 states, “And whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance in order to be seen fasting by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face so that you may not be seen fasting by men, but your Father who sees in secret will repay you.”
- The ministry of Jesus Christ began by Him going by Himself into the desert for 40 days, and during this time we are told that He fasted. The Bible states after the 40 days and 40 nights, Jesus became hungry. At this point, Satan approached Jesus and tempted Him by saying, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” But Jesus responded, “It is written, man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes out of the mouth of God.” In the same way, when we fast, we are given the same opportunity to demonstrate that God is supreme in our lives and that our lives are not dependent upon food or other earthly things, but upon the word of God. During these times our prayers are powerful and receive great attention from God.

- Are believers instructed to fast? Yes. In the Old and New Testament. Jesus said “When you fast...”
- Types of fasts? Food? TV?

Point of the Lesson: Some prayers require fasting.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of King David to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 6

Rule 22

- Forgive Others – There Should be No Anger in Our Prayers -

Scripture Readings:

Matthew 5:23-24: “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.”

Mark 11:25-26: “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions.”

1 Timothy 2:8: “I want men everywhere to lift holy hands in prayers, without anger or disputing.”

Luke 17:4: “And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times seventy, saying ‘I repent,’ forgive him.”

Discussion Points:

- Although our prayers today are usually not accompanied by altars and sacrifices, this passage points out that we are to “reconcile” our differences with others before approaching God. Similarly, in Mark 11:25-26, Jesus stated, “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions.”
- The significance of this forgotten rule can be summarized as follows: Jesus died for the sins of man, and all man has to do is ask for forgiveness from God and his sins are forever forgiven. However, by failing to forgive just one person, the shield from our sins offered by Jesus is affected. As a result, sadly, many Christians take comfort in knowing that Jesus died for their sins, but don't obtain the benefit because of their failure to forgive others.
- The bottom line is that God will not forgive us unless we forgive others. As noted in the next Forgotten Rule #23: “Repent: Sin can annul the authority of our prayers,” if God has not forgiven our sins, and we come before God with sin in our lives, the power of our

prayers is affected. In other words, failing to forgive others can ultimately annul the power of our prayers.

- Jesus further instructed that we are to continually forgive others. Luke 17:4 states: “And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times seventy, saying ‘I repent,’ forgive him.” According to Jesus there never comes a point when we are not to forgive someone.

- As summarized in the Bible in 1 Timothy 2:8, “I want men everywhere to lift holy hands in prayers, without anger or disputing.” Thus, Forgotten Rule #22 of this book is “Forgive others; there should be no anger in our prayers.”

Point of the Lesson: The bottom line is that God will not forgive us unless we forgive others. As noted in the next Forgotten Rule #23: “Repent: Sin can annul the authority of our prayers,” if God has not forgiven our sins, and we come before God with sin in our lives, the power of our prayers is affected. In other words, failing to forgive others can ultimately annul the power of our prayers.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of King David to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 6

Rule 23

- Repent: Sin Can Annul the Authority of Our Prayers -

Scripture Readings:

Psalm 66:18: “If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.”

Isaiah 59:2: “Because of your sin, God has turned away and will not listen anymore.”

Luke 15:7: Jesus Himself stated, “I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”

John 9:31: “We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does His will.”

Leviticus 5:5: “When anyone is guilty in any of these ways, he must confess in what way he has sinned.”

Numbers 5:6-7: “When a man or woman wrongs another in any way and so is unfaithful to the Lord, that person is guilty and must confess the sin he has committed.”

Discussion Points:

- According to Isaiah 59:2, “Because of your sin, God has turned away and will not listen anymore.” Because all people have sin in their lives, every person must ask God for forgiveness from their sins before addressing God in additional prayer. As elementary as it may seem, the “request for forgiveness” section of our prayers should be at the very beginning. The rationale behind this organization of prayer is that if sin keeps God from hearing our prayers, and we don’t request forgiveness until the very end, then the entire prayer prior to asking for forgiveness may fall upon deaf ears. Thus, it is important to ask for forgiveness at the beginning of our prayers.
- It is only natural that we want to prolong the repentance portion of our prayer until the very end. For example, in our daily encounters with other people, we seldom desire to approach someone with “bad news.” Rather, we usually try to start a conversation off with something positive. It is important, however, to note that the forgiveness portion of our prayers is one that God looks forward to. To prove this seemingly outlandish point you must look to the fifteenth chapter of Luke. In Luke 15:7, Jesus Himself stated, “I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents,

than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.” Accordingly, repentance is important and should not be forgotten.

