Prayers

Martin Nyamu

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# Sermon Title: “The Power of Prayer: Talking with the God Who Listens”

“The LORD is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth.”  
— *Psalm 145:18 (NIV)*

## Introduction: What Is Prayer?

Prayer is not a ritual or a religious routine — it’s a relationship.  
It’s the way we talk to God, listen to Him, and grow closer to Him.

In the same way we keep in touch with friends through messages or calls, prayer keeps us connected to God.  
It’s not about using fancy words or repeating the same phrases — it’s about being real with God.

“When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”  
— *Matthew 6:6 (NIV)*

Jesus teaches us that prayer is not for show — it’s personal, intimate, and powerful.

## 1. Why Should We Pray?

Many people wonder: “If God already knows everything, why should we pray?”  
The answer is simple: because God desires a relationship, not a ritual.

Prayer is how we invite God into our lives — into our decisions, struggles, dreams, and fears.  
It’s how we show our dependence on Him.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”  
— *Philippians 4:6 (NIV)*

### Real-Life Scenario:

Consider a person who is struggling with a big decision, like choosing a new job or moving to a new city. The situation may seem overwhelming, but through prayer, they invite God into the process. By praying, they shift their focus from fear to faith, trusting that God’s plan is greater than their own.

When we pray, we shift our focus from our problems to God’s power.  
We trade our worry for His peace, our fear for His strength.

## 2. Prayer Is a Two-Way Conversation

Prayer is not just talking to God — it’s also listening to Him.  
We listen when we read His Word, when we sit quietly before Him, and when the Holy Spirit speaks gently to our hearts.

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”  
— *John 10:27 (NIV)*

### Real-Life Scenario:

In a busy world full of distractions, a teenager feels overwhelmed by social pressures. Through prayer, they practice tuning out the noise around them, sitting quietly before God, and listening for His guidance. This allows them to make better decisions, stay grounded in their faith, and resist the pressures of the world.

Listening in prayer helps us make wise choices, avoid temptation, and walk in God’s will.

## 3. God Hears Every Prayer

Sometimes, people think God doesn’t hear them because the answer doesn’t come immediately.  
But the truth is — God always hears. He just answers in His perfect time and way.

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.”  
— *1 John 5:14 (NIV)*

God’s answers come in three main ways:  
- **Yes** — when it’s the right thing and the right time.  
- **No** — when it’s not good for us.  
- **Wait** — when we’re not ready yet.

Even when God seems silent, He is still working behind the scenes.  
The silence is not rejection; it’s preparation.

### Real-Life Scenario:

A young woman prays fervently for a relationship to work out. She waits for months, but it never happens. Initially, she feels rejected, but later, she realizes that God was protecting her from a relationship that wasn’t aligned with His plans for her life. His “no” was actually an act of love.

## 4. Prayer Changes Us More Than It Changes Things

When we pray, we don’t just change our circumstances — God changes us.  
Prayer aligns our hearts with His heart. It shapes our attitudes, strengthens our faith, and builds spiritual maturity.

“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”  
— *Psalm 51:10 (NIV)*

Through prayer, we learn humility, patience, and trust.  
We begin to desire what God desires, love what He loves, and hate what He hates.

### Real-Life Scenario:

A man struggling with anger prays for change, but instead of an immediate fix, God begins to soften his heart over time. As he continues praying, he finds himself growing more patient and loving, realizing that prayer is transforming him more than his circumstances.

The more we pray, the more we become like Jesus.

## 5. Barriers to Prayer

Sometimes, our prayers feel weak or unanswered because of hidden barriers:

* **Unforgiveness**: *“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them…”* (Mark 11:25)
* **Sin**: *“If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.”* (Psalm 66:18)
* **Doubt**: *“But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt…”* (James 1:6)

To have a powerful prayer life, we must keep our hearts clean, forgive others, and trust that God is faithful.

## 6. How Should We Pray? — The Lord’s Prayer as a Model

When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He gave them the Lord’s Prayer as a guide (Matthew 6:9–13).  
Let’s break it down:

* **Worship**: *“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.”* — Acknowledge who God is.
* **Surrender**: *“Your kingdom come, your will be done…”* — Submit to God’s will.
* **Dependence**: *“Give us today our daily bread.”* — Trust God for your needs.
* **Forgiveness**: *“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive…”* — Keep a clean heart.
* **Protection**: *“Deliver us from evil.”* — Ask for strength and victory.

This isn’t a script — it’s a pattern. It shows us the heart of prayer.

## 7. The Power of Persistent Prayer

Don’t give up when the answer delays.  
Jesus told a parable about a persistent widow (Luke 18:1–8) to teach that we should pray always and not lose heart.

Persistence in prayer shows faith. It proves we trust God even when we don’t see results.

“The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”  
— *James 5:16 (NIV)*

Every prayer you whisper — even in tears — reaches Heaven.  
God stores every prayer, every cry, and every sigh. (*Revelation 5:8*)

### Real-Life Scenario:

A single mother prays for years for her children’s salvation. Though the answer doesn’t come immediately, she keeps praying. One day, her children come to faith, and she sees the fruit of her persistent prayers. God honored her faith, even when she couldn’t see the outcome right away.

## Conclusion: Keep the Fire Burning

Prayer is not just a spiritual activity — it’s a lifestyle.  
It keeps us connected to God, fuels our faith, and gives us victory over the enemy.

“Pray without ceasing.”  
— *1 Thessalonians 5:17 (KJV)*

Let prayer be your first response, not your last resort.  
Talk to God every day — when you’re happy, sad, stressed, or thankful.

When you pray, remember:

* You are talking to your Heavenly Father.
* He is always listening.
* And He delights in hearing your voice.

## Prayer

“Lord, teach us to pray.  
Help us to seek You with sincere hearts.  
Forgive us where we have neglected prayer.  
Fill us with Your Spirit so that we may walk in constant fellowship with You.  
In Jesus’ name, Amen.”