



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: The Role of Prayer in a Spiritual Awakening – Part 2

Guest(s): David Platt

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Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello, everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.

Roger Marsh: Well, welcome everyone to this Wednesday edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, and today, we are continuing an incredibly moving program about the impact of our prayers to Almighty God. What you're about to hear is the second half of a presentation that was given by nationally recognized pastor and author David Platt. Pastor Platt was speaking at the 2019 National Day of Prayer in Washington, DC. Prayer is often an undervalued tool in many churches across our land. Believers must understand the power of our earnest prayers and what impact they have on the heart of God. As our own Dr. Dobson wrote in his March newsletter, and I'm quoting him here, "This is a critical time for prayer by people of faith. Let's join together with a united voice in asking that God, whom we serve, to lead and guide us in these perilous times. Nothing will happen that is not permitted by Him." Well, I hope that that quote and today's broadcast will open your eyes to the importance of and need for prayer.

I'd also like to remind you that tomorrow, May the 5th, is the National Day of Prayer. To honor that day, we are making prayer our theme this week here on Family Talk. As we prepare as citizens and communities and as one nation under God to bring our petitions before the Lord, we ask you to join with us in praying for this country. And tomorrow, please join us on our website and also on our Facebook page to view the live National Day of Prayer broadcast. Our website, by the way, is drjamesdobson.org.

To find us on Facebook, simply go to [Facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) and search for "Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk." Now, as we begin this second installment of Pastor David Platt speaking on the power of prayer, he will continue to preach from Exodus 32 and the mountaintop experience between Moses and God. Let's listen now to the remainder of his presentation on this special edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

David Platt: God in His sovereignty has chosen to make prayer a powerful means by which we interact with Him to effectively shape the course of history. Is this not mind-

boggling? Totally baffling. This is not an over statement. Our prayers affect the way God acts in the world. And that doesn't reduce God. A high view of God leads to a humble view of prayer. I'm not making this up. This booms across the Bible. People pray and fire falls from Heaven. People pray and the lame walk and the hungry eat and the dead come to life.

Look at the story of the church in Acts. Every major move of God in that book comes about in response to the prayers of God's people. They've gathered together for prayer in Acts 1, devoted to prayer chapter two, the spirit of God pours out on them like flames of fire and 3,000 people are saved. Chapter three, Peter and John go up to the temple at the time of prayer. By the beginning of chapter four, many heard the word believed and the number came to about 5,000. Chapter six, it says they devoted themselves to the ministry of prayer and the word. And immediately we hear that number of disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem. End of chapter seven, Stephen looks up to Heaven and prays. Right after that in chapter eight, the church scatters to Judea and Samaria preaching the gospel wherever they go. Chapter nine, Paul is saved and connects with Ananias all in the context of prayer.

Same thing in chapter 10, as Peter and Cornelius are praying and the door is open for the spread of the gospel to the nations. Chapter 12, Peter's in jail. The church is praying. An angel pokes him on the side, leads him outside. Chapter 13, church leaders are worshiping and fasting and praying. The Spirit says, "Set apart for me Saul and Barnabas for the work to which I've called them," and a missionary movement begins that will turn the Roman empire upside down. Chapter 16, Paul and Silas are praying in the middle of prison. God responds with an earthquake and a jailer and his family are saved. Yes, yes, yes. I say it again. In His sovereignty, God has not called us in prayer to watch history, but to shape history for the glory of His great name. Now, I'm guessing there might be someone uncomfortable with that kind of language, but let's be clear what we're not saying here.

We're not saying God is an impotent king who's just sitting on His throne waiting on somebody to pray so that he can start working in the world. That's not what we're saying, because that's not what we're seeing in this text. Instead, what we're seeing is that God wills to work through willing intercessors. What we're seeing is that when we pray, God responds. When we pray, we take our God given place and use our God ordained privilege to participate with Him in the accomplishment of His purposes on the planet.

God help us to see that when we pray, it will have an effect. How does Moses pray? Three ways Moses prays. One, he pleads for God's mercy upon sinners. He pleads for God's mercy upon sinners. God save them. God don't destroy them. And notice the basis for Moses' prayer. He doesn't say to God, "They don't deserve your judgment." Moses knows the severity of their sin. He knows God's judgment is exactly what they deserve. So instead of appealing to some inherent goodness in man, he appeals to the intrinsic glory of God.

