Spurgeon, Charles
The Practice of Powerful and Effective Prayer

10. The Golden Key of Prayer

A sermon by Spurgeon built on Jeremiah 33:3, preached to comfort those in trouble. He breaks the verse into three parts: prayer commanded, an answer promised, and faith encouraged. The whole point is that God invites us to call on him and never lets sincere prayer go to waste.

Key takeaways

- Prayer is not just permitted but commanded — God orders us to pray because we forget, grow worldly, feel too guilty, or doubt that our case is worth bringing to him.
- No matter is too small, too large, or too tainted by sin to bring before God: 'Call unto me' covers every trouble.
- God will answer. His loving nature, his past mercy in giving his Son, his sworn promise, and personal experience all guarantee it.
- Answered prayer means God gives what is best, not always what we literally ask. Prayer is offered in submission — 'not my will but thine be done.'
- Beyond desire, watch for the Holy Spirit's special prompting to pray; when it comes, drop lesser duties and pray hard.

- Prayer unlocks deeper things: it is the best way to study Scripture, to grow in spiritual experience, to be delivered in trial, to be useful in work, and to win blessing for others.
- Pray and then also work — trust God but 'tie up your camel.' Prayer without effort, or effort without prayer, both fail.
- God often gives far more than we ask; expect 'great and mighty things which thou knowest not.'

Passages worth keeping

> *"If there be anything I know... it is that praying breath is never spent in vain."*

Spurgeon's personal testimony, the emotional core of the whole sermon.

> *"To have prayed well is to have studied well."*

Luther's line, used to argue prayer is the key to understanding God's truth.

How it connects

The sermon threads the Bible's prayer promises together — Psalm 50:15, Isaiah 55:6, Matthew 7:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:17 — to show that what looks like a duty is really an open invitation to the throne of grace, made accessible through Christ's atonement.

Scripture referenced

- **Jeremiah 33:3** -- The sermon's text: call, and God answers with great things.
- **Romans 8:32** -- God who gave his Son will surely give all things — ground for confidence in prayer.
- **Matthew 21:22** -- Whatever you ask believing, you shall have it.
- **Hebrews 11:6** -- One must believe God rewards those who diligently seek him.
- **James 1:6-7** -- The waverer, tossed like a wave, receives nothing — prayer needs faith.
- **Daniel 2:17-18** -- Daniel and his companions pray together and God reveals the hidden dream — prayer unlocks mystery.