

December 30, 2008  
Garden Heights Baptist Church  
Pastor Dwight Wagner

## **A Pattern for Powerful Prayer Daniel 9:1-19**

### **Introduction**

**Are you one of those people who find prayer difficult?** I am. It is much easier for me to spend time doing almost anything else but prayer. Read a book, surf the really good stuff on the web, stay up with what is happening in presidential politics, spend time with my family, study, disciple other believers. All of these are much easier for me to do than to spend time in prayer.

When it comes to struggling with prayer, I often hear things like:

- “I wish I had **more time** to pray. But I have so many things going on in my life.”
- “I **run out of things to pray about** after 5 minutes.”
- “My prayers seem like a **laundry lists** of requests that I give to God. Same old, same old.”
- “I feel like my prayers just **bounce** off the **ceiling**.”
- “My prayers just seem **artificial**.”

Those are common excuses and laments that I have used and heard throughout the years. Recently my prayer life has been improving greatly thanks to God's grace through the prayers I believe of others. **God uses others to challenge me to pray—especially the prayers of others in the Bible.**

So this morning I want to challenge us about the subject of prayer from a passage of Scripture that doesn't teach us about prayer via a command, a theological explanation or a doctrinal motivation, but rather by **simple example**. Daniel 9 gives us a picture into Daniel's prayer life that greatly encourages me in my prayer life.

**Here we see a man of God praying!** This man of God provides a **beautiful pattern of prayer** that will address many of the obstacles we have to praying. So turn with me to Daniel 9 and we will look at this pattern of prayer from this man of prayer.

Now Daniel was **not just any man**. By the time Daniel 9 occurs he has lived through being thrown into a den of hungry **lions** and had several **visions** of the future. He was a man of uncompromising **integrity** from his youth as he determined not to be tainted by the world and go against his conscience. He had been taken into **captivity** when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonian army and King Nebuchadnezzar. He was **deported** with the best of the young men of Israel and was being trained to rule over them as well as serve in the Babylonian empire. He was now **80 years old** approximately—in the final years of his life.

In the prior 8 chapters Daniel is a man **unlike almost any man alive** at the time. He demonstrated **consistent spiritual** devotion to God, excelling all other men. He

displayed an **unwavering love** for God, a **stalwart** love, an **excellent** love, a **bold** love. Daniel was **uncompromising, faithful, humble, loyal, persistent** in his devotion, **resistant** to the world, **incorruptible, obedient, reverent, virtuous, godly, trustworthy, godly and much more.**

And yet standing beneath, behind, around, and above all these outstanding traits is this truth: Daniel was **a man devoted to God in prayer!** This is amazing! In fact, I believe that he was all of the above for this one reason: He was a man devoted to prayer. **Prayer came first! Prayer birthed all of these other characteristics.**

**How devoted** was he to prayer? He was so devout and committed to prayer that he would **rather be thrown into a hungry den of lions** rather than stop praying! In fact, other than Jesus, **I don't know of any man in all of the Bible who provides a better example of devotion to prayer than Daniel does!**

**The second half of Daniel 9**, especially verses 24-27, is the better known portion of this chapter. It contains the answer to Daniel's prayer actually in the form of God giving to Daniel an eschatological or prophetic timetable for the arrival and rule of Messiah. It has served as an invaluable passage for understanding the future of world history and students of Bible prophecy have found rich treasure in the second half of Daniel 9.

But as good and necessary is Bible prophecy for us, **prayer is more significant in our walk with God than prophecy will ever be.** And so we will focus on the first half of Daniel 9 and the theme of our prayer lives.

When Daniel 9 begins, we find **Daniel in great distress.** "And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days. Then I rose and went about the king's business, but I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it." (**Daniel 8:27**). Daniel was **overwhelmed** with the ministry God had bestowed upon him. He was **suffering** from hearing from God in the vision of Daniel 8. He knew his people were in distress and under God's judgment. This is why they were in Babylon, not in judgment. Because of their sin they were captives, Jerusalem lay in ruins, the temple destroyed. God was judging their sin now and there would be more judgment in the future. Daniel knew all of this and there was this **incredible weight** upon him. So we learn: **A fulfilled prayer life doesn't just happen when "everything is going your way."** Prayer should be part of life even when we are under the disciplining hand of God. **Don't wait till all your "ducks are in order" to begin mapping out your prayer life right now.**