- John 9:31 states that “we know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does His will.” As a result, we should start all prayers with a request for forgiveness at the very beginning; not only because it enables God to hear the rest of our prayers, but also because of the joy that it provides God.
- When asking for forgiveness, it is also important to be specific as discussed in Forgotten Rule #6, entitled “Be specific.” Although it is often tempting to ask for forgiveness in general, the Bible is clear that God wants us to repent for sins specifically. Leviticus 5:5 states, “when anyone is guilty in any of these ways, he must confess in what way he has sinned.” Similarly, Numbers 5:6-7 states, “when a man or woman wrongs another in any way and so is unfaithful to the Lord, that person is guilty and must confess the sin he has committed.”
- The Bible warns those who do not confess their sins: “He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.” Our prayers are not as effective if we do not repent—sin creates a barrier between our prayers and God. To find God's mercy through prayer, we should repent of our sins.
- Why do we hide our side from God, when all we have to do is confess it and then we can receive forgiveness of our sin? Pride?

Point of the Lesson: Our prayers are not as effective if we do not repent—sin creates a barrier between our prayers and God. To find God's mercy through prayer, we should repent of our sins.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of King David to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 6

Rule 24

- Pray for Those in Authority -

Scripture Readings:

1 Timothy 2:1-2: “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority.”

Proverbs 29:2: “When the righteous are in power, the people rejoice: but when the wicked bear rule, the people mourn.” use of your sin, God has turned away and will not listen anymore.”

Discussion Points:

- The apostle Paul noted in 1 Timothy Chapter 2 that praying for those in authority enables us to live a “quiet and peaceful life.” Today, it is still important that we pray for those in authority. The Bible further instructs that these prayers are to be specific (for specific authority figures, circumstances, etc.). There is a recent trend in churches to provide members with prayer sheets detailing the names of specific authority figures (*i.e.*, senators, congressmen, members of local government, etc.). This is great because a church’s congregation as a whole may not be sufficiently familiar with certain events to enable specific prayer.
- Because God want us to pray for authority figures, it is important to pay attention and be watchful for those in authority—this gives watching the news and reading the paper a whole new purpose! As a result, if they fail and we did not pray for them, we are partly to blame. We should be sufficiently informed so that we can pray for those in authority.
- Why pray for those in authority? They are the leaders. And “so that you may lead a life of peacefulness.
- We are to pray for “all those in authority.” Republicans should pray from Democrats and Democrats should pray for Republicans. You don’t have to endorse them, just pray for wisdom, etc. We should remember who was the Caesar when Paul was writing this instruction on prayer: it was Cruel Caesar Nero who burned Christians and killed his own mother.

Point of the Lesson: Gods instruction is clear: we are to pray for “all those in authority.”

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of King David to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 6

Past Prayer That Worked # 6

- King David Prayers for Deliverance -

Scripture Readings:

King David's Prayers for Deliverance Psalms 35, 51,138

While fleeing for his life from King Saul, the future King David prayed a number of prayers, several of which are recorded in the Bible in the Book of Psalms. Below are some key excerpts from David's prayers—all of which were collectively answered when God delivered David from King Saul and crowned him king.

Psalm 35:11-15 (Humility Through Fasting; Praying for Others)

Ruthless witnesses came forward;
They questioned me on things I know nothing about.
They repay me evil for good and leave my soul forlorn.
Yet when they were ill, I put on sackcloth and humbled myself with fasting.
When my prayers were not answered;
I went about mourning as though for my friend or brother.
I bowed my head in grief as though weeping for my mother.
but when I stumbled they gathered in glee.

Psalm 51:9-12 (A Prayer for Forgiveness)

Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

Psalm 138:4-5 (A Prayer for Those in Authority)

May all the kings of the earth praise you, O Lord, When they hear the words of your mouth. May they sing of the ways of the Lord, for the glory of the Lord is great.

Review: Can you tell how each of the Forgotten Rules 21-24 are illustrated in David's Prayer?

21. Some Prayers Require Fasting.

As discussed in Forgotten Rule #21, some prayers require fasting. Fasting is a unique technique that allows us to become more dependent on God and to humble ourselves before going to Him in prayer. As noted in Psalm 35:11-15, David understood that fasting added a new dimension to his prayers. David specifically realized that fasting could be used as a method of humbling himself before God. This same technique can be used in our own prayers to add power.

