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The Art of Prayer

13. Chapter Ten — Elements of the Believer's Prayer Life

This chapter lays out what makes prayer, especially intercession, effective. It names five elements — fervency, desire, perseverance, and fasting — and illustrates them with the author's own experience of a burden to pray that preceded the 1947 healing revival.

Key takeaways

- Fervency: effective prayer 'boils' — it is earnest, a striving and wrestling (like Epaphras 'laboring fervently').
- Desire: God Himself lays a consuming desire on your heart to intercede; when that yearning takes over, the answer is near. It is creative desire.
- The author prayed intensely in 1942-43 for greater manifestations of the Spirit; God told him a healing revival was coming after WWII. It came in 1947 — fruit of prayers prayed years earlier.
- We are not robots. God leads and nudges but never forces; it is the devil that drives. We must will to respond to the Spirit's urges and burdens, and stay sensitive instead of living only in the mental realm.

- When God gives you a burden, that becomes your supreme desire for Him, because He activates it. Interceding is cooperating with God.
- Perseverance: keep praying until the answer comes or the burden lifts — burdens can last hours or days.
- Fasting: sometimes needed, done 'as occasion serves.' The epistles never command the Church to fast. Fasting doesn't change God; it changes you, keeping the flesh under and making you sensitive to the Spirit.

Passages worth keeping

> *"When the desire to see the answer come is intensified so that it absorbs all the energies, then the time for the fulfillment is not far away."*

Defines the 'creative desire' that brings the answer.

> *"Fasting does not change God... But fasting will change you."*

Corrects a common misunderstanding about why believers fast.

How it connects

The healing-revival story shows intercession as God's will worked out through a willing person — the same pattern as the suicide-bridge rescue in Chapter 9.

Scripture referenced

- **James 5:16-18** -- A righteous man's fervent prayer avails much — Elijah's example.
- **Romans 12:11** -- Be 'fervent in spirit' — to boil, to be earnest.
- **Ephesians 6:18** -- Pray with all perseverance for all saints.
- **1 Corinthians 3:9** -- We are laborers together with God — intercession as cooperation.
- **1 Samuel 10:7** -- 'Do as occasion serve thee' — the principle behind fasting as needed.