

CA 24 TFP1 THE POWER OF PRAYER (Formally CA24 Hudson Taylor)

Music intro

Look for



FOSTER: His foot slipped and He almost fell. Except for the moonlight that streamed between the clouds, the path was dark. Though most were asleep in the valley below, the mountain provided the solitude He needed for His important task. Tomorrow was a big day, and He'd stay up all night preparing for it. The decision He'd make would impact generations of people. This type of pressure would be too much for most men, but He was used to it. He dealt with this issue the same way He handled everything He did—with prayer. He'd pray all night long—alone on the mountain. And in the morning....Jesus would select His twelve disciples.

Welcome to Champions Arise. I'm Foster Braun and I'm with Kent Darcie. Today we will talk about prayer. How do we pray? What should we pray for? How does God answer prayer? And how can prayer impact our Christian life? So please stay with us right here on Champions Arise.

Theme Music in

FOSTER: Kent, you and I have both heard the question, "If God knows everything about us, why we should we pray?" What is your answer to that question?

KENT: For me, the answer is simple. We should pray because Jesus did. He set the example. If there was ever a person that shouldn't need to pray, it would be Jesus. And yet, in what you just read, and throughout His life, including the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed.

And He taught us to pray. And He told stories about people praying like the tax collector and the Pharisee. So if Jesus needed to pray, and emphasized the need for prayer so much, we certainly need to pray.

- **FOSTER:** In our last couple programs we've talked about how Christianity is a relationship.

KENT: Yes a relationship with God that ultimately strengthens our relationships with each other.

FOSTER: But all healthy relationships require regular communication.

KENT: That's true. And prayer is our regular communication with God. If we rarely spoke to our wife or our best friend, the relationship would slowly die. It's the same with God.

- **FOSTER:** So Kent, how do we pray? Is there a right way to pray?

KENT: First we have to think of prayer as a conversation. The Apostle Paul said, "Pray without ceasing." [1 Thes. 5:17]

FOSTER: Okay Kent. I've heard that before, but what does that look like? For the man who is trying to balance his wife and family with work and other responsibilities, how does he pray without ceasing?

KENT: Well, we have to recognize that prayer comes in many forms. When we hear the word “prayer”, we tend to think of a bowed head, or closed eyes, folded hands....

➤ **FOSTER:** on our knees

KENT: on our knees, but these are not the only ways we can pray. There was a monk named Brother Lawrence who lived over three hundred years ago. He was a **cook** at the monastery. Which wasn't very glamorous, and it didn't seem very spiritual. Preparing meals day after day, year after year can be pretty boring. Like many of the responsibilities we have as men. They need to be done, but they don't seem important.

But Brother Lawrence saw everything he did as an act of prayer. He called it “practicing the presence of Christ.” For him, prayer was his opportunity to share every moment with the Lord and bring every detail of his life into God's presence.

FOSTER: That is a very interesting way to look at prayer.

KENT: pretty challenging really. You know Dr. Leighton Ford approached prayer the same way. He said, “Don't limit your prayers to a formal act once a day. Get in the habit of sending quick prayers to God many times a day. Pray when you wake up; pray before meals; pray as you walk or ride or wait; pray when you can't sleep. Even doing your work or your recreation to the glory of God can be a prayer.”

That is how one prays without ceasing.

FOSTER: And if you just joined the program, we're glad to have you with us today on Champions Arise. I'm Foster Braun and I'm joined by Kent Darcie. Today we are looking at prayer.

Kent, I want to get back to the question of “how do we pray?” Because this is so important to living a Christian life.

KENT: It is. And when we want to know the basics of prayer, a good place to look is at Matthew 6, starting at verse 9. This is where we find “The Lord's Prayer.” And I'm not going to read the prayer but I want to point to four key parts of it. You can remember these by the word ACTS. A-C-T-S.

The A is for adoration – being in awe, loving – we see this in verse 9; “Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.” That is adoration for God.

The C in ACTS is for Confession. This is in verse 12. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

FOSTER: And these don't have to be done together.

KENT: No, if you see something that causes you to appreciate God for His goodness or creativity, tell Him in prayer. Adore Him.

FOSTER: and if you say or do something wrong, offer a quick prayer of confession.

KENT: Yes. You just pray “Lord, I’m really sorry for thinking those terrible things about that person.” Quick prayers keep us in communication with God.

FOSTER: And the “T” in ACTS?

KENT: The T in ACTS (of prayer) stands for Thanksgiving. It’s ok to ask God to meet our needs, but it’s just as important to thank Him for His goodness and provision for us. Verse 9 begins with Our Father. That should produce great thankfulness in our hearts for the privilege of being able to call Almighty God, Our Father. Psalm 118 verse 1 says, “Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good!” [NLT] Thanking God is always a good thing.

FOSTER: So our prayers should include adoration, confession, thanks, And the S?

KENT: The S in ACTS (when we’re praying) stands for supplication. Supplication is presenting our needs to God. Matthew 6 verse 10 says “Your will be done.

Verse 11 says, “Give us this day our daily bread.

Verse 12 says, “Forgive us our debts

Verse 13 says, “Do not lead us into temptation and deliver us from the evil one.

These are all supplications—requests. And it is perfectly ok to present our needs to God—big or small.