22. Forgive Others; There Should be no Anger in our Prayers.

We know that David had enemies. In fact, several of David's prayers were used to ask for God's protection from the many people that were trying to kill him. One of David's many prayers for protection can be found in Psalm 102:7-8. In this passage, David states "I lie awake; I have become like a bird alone on a roof. All day long my enemies taunt me; those who rail against me use my name as a curse." Despite David's many enemies and his fear of them, according to Psalm 35:13-14, David was able to forgive them and pray for them as though his enemies were a friend or a family member. According to Psalm 35, when David's prayers for his enemies went unanswered he grieved for them as he would grieve for his own mother. As noted in Forgotten Rule #22: "Forgive others; there should be no anger in our prayers," having anger in our lives can annul the power of our prayers. The fact that David was repeatedly tormented by his enemies could have had a drastic effect on the power of his prayer. If David had allowed his enemies to anger him, the result could have been annulled prayer. To the contrary, David did not allow his enemies to weaken the power of his prayers. Like David, we too should not allow others to affect our prayer relationship with God. To avoid this danger, it is important to forgive others and not live with anger in our lives. David was able to do this, and powerful prayer resulted.

23. Repent. Sin Can Annul the Power of Your Prayer.

David's prayer in Psalm 51 notes that having sin in our lives creates a barrier between us and God. As pointed out in Forgotten Rule #23, sin can prevent God from hearing our prayers. David realized this important aspect of powerful prayer and as a result pleaded for God to create in him "a pure heart." Similarly, we too should ask God to grant us a pure heart and to forgive our sins, so that they do not create a barrier to our relationship with Him.

24. Pray for Those in Authority.

In Psalm 138:4-5, we see that David knew the importance of praying for those in authority. In this biblical passage, David prays for "all the kings of the earth." Specifically, David prays that they will know and praise God and that they will know the ways of the Lord (i.e., live a righteous life). As discussed in Forgotten Rule #24: "Pray for those in authority," the Bible instructs us to pray for our authority figures in order that we can have a better chance for a "quiet and peaceful life." David followed this rule in his prayer and in the end he was crowned king.

The forgotten rules described above played a vital role in the success of David's prayers. Like David, we should also realize the importance of these rules and apply them in our prayers.

CLASS 7

Rule 25

- Pray that God Will Help You Resist Temptation -

Scripture Readings:

Luke 22:40: “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.”

Matthew 26:41: “**Watch and** pray that you will not fall into temptation, the spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”

2 Peter 2:9: “The Lord knows how to rescue the **godly** from temptation.”

Discussion Points:

- God expects us to acknowledge our temptations and pray for protection from them. As declared in Luke 22:40 and Matthew 26:41, God does have the power to rescue us from temptation, but we are instructed in the Bible to *pray* for such assistance.
- Notice that Jesus instructs us to “watch” and pray. Does this mean we should be on alert and keep watch over potential temptations? How might that be helpful to living out a godly life?
- The Bible tells us that the devil is prowling around us like a lion, so therefore, we need to be watchful. The Bible warns us to “be of sober spirit, be on alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” With that warning, however, the Bible instructs us to “**be always on the watch**, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen.”
- Why does the Bible say that the Lord knows how to rescue the “godly” from temptation. God is all knowing so He clearly knows how to rescue the godly and ungodly from temptation. Perhaps this is based on the predicate that it is the “godly” that will be asking the Lord for protection from their temptations.
- Does it help to be specific? When praying for God’s help, we should not only pray in general for God to give us the power to resist temptation, but to the extent known, we should be specific in these types of requests. This means that if we have a particular temptation in our lives, or we know of a weakness that we might be exposed to in the future, we should specifically request for God to protect us from that particular temptation. Matthew 26:41 states that “the spirit is willing, but the body is weak.” In other words, the spirit is willing to assist us in areas where we are weak—but we have to ask.

- How does this forgotten rule impact our prayers? First, we are specifically instructed by Jesus to do it. Second, by addressing temptation and avoiding sin, we are able to live a more righteous life. Recall, that we previously reviewed the numerous verses in the Bible that specifically state the prayer of the righteous is power and that sin creates a barrier between us and God – impeding the effectiveness of our prayers.

