

DEEPER CHRISTIAN LIFE MINISTRY, NORTHERN EUROPE
CORPORATE WORKERS' TRAINING PROGRAMME, 4TH QUARTER, 2014
THEME: DAY OF PRAYER AND REVIVAL

09:45 – 10:15: Opening prayer	13:00 – 13:45: Lunch break
10:15 – 11:15: <i>The privilege of individual prayer</i>	13:45 – 14:30: <i>Making eternally significant investments</i>
11:15 – 11:45: Personal plea	14:30 – 15:00: Q&A, Briefing
11:45 – 12:45: <i>The place of intercessory prayer</i>	15:00 – 15:30: SFC
12:45 – 13:00: Ministration	15:30 – 17:00: <i>The power of importunate praying</i>

WORKSHOP SONGS

Pass me not, O gentle Saviour

1. Pass me not, O gentle Saviour,
Hear my humble cry;
While on others Thou art calling,
Do not pass me by.

*Saviour, Saviour,
Hear my humble cry;
While on others Thou art calling,
Do not pass me by.*

2. Let me at Thy throne of mercy,
Find a sweet relief;
Kneeling there in deep contrition,
Help my unbelief.
3. Trusting only in Thy merit,
Would I seek Thy face;
Heal my wounded, broken spirit,
Save me by Thy grace.
4. Thou the Spring of all my comfort,
More than life to me;
Whom have I on earth beside Thee?
Whom in heav'n but Thee?

Sweet hour of prayer

1. Sweet hour of pray'r! Sweet hour of pray'r!
That calls me from a world of care
And bids me at my Father's throne
Make all my wants and wishes known;
In seasons of distress and grief,
My soul has often found relief,
And oft escaped the tempter's snare
By thy return sweet hour of pray'r.
2. Sweet hour of pray'r! Sweet hour of pray'r!
Thy wings shall my petition bear

To Him whose truth and faithfulness
Engage the waiting soul to bless;
And since He bids me seek His face,
Believe His Word and trust His grace,
I'll cast on Him my every care,
And wait for thee, sweet hour of pray'r.

3. Sweet hour of pray'r! Sweet hour of pray'r!
May I thy consolation share,
Till from Mount Pisgah's lofty height,
I view my home and take my flight:
This robe of flesh I'll drop and rise
To seize the everlasting prize;
And shout while passing through the air,
Farewell, farewell, sweet hour of pray'r.

Blest be the tie that binds

1. Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.
2. Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.
3. We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each other flows
The sympathising tear.
4. When we asunder part
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again.

THE PRIVILEGE OF INDIVIDUAL PRAYER

James 5:14

"Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms" – James 5:13. Prayer is a universal language which conveys the appeal of man to God. It is a cry for divine help in the time of need. We ought always to

pray and not to faint. God promises to answer prayer and that is the justification for praying (Psalm 65:2; 147:9). We can pray as a group. We can solicit prayer from others. The emphasis of this verse is on individual, personal prayer in the time of affliction. That we are asked to pray in such cases means God is willing to answer.

THE PECULIARITY OF AFFLICTIONS

Afflictions signify suffering and they can take different forms. Pain, poverty, plagues, punishment from God, persecution, problems of life, peril or danger, all are forms of affliction and they are no respecter of persons. However, the bible differentiates between various forms of affliction; we have:

1. The affliction of the rebellious (II Chronicles 33:10-13; Psalm 107:17-20; Jonah 2:1,2; Luke 15:11-19). Sinners or erring believers fall under this category.
2. The affliction of the restless (Ruth 1:19-21; II Chronicles 18:29-32; 19:1,2; 20:35-37; 35:20-24; James 4:1-4). These are otherwise righteous people who choose a wrong course.

The affliction of the righteous (Genesis 31:42; Exodus 3:7; I Samuel 1:11; Psalm 34:19; Mark 4:17; II Corinthians 4:17). These are victims of life's trials, which are common to all men. Persecution and trial of faith are included.

THE PRAYER OF THE AFFLICTED

Prayer in the time of affliction must first take care of the root of the affliction. It is an individual prayer with an individual background. When prayer is removed from the origin of the problem, it loses its power. The nature of the prayer depends on the nature of the affliction:

1. The prayer of the rebellious has repentance and dedication as the underlying tone (II Chronicles 33:11-16; Jonah 2:7-9; Luke 15:20,21). The afflicted justifies God by admitting personal fault.
2. The prayer of the restless has restoration and duty as the main focus (Ruth 1:6; II Chronicles 18:31; 19:1-7; James 4:4-10). The afflicted makes corrections and returns to duty (Psalm 85:5-8; I Kings 22:48,49).