Praying is building a relationship between us and God. Think about your closest relationships. You probably feel free to talk about anything. You listen to what your spouse or friend has to say and then it’s your turn. Prayer is the same way.

FOSTER: I think it might be a little scary for some of us to approach God like a friend in prayer, but that is really his desire right?

KENT: Yes. And that’s why the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. The way Jesus prayed to God—just talking—was a new experience for the disciples. And they wanted to learn how to do it.

FOSTER: and we’ve now learned some methods of praying. Now the question is what should we pray for?

KENT: Philippians 4 verse 6 says, “*Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.*” [NLT]

But we can also break “everything” down into four basic areas or prayer

The first area is pray that God will grow your relationship with Him. That includes praying for a willingness to obey Him, trust Him, and avoid sin.

Second area , pray that God will help you to grow personally. How are your relationships? How are you handling your job? **Where** are areas you need wisdom and maturity? Bring these needs to the Lord in prayer.

The third basic area we can pray is, Ask God for insights into situations that are overwhelming you. James 1:5 says “if any of you lack wisdom he should ask God.”

FOSTER: That seems like a big one, because, as men, we like to solve problems on our own.

KENT: But why struggle with **our** limited wisdom, when God offers His? And another problem that can be overwhelming is sickness, or a long term medical issue. These need to be taken to God in prayer as well. But so far we’ve looked at our needs. The fourth area of prayer is:

We should pray for others. Family members, friends, missionaries, ministries, our church, our church leaders. Our leaders in government – and I would add whether we like them or not. And we should pray for our enemies.

These types of prayers are called intercessory prayers. But the four areas,

- Praying for growth in our relationship with God
- Praying for our personal growth
- Praying for our needs
- Praying for others

can be used at any time, separately or together. And they don’t have to be full of big words.

FOSTER: What do you mean big words?

KENT: Sometimes we’ll hear church leaders pray and think ours aren’t good enough. But I love this story. There was a new believer and just learning how to pray.

His name was Tom. And a group of men had invited him to a prayer meeting. He went, but when he got there, he said “I can’t pray.” He just felt intimidated. So the men were going around the circle praying and when it was his turn, this is what he prayed, “Lord, this is Tom. I’m the one **who met** you last Thursday. I’m sorry I can’t say it like the rest of these guys, but I just **want you** to know that I love you. Thanks a lot. I’ll see you later.”

FOSTER: That’s great! And God probably likes that prayer better than the long ones.

KENT: Probably. Because it was from Tom’s heart. And that’s what God wants. God desires that intimate, honest, open relationship with us.

FOSTER: And I want to squeeze in one last question, how does God answer prayer?

KENT: the simplest answers is God answers our prayers with “Yes”, “No”, or “wait.”

God will say yes when it’s in His will to happen at that time.

He’ll say “no” because it might not be in our long term interests. Or it’s not part of His plan for our life. It might be harmful to us. It might be stupid. I mean Foster, I can’t tell you how many times I’ve prayed “Oh Lord, please give me this. I really need this to happen.” And after time passes, I look back and pray, “Thank you Lord for NOT answering that prayer.”

FOSTER: I think many of us can give an “Amen” to that prayer!

KENT: I think you're right. So "NO" is not always a bad thing.

And "Wait" can be for any number of reasons. We may not be ready for what we're praying for. Maybe someone else isn't ready. God may need to build our character more, or confront a sin in our life. "Wait" can be a tough answer, but we have to trust that God always knows what is best.

FOSTER: And God always knows what's best. Kent, as we finish up can you do an overview of what we've learned about prayer today please?

KENT: Sure. First we saw that if **Jesus** needed to pray, we definitely need to pray. We talked about how it is important to pray without ceasing. We looked at the basic parts of prayer with the Word ACTS – Adoration, Confession, Thanks, and Supplication. And we looked at four areas that we should be praying for: Those were

- Praying for growth in our relationship with God
- Praying for our personal growth
- Praying for our needs
- Praying for others

And these can be done at any time, individually or together. The key to prayer is being ourselves—not using fancy words, it's just praying from the heart.

FOSTER: You know Kent, children are often the best at praying from their heart.

I remember a little boy who prayed, "Dear God, could you make me a little brother. I need somebody to boss around." One time a little girl prayed, "Dear God, did you mean for the giraffe to look like that or was that an accident?"

KENT: Children are wonderful examples of saying what's in their head and on their heart.

FOSTER: Maybe when it comes to prayer, we can learn from them. Jesus did say, "*Whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven.*" [Matt. 18:4] Kent, thanks for this insightful discussion.

KENT: It's been my pleasure.

FOSTER: We'll be right back.

Music Theme in

Program Close

FOSTER: Thank you for joining us on Champions Arise where men are equipped and strengthened to meet their God-given potential. Today's topic was prayer. This program was based on Lesson 6 in the book "The Four Priorities," by Dr. John Tolson and Larry Kreider. Published by The Gathering USA in 2007 and used with permission. You can learn more about this book and listen to any of the programs in this series at our website championsarise.org. I'm Foster Braun with Kent Darcie. Thank you for listening to Champions Arise. May God mold you into the man He knows you can be.

Closing TAG: This was CA 24 TFP1 THE POWER OF PRAYER (Formally CA24 Hudson Taylor)