Daniel had also had **a vision of a coming kingdom as well.** So he had these visions colliding in his mind: There was a coming future, glorious kingdom of God's anointed one but also there was coming judgment for his people. And there was no one, in this case, who was able to interpret the dream and visions. Daniel was in the **1 Peter 1** mode who were searching intently and carefully "inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the suffering of Christ and the subsequent glories." (1 Peter 1:11). So here's another preliminary lesson on prayer: **Don't wait till you have your life all figured out or understand why everything is happening. Pray now!**

Furthermore, Daniel was a **busy man** at this point. At 80 years old, he was the virtual prime minister of the Medo-Persian kingdom! He was going about doing the king's business. He had his work still to attend to. Last time I checked high ranking political leaders of powerful nations kept pretty hectic schedules. Daniel knocks from under us the excuse: "I have so much to do that I can't pray. When things settle down I will pray! After I get through the rigors of my education, after I get my promotion, after I raise my kids. . . then I will be devoted to prayer!" Another lesson: **don't wait till you have time to pray---you never will! That will probably never happen! So, devote yourself to prayer now.**

Now in verse 1 we find the **historical setting for this prayer**: " In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—" (Daniel 9:1). The Babylonian kingdom and **Nebuchadnezzar are history**. Daniel lived through all of that: Nebuchadnezzar living like a beast in the field for seven years because of his **pride**. In Daniel 5, Daniel was there when the handwriting appears on the wall during a **sensuous feast** that **Belteshazzar** was hosting. They saying appears, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." "God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting; your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and the Persians." That very night the vast Babylonian empire was conquered and Daniel is now serving in his first year as Prime Minister of the new empire.

Now in this setting he prays and by his examples we learn **seven principles of true, powerful praying!** Write these down! Follow this pattern for powerful praying in 2008!

#### **I. True prayer is generated by the Word of God (v. 2)**

Verse 2 teaches us first that true prayer is generated by the Word of God. "in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived **in the books** the number of years that, **according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet**, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years." (Daniel 9:2).

Daniel demonstrates a right view of **inspiration** when he calls this "the word of the Lord to Jeremiah, the prophet." He was reading in one of the books, that is the scrolls—they didn't have bound copies of the Bible yet, just individual scrolls—with sometimes not even all of a particular book on the scroll. So he is poring over these scrolls and he comes to **Jeremiah 25:11-12 and 29:10-12**. He learns that after 70 years Babylonian is going to be gone and that their captivity will be up. And as he contemplates that he realizes that time frame is pretty well up. Babylonian has just been destroyed. Restoration is coming and God's Word says they will be going home.

So Daniel in this prayer then **aligns himself up with the Word of God** and prays for God's will be to done according to His will! And that is what prayer really is all about! It is lining ourselves up with the purposes of God as revealed in the Word of God.

You might ask, "Hey, Daniel knew what the will of God was. And God was going to do His will, so why pray? What is there to pray about? God is going to do what he says he is going to do when he says he is going to do it, right? He's sovereign! So why pray? Well, as we read a few weeks ago in a FOCUS article the real question should be, "If

God isn't sovereign, why pray?" I mean, the real motivation to prayer is **because God is sovereign! He is all powerful, all-wise, and infinitely loving toward his children!**

Here is the principle: **All prayer is to be in agreement with, in harmony with, in accord with, and in response to the Word of God!**

That is what you find in the book of **Revelation** when near the end, Jesus tells John, "Behold, I am coming quickly." What does John do? Say, "Uh, ok, that's cool!" No, he pleads in prayer, "Even so Lord, come! Come!" That is the nature of prayer. It responds to God's Word.

**Prayer finds its foundation and its subject matter in the purposes of God.** So what you want to do in prayer is **align yourself with God's purposes.** This is how Jesus taught us prayer in the **Lord's Prayer.** We aren't to just resign ourselves in some sort of fatalistic way and say, "Lord, you said your kingdom is going to come. We know your will is going to be done anyway. We know people will honor and hallow your name one day." No we are to be energetically praying, "Lord, magnify and honor Your Name! We love your will, Lord, so do it! And we are so excited about your kingdom coming, Lord!"

**God's sovereignty, his promises, his prophecies do not preclude or halt our praying and our supplications!** Rather they **call** for it! They **drive** it. Our prayers respond to the Word. The Word **lines us up with God's purposes.**

**God uses our prayers to accomplish His purposes.** Prayers are part of the God-ordained means to the end of accomplishing His purposes. And that is why the effectual fervent prayer of God's people accomplishes much!