Point of Lesson: God expects us to acknowledge our temptations to Him and to pray for protection from them. Following this forgotten rule can strengthen our ability to live a righteous life, which will ultimately result in more powerful prayer.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Jesus to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 7

Rule 26

- Don't Pray So that Others May See You Praying -

Scripture Readings:

Matthew 6:5: “And when you pray, you are not to be as the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners, in order to be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their **reward in full**.”

Matthew 6:6: “When you pray, go into your inner room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, **will reward you**.”

Matthew 6:1: “BEWARE of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you will **have no reward** with your Father who is in heaven.”

Discussion Points:

- Is this a deflating concern? In a way, it is unfortunate that in today's society this is not a common problem. Because of the manner in which today's society views religion, prayers are usually not performed out loud to gain approval from our peers. As a result, most people don't pray out loud on street corners, in the office, in a restaurant, or in other public places. But for those that do in an effort to glorify themselves (instead of God), “they have received their reward in full.” In synagogues and churches, however, the temptation is still somewhat present to pray in a manner so that others may see. In these situations, this forgotten rule should be applied.
- What is the purpose of this instruction in the Bible? According to Matthew 6:6, “when you pray, go into your inner room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” Matthew 6:1 also provides the following warning, “BEWARE of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you will have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.” The key here is to avoid praying “in order to be seen by men.”
- Does this rule prohibit group prayers? This rule is not to be interpreted as prohibiting group prayers. Clearly, God loves group prayers. To this end, Matthew 18:19-20 states that where two or more people gather in God's name, He is there also. Rather, this rule was given as a warning for prayers given in public that the focus should be on God and not on others in the group.

- Did Jesus follow this rule? In accordance with this rule, Jesus often prayed in secret places. An example of this rule was illustrated by Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane just prior to His crucifixion on the cross. According to Matthew 26:36, Jesus told his disciples, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” It was away from His disciples that He “fell on His face” and was able to truly humble Himself before God. Like Jesus, we too should place the focus of our prayers on God, and not others.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Jesus to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 7

Rule 27

- Pray in the Name of Jesus -

Scripture Readings:

John 14:13-14: “I will do whatever you ask in **My name**, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask Me for anything in **My name**, and I will do it.”

John 16:23: “I tell you the truth, My Father will give you whatever you ask in **My name**.”

Discussion Points:

- How is this done in practice? Usually, this is literally done by adding the phrase “in Jesus’ name” at the end of a prayer. During His time on earth, Jesus repeatedly emphasized the importance of praying in His name. As seen in John 16:23, Jesus stated that we are to make our requests in His name.
- According to John 16:23, Jesus stated, “I tell you the truth, My Father will give you whatever you ask in My name.” It should be noted, however, that praying in Jesus’ name is not accomplished by merely stating it at the end of our prayers. Rather, the proper attitude and heart must accompany our prayers to offer them in Jesus’ name. Our attitude and heart should be based on the foundation that Jesus is our Savior and that He died for our sins so that we can have a pure relationship with God. It is based on this truth that we are able to strengthen the effectiveness of our prayers by praying through someone who is sinless, holy, and whose relationship bears no hindrance with God.

Point of Lesson: Since God has allowed us the ability to go through His Son, we deny ourselves the ultimate power of prayer when we fail to follow this important rule. Forgetting to add this essential element to each prayer unquestionably prevents us from attaining the full power of prayer.

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Jesus to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 7

Rule 28

- *Be Patient* -

Scripture Readings:

Psalm 37:7: “Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him.”

Lamentations 3:25: “The Lord is good to those who wait for Him.”

Isaiah 40:31: “Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired; they will walk and not become weary.”

Psalm 27:14: “Wait for the Lord; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the Lord.”

Isaiah 49:23: “Those who hopefully wait for Me will not be put to shame.”

Discussion Points:

- Is waiting a necessary ingredient to prayer? Can it be as important as praying? According to Lamentations 3:25, “The Lord is good to those who wait for Him.” However, practicing such patience at times requires great endurance. This is because, asking for God’s hand in needful situations may involve us waiting for His answer. There is an old saying that the Lord will not give us more that we can handle. This is so true and great to remember in tough situations.
- How does waiting allow you to gain strength? Isaiah 40:31 states, “Yet those who *wait* for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired; they will walk and not become weary.” Further instruction for situations that require patience can be found in Psalm 27:14 which states, "Wait for the Lord; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the Lord."
- Unfortunately, there is no set time frame (at least that we on earth are aware of) in which God answers prayers. But we must always assume that God’s delay is for a particular purpose—even if it is to build perseverance. In order to accomplish God’s purpose, however, **we must be patient and wait for His answer, knowing that any delay is for a reason.**

Point of Lesson: In summary, sometimes God's purpose cannot be accomplished by answering our prayers immediately, and sometimes the very situation that we are praying for God to take us from, is one in which He intended us to be in. Moreover, sometimes it is tempting to feel that no action on the part of God equates to God not being in control of the situation."