"Save them, O God, for your name's sake. Show your majesty by showering them with mercy." And then later in the chapter, look at Moses' intercession intensified. Verse 31. Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Alas, these people have sinned a great sin. They've made for themselves gods of gold. But now if you will forgive their sin, but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written." What a prayer. To pray just like Paul prayed in Romans 9 that we would be, that he would be accursed and cutoff for the sake of his people. Now, both Moses and Paul know based upon the purposes and promises of God, that's not possible, but there's a desperation here. There's an exasperation even. It says, "God, whatever it takes. Do whatever it takes. Take my own life, if necessary, but glorify yourself in the salvation of these souls." Brothers and sisters, is this how we pray?

God helps to plead like this for the salvation of souls and our country around the world. Lord willing, I will actually be on a flight tomorrow morning to the Himalayas where I've been on different occasions. I remember the first time we went into these remote regions. We helicoptered in to about 12,000 feet where we landed there basically as far up as you can go in those mountains and hiked up to where you can still maintain life. Then we hiked out over about six days through about 90 miles going through village, after village, after village. The only way I can describe it is just a collision of urgent spiritual and physical need. The physical needs, a study was done about 10 years ago in these villages we were in and they found that half the children were dying before their eighth birthday. One mom had 14 kids, two made it to adulthood.

They're dying of things like diarrhea or simple cut that turns into an infection and if you don't have medicine, ends up taking over your entire body. The poverty everywhere. One of the worst byproducts of that poverty is sex trafficking. Traffickers will prey on the people in these villages. Trafficker goes into a village, meets with a family, promises their young daughter a better life if she'll go with him to the city, even gives the family money. Equivalent to about \$100 is all it takes to convince a starving family that it's worth sending their daughter off. Besides, she's going to be better off, right?

They give her away. Traffickers pick up little girls, 15, 10 years old. Take them down into the city where they put these girls in a brothel and they break them and require them to do whatever the man who come into those brothels want them to do. Some of these little girls will have 15 to 20 customers a day. This is their life, shamed and used and abused. Can't get out. Sometimes authority's corrupt, paid off by the traffickers. Traffickers threaten if the girl leaves, they'll go back and harm their families.

Some stay in the city, others are taken into other countries. We're talking thousands and thousands of girls just taken from impoverished villages like these. They're totally unreached by the gospel. 24 people groups in this area we're in totally unreached. They've never heard the good news of God's love and Jesus. We would walk for days without ever hearing somebody who'd even

heard of Jesus until we got there. It's one thing to stand behind a podium and talk about these rallies.

It's a whole other thing to be face-to-face with people who it certainly seems like they've been born into an earthly hell, only to move on to an eternal one without ever hearing how they could be saved. I was just driven to pray. I was just driven to pray and continually now. God, have a mercy on them. Have mercy, God, on these men and women and their families, these kids, these girls in these brothels. I'm praying that God in His providence might use my pleading and the pleading of many others. God, wake us up to plead on behalf of those in urgent need. May God use our pleading to achieve his purposes in that place to glorify his name as the defender of the poor and the deliverer of the slave and the savior of the peoples. Jesus, you have purchased men and women from every single one of those people groups. You love them. You desire their salvations. I'm pleading that you would use my prayers as a means by which your purposes of love and grace and mercy might be accomplished among them.

Is this how we're praying? Like Moses pleads, we must plead for God's mercy among sinners. Which leads right to the second way he prays; he pleads for God's presence and power among His people. He pleads for God's presence and power among His people. Look what happens next. You go into Exodus 33. The Lord said to Moses, "Depart. Go up from here, you and the people whom you've brought up out of the land of Egypt, the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, 'To your offspring I will give it. I will send an angel before you. I will drive out these nations. Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey. But here's the deal, I will not go up among you unless I consume you on the way for you are stiff-necked people.'" God basically says the land is yours, but I won't go with you. In other words, you can have my promises, but you won't have my presence. What would you do if you were in Moses's shoes? Be careful not to answer too quickly, because I believe you and I are tempted in a strangely similar way all across our church culture today.

Think about it. You and I are tempted every day in our lives, in our churches to do the work of God apart from the power of the presence of God. Let's be honest with each other. We have created a whole host of means and methods for doing ministry today that require little, if any help at all from the Holy Spirit of God. We don't have to fast and pray for the church to grow. We have marketing for that today. We can draw the crowds without prayer. Good publicity. It's possible, dangerously possible, for you and I to carry on the machinery and activity of churches and ministries we're a part of. And all of it can be smooth, even successful in the eyes of the world. We can never notice that the Holy Spirit is totally absent from it. If we're not careful, we can deceive ourselves, mistaking the presence of physical bodies in a building for the existence of spiritual life in a church.