So here is Daniel who knows better than anyone else alive the certainty of God's purpose, God's promises, His sovereignty and yet: **HE IS A MAN OF INCESSANT PRAYER!** What an example! His **love** for **God** was so great, his **attachment** to God's **Word** so profound and his **desire** for God's **will** so encompassing that he could not restrain himself from pleading with God to do what God said He would do!

**Daniel isn't the only example.** Some men who lived after he did set the same pace. You have **Ezra** in Ezra 9 discovering that so many of the **marriages** in his land were **unbiblical.** He knows what God's will and he is appalled at the sin he sees. He is distressed and do you know what he does? He plunges into intercession confessing this sin, celebrating God's grace to the remnant. He is so appalled at this that he sits for a day. He rips his clothes, dishevels his hair, pulls out his beard, and fall on his knees and spreads out his hands to the Lord. He feels the pain of the people's sin and then prays that God's will be done!

Another great example is found in **Nehemiah 9:1-4** where God's people hear God's Word read and explained for the first time in years. Go there if you want to see what should happen when people hear the Word of God, are touched by God's grace and face the judgment of God.

You see, **the Word generates our prayers because the Word reveals God's purposes and our hearts are then drawn up to God's purposes.**

**How does that look?** Well, **very practically**, every morning for me (and I learned this through the example of George Mueller), I start off with a short period of prayer and I ask God to incline my heart toward His testimonies, open my eyes that I may behold wonderful things out of his law, unite my heart to fear His name, satisfy me with His love, turn my heart toward heaven. I pray that I might delight in God, desire God, discern His truth, make the most of this opportunity, and love God with all my heart. Then I open His Word and read a portion of the OT, a psalm, and part of the NT and as I read I am praying! If there is a command to obey I tell God I want to do that. If there is sin to confess, I confess. If I see something of God's character, I praise Him. If I find a promise, I believe it! In this way, prayer and the Word are married and become one.

**This gives me so much to pray about I have to actually limit my time in prayer.** I then move on to pray through one of the attributes or names of God (more on that later) and then I pray systematically for other requests.

**Your best prayer time will be with an open Bible! Pray, don't just read through, the Bible.** Line yourself up with God's purposes. And you won't run out of things to pray about! I find it helpful to read out of multiple parts of the Bible every day, but you do what is best for you. My **varied reading** helps me even in the tough sections that "seem of little relevance to me, because I usually find a gold mine of prayer prompters in another reading. So whether I am reading Nahum which highlights sinfulness, repentance or redemption or James which you almost can pray through verse by verse, I align myself with the purposes of God in prayer. The Word generates my prayers!

## **II. True prayer is grounded in the will of God (v. 2)**

Secondly, and we have touched on this already but true prayer is grounded in the will of God. "in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books **the number of years that**, according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, **must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.**" (Daniel 9:2). Daniel knew God's will and he prayed, "Do it, Lord" in the rest of this passage.

Now again, you might say, "**But why pray if you know what God's will is. I mean God chooses what He will do and how he will do it, right?**" Yes, but again it is just like John who prays, "Yes, Lord I know you are coming but even so come now!"

Now prayer grounded in the will of God **is not fatalism. Fatalism, in fact, is deadly to prayer.** Fatalism demonstrates that you really don't know God's heart. Because if you know God's will you want to align yourself with God's purposes and affirm that in prayer!

In 1 Samuel 12, we find out that **Israel wants a king**—just like everyone around them. They have got problems in their neighborhood and everyone else in the neighborhood has a king. And they are all saying, "You don't have a king, you don't have a king!" So Israel says, "Samuel, we need a king!" which is what God said they didn't need. But God decides to give them a king and Samuel presents Saul to them. Then they realize, "Oh, we made a big mistake, Samuel! We shouldn't have asked for a king! O Samuel, will you keep praying for us even though we rejected your counsel. Samuel responds,

"Do not be afraid; you have done all this evil. Yet do not turn aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart. And do not turn aside after empty things that cannot profit or deliver, for they are empty. For the Lord will not forsake his people, **for his great name's sake**, because it has pleased the Lord to make you a people for himself. Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you, and I will instruct you in the good and the right way." (1 Samuel 12:20-23).