The prayer of the righteous is focused on redemption and deliverance (Numbers 20:16; II Samuel 22:7; II Kings 4:1; Psalm 50:14,15).

THE PRAISES AT THE ANSWER

"Is any merry?" The Lord will give you a merry heart. **"Let him sing psalms."** When answers come, praises should go to God whose is all the glory (Psalm 50:15). We glorify God through actively praising Him and continuing in His word. We should not give the glory due to God to man or devil.

THE PLACE OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER

James 5:14,15

The believer's prayer should not be limited to requests for personal benefit. That would be too narrow for such a potent weapon. Prayer becomes versatile when its scope is widened to bring benefit to others. In that sense we are to pray **"one for another"**. That is intercessory prayer. We see a wonderful example in Abraham in his effectual prayer for Sodom and Gomorrah. Though the cities were destroyed, Abraham's main interest there (Lot) was spared. The specific case of this passage is on prayer for divine healing. God honours the prayer of elders on this behalf and He will respond favourably as we bring ailing members before His throne.

THE PREDICAMENT OF THE AUDIENCE

The epistle of James is about the oldest of the New Testament epistles. It bears largely with the Jewish background of early Christianity. In the introductory verse, we see it addressed **"to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad,"** (James 1:1), referring to the Christian Jews of the dispersion. It is the same background in which the Lord ministered. This audience had specific problems, which the apostle addressed. These were:

- Partiality (James 2:1-4,6,9).
- Dead faith (James 2:14-21).
- Unbridled tongue (James 3:1-12).
- Lust and worldliness (James 4:1-4).
- Boasting (James 4:13-16).
- Oppression (James 5:1-6).

With this background, we can understand the weakness of faith they had, of which Paul the Apostle referred to even much later (Hebrews 5:11,12). Christians of today (and definitely of Gentile origin) should not be caught in the same web of weakness of faith and slow attitude to spiritual truth (I Corinthians 10:11).

THE PRESCRIPTION OF THE APOSTLE

If a believer is so sick that he cannot pray for himself, God has not left him to despair. We have elders in the Church, whose role is to pray for the person when they are called in. In the Bible, people prayed personally and they were healed (II Kings 20:1-7; Mark 1:40-42; 5:25-29). Laying hands on the sick for healing happened too (Mark 16:17,18; Luke 4:40; Acts 28:8). Anointing oil has its origin in the Old Testament (Exodus 30:22-33; Psalm 89:20). It was a special composition, not just olive oil alone as people do today. It was not to be composed by common people or come on just anyone. The anointing with oil was scarcely used in the New Testament; the oil is purely symbolic of the Holy Spirit and its use was only in a Jewish setting (Mark 6:12,13; James 5:14).

“And if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” Sin can be the cause of sicknesses. There is specific prayer for healing with sin as background (Genesis 20:17,18; Numbers 12:4-15; II Chronicles 30:17-20; Matthew 9:2).

THE PRAYER WITH ANOINTING

The anointing of the Holy Spirit is still at work today. **“These signs shall follow them that believe...”** If you are weak in faith and your prayers are ineffective, the intercessory prayer of the Church will avail for you and the Lord shall raise you up. It is guaranteed because God has given us the gifts of healing (I Corinthians 12:7-11). Where sin is the background, it should be confessed and cleared out of the way. God’s power is at work as in the days of old!

THE POWER OF IMPORTUNATE PRAYING

James 5:16-18

In our last exposition, we learnt about intercessory prayer for healing. The closing verse ended with the promise of forgiveness for a sick one who has committed sins. In other words, sin is a major hindrance to healing in particular and to answers to prayer in general. Hence in this message, we will open with the need for clearing the obstacle away so we can truly pray and get answers. Then we will focus on the power of persevering prayer.

EXHORTATION TO CONFESSION AND INTERCESSORY PRAYER

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.” Sin will always hinder prayer (Psalm 66:18; Isaiah 59:1,2). There is nothing profitable to do with sin than to confess and forsake it (Proverbs 28:13). Especially as one seeks prayer from the elders of the Church, covering up sins is a hindrance. It is not enough in that case to confess the sin to God but specifically **“one to another”**. It is when this is done that intercessory prayer is possible in the sight of God. Prayer for healing follows a hearty and complete confession of sin.

EARNESTNESS AND CONSECRATION IN IMPORTUNATE PRAYING

He who would have power in prayer must satisfy God’s requirements. **One**, the prayer must be effectual in the sense of being scriptural and based on the merit of Christ. Prayers based on sentiment, outside God’s will or aimed at pleasing the flesh, are not effectual (I John 5:14,15). **Two**, the prayer must be fervent. Earnest prayer is born out of deep concern and a holy passion to receive an answer. It is prayer that focuses on God alone and has no alternative. It is praying out of a single heart (Jeremiah 29:11-14). And **three**, the person behind the prayer must be righteous (Proverbs 15:8; 28:9; I John 3:22).