I wonder, I wonder if the greatest hindrance to the advancement of the gospel in our day may be the attempt of the people of God to do the work of God apart

from the power of the spirit of God. Maybe the greatest barrier to the spread of the gospel may not be the self-indulgent immortality of our culture, but our self-sufficient mentality in the church evident in our prayerlessness. What does Moses do when faced with the prospect of doing God's work apart from God's presence?

He prays. He goes into the tent of meeting. You got to see this scene, verse seven. Moses just takes the tent. Pitch it outside the camp, far from the camp. He called it the tent of meeting. Everyone who sought the Lord would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp. Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise up. Each would stand at his tent door and watch Moses until he'd gone into the tent. When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent. The Lord would speak with Moses. When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship each at his tent door. Thus, the Lord used to speak to Moses face-to-face as a man speaks to his friend. Just get that scene. Can you imagine being in the camp? Thousands and thousands and thousands of people.

Word gets around that Moses is going out to the tent and everybody, thousands of people of all ages, go and stand in silence at the door of their tent and watch as this man goes into a tent to meet with God. They're standing in silent awe as a cloud comes and settles on that tent. Nobody says anything, because there's a man meeting with God. This is one of those places. We can't just leave this in the Old Testament, right? Every single one of us can go in the tent. Actually, it gets better because we don't have to go anywhere. You are the tent. You are the tent. The Holy Spirit of God dwells in you. Do you realize this, the privilege that we have? What Old Testament saints could have only longed for, you and I can do before we get out of bed in the morning. We have the privilege of communion with God. Moses goes in and he speaks with God. There's not a risen prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face-to-face.

We have the privilege of knowing God face-to-face through Jesus, what he's done and across for us. What a privilege we have. Let's not forsake this privilege. Moses goes and he says, "I can't do this without you. I can't do this without you." He pleads for God's presence to go with them and God answers. Let's do this. Let's get on our faces before God day after day after day, all night in our churches and say, "God, we can't do this without you. We need your grace. We need your mercy. We need the power of your presence among us."

Moses pleads and God answers. Let us not settle for prayerlessness and in the process settle for powerlessness. Let us throw aside all of our damning dependence on natural ability and human ingenuity and let's plead for God to do in our churches, across our country, and among the nations what only God can do. We plead for God's mercy upon sinners. We plead for God's presence and power among his people, and then third, Moses pleads for God's glory on the earth, for God's glories, as if Moses has not been bold enough already.

God has relented His wrath. He has promised His presence. If I'm Moses, I'm content at this point. All right, come back to the tent another day. Not Moses though. He's prevailed with God and prayer, yet he tarries in the tent and asked for one more thing. Verse 18, Moses said, "Please show me your glory." Now, wait a minute. Think about it. The man who's making this request, this is the guy who got to speak with God in a bush that was a flame and never burned out. This is the man who saw God split a sea in front of his eyes. This is the man who saw God lead him and his people with a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. The man who struck a rock and saw water come pouring out, prayed and breakfast fell from Heaven. This is the man who everybody else was warned to stay away from Mount Sinai. He was invited to stand on Mount Sinai and commune with God. If anybody had seen the glory of God, it was Moses. He'd seen so much. But here's the deal, he wanted more.

Apparently once you taste of the glory of this God, you have an insatiable desire for more and more and more. And because He is infinitely glorious, that means there is more and more and more glory to be found. That's an awesome thought. 10 trillion years from now, we'll still be discovering more glory in God. Our God is not boring. We will never tire of Him. His beauty is unfading. Moses says, "I want to see your glory." God says, "Moses, you don't know what you're asking for." A complete revelation of God and all His glory would annihilate Moses on the spot. Moses is pleading for that which would obliterate him, yet God agrees to show him His back, a partial view so to speak, which we see in the next chapter is a breathtaking glimpse of God's faithfulness and forgiveness and goodness and glory. We pray. Why? Because we want to see God. We pray because we want to know God.