Did you catch that? He says, "Israel, don't worry—God isn't going to forsake you. And that is why I will pray for you!" That is the opposite of what you might expect, right? "God isn't going to forsake you but I will pray for you." Not "God isn't going to forsake you, so why do I need to pray?" Not he knew what God's will was so Samuel knew how to pray and God used his prayer to fulfill his purpose.

John teaches us the same truth: "And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him." (1 John 5:14-15).

There is **no neutral acceptance or indifference here**. No prayer according to God's will is an **affirmation—a celebration**—of the divine purpose. It is saying, "God do what you said you would do! Fulfill your promises!" That is the only safe ground to pray on.

Peter commands us, "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers." (**1 Peter 4:7**). You can ask, "If the end of all things is near, why pray?" Peter says, "Because you know the end is near, pray!" Don't be fatalistic. God is sovereign! But you are to act responsibly and pray!

You see because we know God is sovereign, we pray according to His will. And Daniel prayed! The Word of God generated his prayers and the will of God grounded them.

### **III. True prayer is characterized by intensity (v. 3)**

That wasn't the end of Daniel's prayer. That was just the **beginning** though. He didn't just check in with a short prayer after finding the scroll and say, "OK, God you said, '70 years.' I vote for that, too!"

No he wasn't indifferent, he was **intense**: "Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes." (Daniel 9:3). **True prayer is characterized by intensity**. Now in other places we find out the **frequency** of Daniel's prayer like in Daniel 6 where he prayed three times a day. But here we are focusing not on how much Daniel prayed but on how deeply he prayed. There is a sense of **undistracted resoluteness** here: "I turned my face to the Lord God—to Adonai: sovereign ruler, the one who holds divine, unrestricted authority."

"I sought him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes." There was **passion** here. **Contrition. Brokenness. Humility. Meekness. Fasting** is always associated with prayer in the Bible (except in the case of the Pharisees who didn't connect the two all the time). There wasn't any virtue in fasting itself; rather it was in the resolute intensity it displayed. Daniel sought the sovereignty with such intensity that he didn't eat.

He was like **Hannah** in 1 Samuel 1, **Esther** when needed to risk her life to go into the king, and the **Ninevites** pleading for God's mercy and deliverance after Jonah's one line message of destruction!

**Job** covered himself with sackcloth and ashes and shaved his head after God through Satan took away everything he had. The **publican** in Luke 18 beat his breast during his intense pray which reflected deep sighing, a broken heart, and broken spirit. **Joel** tells us to rend our hearts and not our garments (Joel 2:13). **When was the last time you prayed with such intensity? With groanings, crying out aloud, pouring your heart out to God?** It is the effectual, fervent prayer that avails much! (James 5:16).

The greatest example of intensity was **Christ** in the garden praying. He knew the will of God but he was still intense. He prayed according to God's will, "Not my will, but yours be done! But if possible take this cup from me!" He accepted God's answer but while he prayed, he sweat blood—his small capillaries exploded.

Just like Jesus, Daniel knew God's will and he accepted it but that is what made him fervent and intense.

Beloved, let's admit it: **our prayers lack fervency!** And I am not talking about some whipped up emotion or display of tears for show! **I am talking about Word-generated, God's will-grounded, intense prayer.**

Why is this so? **What kills fervency? What kills zeal in prayer? Sin** certainly does! **Corruption** in the church! **Pollution** with false doctrine. The lack of **discernment** among Christians. We are too **preoccupied** with our "wish list" that we submit to God that we never get to his "will" list in the Word. And when we do get convicted, we see that no one else is too zealous about prayer, and we just let other people's spiritual **complacency**. That shouldn't be so, but let me tell you something: **your lack of spiritual zeal may not be just affecting your own heart; it may be affecting others.** Because others look to you as an **example** and you are letting them down. Or others may look to you for **encouragement** and you let them down. **All of these areas wrench our heart from God and kill our zeal!**

If you want to catch **what zeal looks like**, read Paul in **2 Corinthians 11** who talks about all his challenges from the outside world and then on top of that his daily concern for all the churches. What concerned him? Sin in the church, worldly preoccupation among its members, false doctrine, division, etc. He said, "Who is weak and I am not weak? Who falls and I don't feel it?" I mean **Paul took his Christianity and concern for the church seriously.**

And so did **Jesus!** **When he cleansed the temple**, Jesus demonstrated that the zeal for God's house consumed him. Where is our zeal for the things of God? Specifically where is our zeal for prayer?

