

# Foreword

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Does the body of Christ need another book on prayer? After reading Pastor Clarence Washington's book, I must say a hearty, "Yes!" Many books on prayer written by the spiritual giants, though rich and spiritually profound, present a Navy Seals type of intensity and specialized discipline that make it very hard to practice for a lifetime, though exciting for a short while. Others focus on "doing" prayer as it might be an exercise that I must force upon my life, even if I really don't want to. Pastor Washington has a fresh, biblical, realistic, and down to earth book on prayer that helped me see prayer as a natural and regular part of my relationship with the Lord.

Because Pastor Washington is pastoral in this book, he applies the Christian's prayer life to the whole of Christian life. His manner of writing is in the style of a caring, counseling, spiritual mentor. He appeals to the believer to surrender heart and soul to a living God that is on our side. He wants us to and will help us overcome all of life's obstacles, not by obligation, but by His kindness or grace. For example, since faith is such an important part of praying, when Christians have the faith to follow biblical guidelines to give from their finances to God's work, that same faith makes one's prayers more effective.

It also brings the supernatural element into personal finances, putting God in control of the believer's money. He does this with so many other aspects of the Christian life. He unites prayer with every aspect of living as a Christian. It is practical. That is good news because after reading the book, not only did I receive a comprehensive, doctrinally sound and biblical overview of the discipline of prayer, but left this reading experience more convinced that a life surrendered to God makes prayer more of a pleasure.

In an encouraging style, Pastor Washington emphasizes that once a person is surrendered, prayer can happen while kneeling, standing, driving or eating. All have their own merits, but there are ways they can enhance the prayer experience at the right place and time. The author takes us on a biblical journey across the pages of scripture from Genesis to Revelation. He also makes the most of the classic passages, whether Elijah praying in

a rainstorm from a fist-sized cloud or the monumental truths of the ***Our Father***.

But after laying it all out, he appeals not to guilt, nor duty, but rather to the free will to leap into a fresh experience of God, saying, “And now it’s up to you beloved of God, to put what you have learned into practice” (p.367). This book puts forth practical, biblical, and spiritual principles that are mine to own and take advantage of. It empowers me as a believer with free will to love and serve my God, and in such an empowering manner Pastor Washington says in closing, “The decision is yours!” (p. 380).

Pastor Eric Villanueva

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## Introduction:

# How Much Do You Know About Prayer?

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The purpose for writing this handbook is to help Christian believers to easily and quickly obtain the information or tools needed for effective prayer. Effective prayer is the key element to rising above a mediocre, average, or ordinary Christian life. Therefore, this book presents the *How*s and *Why*s of effective prayer using the KISS principle—Keep It Simple Saints. Great effort was made to put the cookies on the bottom shelf so that anyone can easily reach and consume them.

However, the subject matter presented is thorough. Ministry leaders, lay people, as well as new converts, can easily use this book to preach, teach, and/or learn the principles of effective prayer. Pastors, ministers, evangelists, and teachers will discover that the simple manner in which the book is organized expedites the quick conversion of its contents into discussion points for sermons or teaching.

Likewise, this book has a simple but complete Table of Contents, appendices, indices, and notes, allowing readers to dig as deep as they desire. But, the appendices, indices, and notes are not necessary for a basic working knowledge of effective prayer.

Also, the Table of Contents contains several *Decision Points* to allow readers to skip over portions of discussion on most subject matters. Therefore, a reader can quickly rake out the chunks of confusion or uncertainty about prayer. Then, at a later time, readers can sift through the appendices, indices, notes, and the material not read at the *Decision Points*.

This method of absorbing the book's content will provide an in-depth understanding of the material or how to teach or preach the tools of effective prayer. And it enables readers to more quickly absorb and install the essentials of prayer into daily life.

Now, there are many very good books on prayer. But as you read this book, you will discover that none are as complete and simple in the organization and presentation of the subject matter as *Tools for Effective Prayer*.

Just like your lifestyle, your current prayer life is also “perfectly designed to produce the result you are getting”<sup>1</sup> (Dallas Willard ). Therefore, if you want a prayer life that will bring more glory to God,

enable you to see God's face clearer than you have ever seen it before, and move God's hand in your favor like never before—then you must start praying like you have never prayed before! *Tools for Effective Prayer* will teach you how to do that. I am sure that after you read this book and apply the principles of prayer contained in it, you will be equipped and able to live the abundant life that Christ died to provide for the saints of God. And your life will never ever be the same again!

In summary, the intent of this book is not to cause anyone to feel guilty about their shortcomings in their prayer life. The intent is to give you the tools for effective prayer so that you may have the ability to take your prayer life to a new higher level. This book will encourage, motivate, and teach you how to pray with power and effectiveness.

So let me start you out on your journey to more effective and powerful prayer with some words of encouragement from the great saint of God, E.M. Bounds . The following is a quote from his great little book entitled, *Power Through Prayer*:

The apostles “gave themselves to prayer”—the most difficult thing to get men or even the preachers to do. Laymen there are who will give their money—some of them in rich abundance—but they will not “give themselves” to prayer, without which their money is but a curse. There are preachers who will preach and deliver great and eloquent addresses on the need of revival and the spread of the kingdom of God, but not many there are who will do that without which all preaching and organizing are worse than vain—pray. It is out of date, almost a lost art, and the greatest benefactor for this age could have is the man who will bring the preachers and the church back to prayer.<sup>2</sup>