Past Prayer That Worked: At the end of this lesson, we will cover a past prayer that worked that illustrates this rule. We will review the Prayer of Jesus to see how this forgotten rule was applied.

CLASS 7

Past Prayer That Worked # 7

- Jesus' Prayer for Life -

Scripture Reading:

Luke 22:39-42

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and His disciples followed Him. On reaching the place, He said to them, 'Pray that you will not fall into temptation.' He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, 'Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me; yet not as I will, but Yours be done.'

Review: Can you tell how each of the Forgotten Rules 25-28 are illustrated in Jesus' Prayer?

25. Pray that God Will Help You Resist Temptation.

- Just prior to praying for God to spare Him from death on the cross, Jesus found it necessary to instruct His disciples to pray that they not fall into temptation.
- God knows how to rescue us from temptation, but He expects us to ask for it. Jesus knew of the dangers of temptation, its effect on prayer, and the importance of asking for God's protection in this area.

26. Don't Pray so That Others May See You Praying.

- As pointed out in Luke Chapter 22, Jesus "withdrew" from His disciples before He prayed.
- Our focus is to be solely on God.
- Like Jesus, we should make sure that our prayers are not an act for others, but are conducted only for an audience of one—God.

27. Pray in the Name of Jesus.

- It is also important to note that the power of Jesus' prayer can be attributed to the fact that it was prayed by someone who had no hindrances in his relationship with God.

- Although we cannot achieve this pure, unhindered communication with God on our own, as discussed in **Forgotten Rule #27**: “Pray in the name of Jesus,” we can pray in Jesus’ name to accomplish this same result.
- In John 16:23, we are reminded that God will give us whatever we ask for in Jesus’ name (that is in accordance with God’s will).
- We have been granted the unbelievable privilege of praying to God through Jesus, thereby utilizing His perfection to strengthen our prayers.

28. Be Patient.

- After praying the prayer in Luke Chapter 22, Jesus also showed the importance of patience. Jesus trusted in God and knew that no matter what the answer was to His prayer, God had a greater purpose.
- Jesus waited patiently for God's answer, and although He was crucified on the cross, He was resurrected in the end and ascended into heaven to sit on the throne with God. Jesus’ death ultimately opened the door for believers on earth to attain salvation and eternal life.
- God knew of this higher purpose, and Jesus’ patience allowed this purpose to be obtained.
- As noted in **Forgotten Rule #28**: “Be patient,” God has instructed us that those who wait hopefully in Him “will not be put to shame.” Waiting patiently for God’s answer is a key aspect of successful prayer—it is all about God’s timing, not ours. Sometimes, it is only by waiting that we can fully receive God’s answer.

Conclusion

The Bible has revealed to us what is necessary in order to effectively pray to God. According to the Bible, there are certain rules that we need to follow in order to achieve the fully intended power of prayer. Sadly, over time, several of these rules have been forgotten. The intent of this book is to compile the rules on prayer revealed throughout the Bible and preserve them in a single place. In all, this book reveals 28 forgotten rules on prayer and illustrates how each rule has been used in the Bible to achieve the full power of prayer. Near the end of Jesus' life, one of His apostles asked Jesus how to pray. As an *example* of how to pray, Jesus provided a model prayer for His disciples and all future generations to follow. This model prayer is commonly referred to as the "Lord's Prayer." The model prayer, which can be found in Matthew 6:9-13, goes as follows:

**Our Father in Heaven,
hallowed be Your name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread,
forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one,
for Yours is the kingdom and the power
and the glory forever. Amen.**

Each forgotten rule of prayer provided in this book can be found in Jesus' model prayer or in the specific instructions that Jesus gave to the same disciples. By following these rules, we can all maximize our communications with God.

Closing Reminder

Through all situations, however, always remember:

"The Lord longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you."

Isaiah 30:18 (NAS)