**What is zeal:** Dave Harvey says it memorably, "**Zeal is desire on steroids.** An average football fan sits in the stands and cheers, but a zealous one will sit shirtless in subfreezing weather with his body painted in team colors. Zeal is people who get up at

1:00 AM on Black Friday to stand in the dark to score a bargain. Zeal is deep desire that defines how we live and reveals what we love!" **How does your intensity in prayer define how you live and reveal what you love?**

#### **IV. True prayer identifies with God's people (v. 5-15)**

Here's a fifth characteristic about prayer: true prayer identifies with God's people. True prayer is not preoccupied with your own needs. True prayer is **preoccupied with the needs of others primarily!** Notice the pronouns in this passage.:

- **We** have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled (5)
- **We** have not listened to your servants (6)
- to **us** belong open shame (7)
- To **us**, O Lord, belongs open shame (8)
- **we** have rebelled against him (9)
- **we** have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by walking in his ways (10)
- **All Israel** has transgressed your law. . . the curse and the oath have been poured out on **us**. . . for **we** have sinned against him (11)
- "**we** have not entreated the favor of the Lord our God (13)
- **we** have not obeyed his voice (14)
- **we** have sinned, **we** have done wickedly (15)

Other examples of this type of identity with God's people appears all through Scripture. Take the **Lord's Prayer**: give us today our daily bread, forgive us our trespasses, deliver us from evil. Or **Ephesians 6:18**, "Making supplication for all the saints."

**The focus of our prayers should be to carry the needs of others!** This is part of bearing one another's burdens and thus fulfilling the law of Christ! So we shouldn't be praying, " Lord, straighten out **this church!** Oh, Lord, please make **them** love the truth, please make **them** godly!" No, **we are in this together.** When one rejoices we all rejoice. **When one suffers we all suffer!**

And you know that applies to the testimony of this church. When someone who calls themselves a Christian discredits the name of Christ, we all suffer. Someone you know probably associates you as a Christian with Kenneth Hagin or Benny Hinn or Jimmy Swaggart who calls themselves Christians. That's true, even though it is so sad.

When we pray, we have to pray in solidarity even with struggling believers. We shouldn't pray like the self-righteous **Pharisee** of Luke 18, "Lord, I am thankful that I am not like that sinner over there."

Listen, you might sin differently than other people, but you and I still sin! So as one man has said, "**The secret of intercession is we, our, and us.**"

#### **V. True prayer is built on confession (vv. 4-15, 20)**

The fifth element of powerful prayer is connected with the previous one but it stands alone as well: true prayer is built on confession. Daniel wants God to restore Israel to

her former independence and rebuild the temple and Jerusalem and grace it again with God's presence. But he knows there is **sin that needs confessed and forsaken**.

So he prays, "We have **sinned** and **done wrong** and **acted wickedly** and rebelled, **turning aside** from your commandments and rules." (Daniel 9:5). Five different verbs in verse 5 that exhibit confession. And then he adds:

- we have not **listened** to your servants the prophets (6)
- to us belong **open shame**. . .because of the **treachery** that we have committed against you (7)
- we have **sinned** against you (8)
- we have **rebelled** against him (9)
- we have not **obeyed** the voice of the Lord (10)
- All Israel has **transgressed** your law and **turned aside, refusing to obey your voice**. . . we have **sinned** against him (11)
- we have not **entreated** the favor of the Lord our God, **turning** from our iniquities and gaining insight by your truth (13)
- we have not **obeyed** his voice (14)
- we have **sinned**, we have **done wickedly** (15)

He keeps saying this again and again. His heart is heavy and he utters confession to God. He prays (v. 20), "**confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel**, and presenting his plea before the Lord my God!"

Listen, your prayers and mine must **ooze with a sense of our own unworthiness**. I have **no right to ask God for anything**. I have no personal right to **enter** his **presence**. There is nothing in me that deserves an answer to my prayers. I don't **deserve** any of his blessings. I am just a sinner, just like Isaiah—a man of unclean lips which demonstrates I have an unclean heart. And Isaiah had the best mouth in town!

The heart of prayer, the foundation of prayer, must be our own **unworthiness**. **I don't deserve anything**. We may be **religious**, we may go to **church**, but if everyone knew our heart like God does we would beat our chest like the **publican** and come to God like the **younger prodigal** son and say, "Father, I have sinned against you!" We have been unfaithful to God. We haven't always obeyed his Word. And just like the Israelites here we should have open shame!