EXAMPLE OF COMMITMENT TO INCESSANT PRAYING

Lest any should despair if such a prayer or situation were ever possible, we are given an example in Elijah who **“was a man subject to like passions as we are...”** He could be hungry, tired, discouraged, happy, etc. He was a human being not an angel! **“... And he prayed earnestly...”** That is what he did differently and that differentiated him from the generality of people with the same like passions. The subject of Elijah’s prayer was far-reaching; ours could be too as we intercede for others incessantly. He prayed that it might not rain on earth for three-and-half years as a form of discipline to God’s erring people. And he prayed again for rain to help and restore the people. God answered because he fulfilled God’s requirements. He will answer us too as we fulfil His conditions for ourselves and for others (Numbers 14:11-20; II Chronicles 7:14; Luke 18:1-8).

MAKING ETERNALLY SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

1 Timothy 4:8, Matthew 7:24 – 27; 13:44

Investment involves committing resources (money, strength, time, etc.) today to endeavours, with the expectation to create additional wealth in the future. There are several forms of investment in the world. One, physical – an investment into our health, shelter, clothing, security (1 Timothy 4:8^a, Genesis 11:4). Two, **social** – raising a family, or defending a cause – children, women or race (1 Timothy 5: 14; Proverbs 22:6). Three, **professional** – academics, development of skills or work experience (Daniel 1:3, 4; 2 Chronicles 2:14). Four, **spiritual** - time, money, energy spent in the service of the Lord (1 Timothy 4:8^b).

Everyone makes investments one way or the other. Some build on “sand” and their investments do not survive the test of time (Matthew 7: 27). Others commit their resources and “**dig deep, and lay the foundation on a rock**”, and when the flood will arise, and the stream will beat vehemently, they cannot shake it because they are founded upon a rock. This is wisdom!

HINDRANCES TO MAKING ETERNALLY SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

Though it might seem natural for man to invest in a profitable venture, however this is often not the case. Many are occupied with less significant things (sometimes on things of no value) at the expense of their never dying soul. The causes include: One, **ignorance** (Hosea 4:6, Isaiah 56:10): Ignorance is lack of knowledge, learning, information or awareness. It has been an effective tool used by the Satan to keep the sinner away from the saving knowledge of the Saviour, and to keep believers away from reaching their full potentials (2 Corinthians 4:4; 2:11). Two, **laziness** (Proverbs 20:4; 22:13). Three, **busybody** (1 Kings 20:40). Four, **cares of this life** (Matthew 13:22). And five, **Satan** (1 Thessalonians 2:18).

HOLDING UNTO ETERNALLY SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS

As believers, there are indispensable investments we need to make. They have dual benefits - “**having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come**” (1 Timothy 4:8b). These include:

- **Working on your salvation** (Philippians 2:12). The most important investment a man can ever make is that of his salvation. Few shall be saved, therefore we need to work all the harder that we may be in the number.
- **Searching the Scriptures** (2 Timothy 3:15) – The Scripture is the believer’s manual, navigator, source of inspiration, power and hope. Commitment to daily reading, meditation and practicing of the Scriptures is a great gain (Psalm 1:2,3).
- **Reading Christian literature** (1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 2:15) – “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*”.
- **Involvement in the service of the Lord** (John 4:36) – “*And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together*”.
- **Attending special programmes** (Mark 6:31) – We are often occupied with many activities throughout the day, week, month and the year. It is time to “**Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while**”. Make it a priority to attend specially organised church programmes such as the up-coming December retreat. The benefits of such gatherings are priceless - “**for there the LORD command(ed) the blessing, even life for evermore.**” (Psalm 133:3b)

Seeking extra power to make 2015 a top year?

There is a unique opportunity to do so! Moving from this prayer and revival day, you can close the year on the mountain-top at our December Conference. With a focus on anointing for powerful living, God will put into your hands the key to open every necessary door to power and fruitful living. Make this period a time of conscious investment for power and breakthrough. Set yourself up for success in 2015!

The meeting will be held at:

Ramada Paza Antwerp**, Desguinlei 94, 2018 Antwerp, Belgium.**

The registration is now open. With a contribution of €140 per adult and significantly less for kids, there is every reason to avail yourself of this unique opportunity. Set your agenda in order and create time for visible all-round progress in 2015. It is your greatest investment for this hour!