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Mighty Prevailing Prayer: Experiencing the Power of Answered Prayer

29. Levels of Intensity in Prevailing Prayer

This chapter describes three rising levels of earnestness in prevailing prayer, drawn from Jesus' words in Matthew 7:7. The Holy Spirit may lead an intercessor into any of them depending on the need. Most prayer starts with simple asking; some needs require the deeper hunger of seeking; and some demand the desperate persistence of knocking.

Key takeaways

- Level One — Asking: the simplest form, open to anyone. God always hears when we ask, and asking is the foundation of all prevailing prayer. Examples: Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Peter and John.
- Level Two — Seeking: more intense than asking. It means earnestness, perseverance, and heart-searching — holding on until the answer comes and checking for any hindrance in our own life or faith.
- Seeking often burns as deep yearning and waiting on God. It renews the intercessor even as they wait. Moses, Daniel, and Nehemiah prevailed this way; the early church sought this way before Pentecost.

- Level Three — Knocking: for when the need is urgent and the answer still has not come. It is a holy boldness that persists at heaven's door, like the friend at midnight who kept begging until he received bread.
- Knocking is not treating God as reluctant; He always welcomes us. It teaches that some answers demand bold, refusing-to-quit prayer. Jesus knocked in Gethsemane; Moses, Elisha, and the church for Peter all knocked and prevailed.
- History shows the fruit: Luther's hour of agonizing prayer restored the dying Melanchthon; a bedridden woman's list of 57 names all came to Christ; a mother's night of pleading won her husband.

Passages worth keeping

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”

Jesus' words that structure the whole chapter into three ascending levels.

“It is faith putting its hand on the omnipotence of God and using it in fellowship with our own omnipotent Head until we see His name prevail against all that opposes His will.”

A.B. Simpson's picture of knocking as faith enforcing God's promise, not extorting an unwilling God.

How it connects

The three levels are not different prayers but one prayer growing in intensity as the need and the intercessor's desperation deepen.

Scripture referenced

- **Matt. 7:7-8** -- Ask, seek, knock — the framework for the three levels.
- **Matt. 21:22** -- Assurance that believing asking is answered (Level One).
- **Luke 11:5-8** -- Parable of the friend at midnight — persistent knocking (Level Three).
- **Jer. 29:13** -- "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" (Level Two).
- **Heb. 5:7** -- Jesus praying with loud cries and tears — knocking in Gethsemane.
- **Exod. 32:32** -- Moses knocking as mediator, offering himself to spare Israel.