The Israelites experienced the curse of God upon them for their sin. "All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the **curse** and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been **poured out** upon us, because we have sinned against him. He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, by bringing upon us a **great calamity**. For under the whole heaven **there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem**." (Daniel 9:11-12).

And like them all of us are **cursed sinners**. We are worthy of nothing. I don't deserve anything. I am a sinner, a rebel, but by God's grace and mercy God has saved me. Christ intercedes for me and enables me to intercede for the salvation and the purification of others. True prayer is built on confession.

## **VI. True prayer is dependent on God's character**

Number 6, true prayer is dependent on God's character. If you want to have powerful prayer, then exalt and rehearse and adore God's character. That is what Daniel does.

- O, Lord, the **great** and **awesome** God! (v. 4). This is his transcendence which you would think would keep people away. But read on. . .
- “Who **keeps** his **covenant** and **steadfast love** with those who love him. . . That is **immanence!** He draws near, makes and keeps a covenant with some
- “To you, O Lord, belongs **righteousness** (v. 7)
- To you, O Lord belongs **mercy and forgiveness** (v. 9)
- Note the “**favor** of the Lord” (v. 13). Because of the favor of God, He sent us a Savior—a man so that he knew our trouble and yet God so that He could deliver us from our trouble!

**One of the best things you can do to help your prayer life is to study systematic theology.** Apart from systematic theology, that is the study of God, your prayer life will be weak, short, and frustrating. If you don't study and love God, you will be crippled in lifting up, blessing and praising the name of God because you won't know what his name means. How can you marvel at this character and work if you don't know what He is like or done.

**The more we know of God, the better equipped we are to praise** him for who He is.

The more you meditate on the glory of God and the awfulness of sin, the greater will be your **confession** of your transgression.

Your **thanksgiving** will only be as strong as your theology. If you don't know God well, you will stop at thanking him for things like food and the weather and little else. But those who know God will thank him for His work, gifts, and promises and presence. And if you know God well you will run out of time before you run out of reasons to thank him.

**And finally good theology can change our stale lists of requests into a more meaningful interaction with God.**

As Pastor Joe Thorn writes, “**In the end, I believe prayer is impossible without systematic theology. It is the secret of a healthy prayer life.**”

Now, you if you are new to or not fond of studying theology **start small** and **read it with an aim to learning about God.** Read it prayerfully with the understanding that this will equip you to communicate better with God who has revealed himself to us!

## **VII. True prayer consummates in God's glory (v. 16-19)**

So true prayer is. . .

- Generated by God's Word
- Grounded in God's will
- Characterized by intensity
- Identifies with God's people

- Built on confession
- Dependent on God's characteristic
- And finally. . . true prayer consummates in God's glory (vv. 16-19)

The purpose of prayer is God's glory! "O Lord, according to all your righteous acts, let your anger and your wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy hill, because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a byword among all who are around us." (Daniel 9:16). Oh, Lord, we have **desecrated your name!** So Lord, **rescue** us for your glory!

"Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and **for your own sake**, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called **by your name**. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of **your great mercy**." (Daniel 9:17-18).

Daniel was concerned about God's reputation, not his own! The glory of the Lord was his driving motivation in prayer! And so he concludes: "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, **for your own sake**, O my God, because **your city** and **your people** are called by **your name**." (Daniel 9:19).

**His one consuming passion in prayer was God's glory.** Is that yours? The church is so much like ancient Israel in her sin. May we be more like Daniel in our prayers.

Here are seven truths that are like **stakes God drives into the heart** of our prayer life this morning. This is very **convicting**. It is convicting to my heart. And I don't know which stake or stakes have pierced your heart today but if you are a Christian you ought to be convicted of some shortcoming in your prayer life whether it be a lack of **intensity**, a failure to **confess**, an **inadequate knowledge** of God, his will, his word, or praying for less than the right **motivation!**

Some here do not know Christ! Many have grown **indifferent** to prayer. It is time for some of us to **reassess** our prayer life. It may be time in God's will for some of you to join hands and hearts with this church by public church **membership**. Some need to be **baptized**. We invite you to join us in the prayer room **whether** you want to pray alone or would like counsel from God's Word. We would love to help you.

**May God re-ignite a spirit of true prayer in His church today!**