I think if we're not careful, we learn to pray asking for things, which obviously Scripture tells us to ask for things, but we will miss the point of prayer if we're just focused on things. We will skew prayer from the start if we don't realize that the primary purpose of prayer is not to get something, but to know Someone. You and I have the privilege of knowing God and seeing God in more and more glory. This is how Jesus taught us to pray. Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name. Show your glory. We want your kingdom to come. We want your will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven. When we pray, follow this, His name will be hallowed, His kingdom will come, and His will will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. And all of these things happen in response to the prayers of his people. Revelation 8, you look at it, wish we had time to go there, but it gives us a picture. The prayers of the saints are being stored in the heavenly places. They're accumulating at the altar of God.

Every single prayer for the kingdom of God to come, every single prayer for the glory of God we made known, not one of them is lost in transmission. Not one of them is ever uttered in vain. Every single one of them fueling the fire of incense. That one day, one day soon will usher in the climax of all history in the consummation of God's kingdom. Don't underestimate the role of desperate prayer in your life and in your church.

The mystery of divine sovereignty in the universe, plead for God's mercy upon sinners, plead for God to relent His wrath, shower His mercy, plead for God's presence and power among His people in our churches, and plead for God's glory on the earth. Plead and plead some more and keep on pleading until the day when Scripture promises, we will see His face.

All His unchanging perfections. All His unchanging purposes and promises will come to pass and His ever unfolding plan of which you and I get to play a part. Let's play our part. Jesus, we praise you for your love for us. We praise you for the cross. We praise you for causing the curtain of the temple to be torn in two and inviting us into communion with you, Oh God, our Father in Heaven. We glorify your name, and we want to see more of your glory. God, please, may all of us become less and may you become greater.

We want to see your glory. We want to see you high and lifted up. We want to see your name praised, hallowed, known as holy and good and gracious and mighty. God, I pray specifically for these brothers and sisters. Lord, I pray that you would make them, God, Moses-like intercessors. Help them to see their place today and tomorrow. On their knees before you in intercession before you pleading, standing in the gap, participating with you in the accomplishment of your purposes.

Grip them with the wonder of every single moment they're praying. Give them a praying without ceasing heart. Lord, may just saturate their moments with your spirit, with a spirit consciousness that you are with them and that they have the privilege of intercession. We pray. God, we pray that you would hear our prayers and you would answer. God, we pray that you would answer. We pray you'd give us faith to pray and that you would answer, that you would work in response to our words. We pray Exodus 8:13, "The Lord did according to the word of Moses." God, we are baffled by that sentence. And so, we pray. We pray that you would help us to abide in your words, your words, to abide in us and help us to ask everything we ask according to your word and know, John 15:7, that we have it. That when we speak to you, you do according to our words. God, that's baffling. That feels almost too bold to say, but we praise you for the privilege that you have made a reality for our lives.

I pray that you would hear our prayers and you would work and that you would give faith toward that end. And you would shower your mercy on our country for your glory in our country and your glory among the nations, for your glory in Nepal and your glory among peoples who have yet to hear the name of Jesus. God, we praise you. You alone are worthy of glory. Jesus, you alone are worthy of glory. You are the Alpha and the Omega. You are the beginning and the end. You're the first and the last. The final amen.

Jesus, you are the bread of life. Christ, our creator, our everlasting Father, you are God. You're the good shepherd, the great shepherd, the great high priest, the Holy one, the image of the invisible God. You are judge of the living and the dead. You are King of Kings and Lord of Lords, majestic and mighty. No one

compares to you. The only begotten son of the Father, full of grace and truth. You're the power of God. You are the resurrection and the life, the supreme sacrifice, the way, the truth and the life. The very word of God made flesh. Jesus, you are our Savior, our Lord, our king, and we love you. We pray that you would glorify yourself through the prayers of your people. May it be so in your name we pray, amen.

Roger Marsh:

Oh, amen. What an emotional and spirit-filled prayer to end this edition of Family Talk. Well friend, you've been listening to an honest and insightful voice, the one of Pastor David Platt on today's program. I hope his message spoke to you and reminded you to daily commune with God through prayer. To find out more about David Platt's books and ministry, visit our broadcast page at drjamesdobson.org.

Please remember to join us on our Facebook page or on our website Tomorrow, Thursday, May 5th at 8:00 PM Eastern time to watch the official National Day of Prayer telecast. It's going to be a special and powerful event that you won't want to miss. Just go to Facebook.com and search for "Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk," or you can also watch by visiting our website at drjamesdobson.org. Well, that's all the time we have for today. Be sure to join us again next time for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks for listening.

Announcer:

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