

# Science of Prayer 4 of 6

#0392

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—October 28, 1967

You will remember that last night, we were studying about this wonderful science of prayer, and we found that two of the great objects of prayer are: First, to lead us to what? Sorrow. And second, to what? Trust. Sorrow for sin and trust in our Savior. Now God's purpose in leading us to sorrow for sin is to separate us from sin.

Suppose I have something here in my hand. I'm holding it and I say, "Oh, that's hot. It hurts me." What would you say?

Some of you might say, "It's not hurting him very badly, or he would," what? "Turn loose of it."

The thing which enables us to turn from sin, give it up and stay away from it, is for it to hurt us. But as we studied last night, that which gives us a true understanding of the pain that sin brings is not necessarily a personal experience in sinning because sin, while it does damage, is anesthetic. It destroys but gives pleasure or sleepiness while it's doing it. The thing that awakens man to the pain that sin brings is a view of the cross. Beholding Jesus on Calvary awakens the soul to the terrible nature of sin. And so as we look upon the One whom we have pierced, we become sorry for sin.

But we are to go on from that to a trust in our Savior that joins us with Him. As we pointed out last night, if we merely become sorry for sin, we may carry a load of guilt that depresses. You remember *Testimonies to Ministers* says:

"The feeling of guiltiness must be laid at the foot of the cross, or it will poison the springs of life" *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 518.

Oh, what a statement, my friends!

But that's the only place to lay down the feeling of guiltiness, friends. No couch of some psychoanalyst can do that for us. No human being can take away the burden of guilt. Tranquilizers whether they are chemical or spiritual may be the Devil's endeavor to quiet the guilty conscience, but they can never remove the guilt. It takes blood:

"...without the shedding of blood there is no remission"  
Hebrews 9:22.

It is at Calvary that the sprinkled blood accomplishes its mission of cleansing us from sin, breaking its power, canceling its guilt, and freeing the conscience so that we go forward in faith and trust.

But you remember we read last night that this is to be a daily experience. We are not of those who believe in instantaneous sanctification, for the scriptures do not teach it. Neither are we of those who believe once in grace always in grace for the scriptures do not teach that. We believe that we need, as Paul said, to die, how often? Daily. And the purpose of prayer is to give us this experience—a deeper sorrow every day for sin; a deeper trust every day in our Savior that He takes away the burden of guilt, gives us power to face the tempter and meet the problems of life.

Now this evening, I want to build on the foundation that we laid last night and study with you two great agencies in accomplishing these purposes in prayer. Last night, I gave you the two great purposes. Tonight, I give you two great agencies. What again were those two great purposes? To bring us to what? Sorrow. And second to trust. Now, the two great agencies that I want to study with you tonight in accomplishing that in prayer are the Word and the will. By the Word, I mean the scriptures.

God intends that the study of the Bible and prayer should be mixed together. You're acquainted with statements like these:

“Never should the Bible be studied without prayer”  
*Steps to Christ*, page 91.

Well, why is that? We need prayer to help us understand the Bible. But equally true, we need the Bible to furnish us with subject matter for prayer.

Now, if you have not entered into this experience of prayer, you probably have found the prayer life is not very deep. And you have found that your mind wanders about. And you either have settled down to a certain form in which you run over certain requests, and get up. Or else, you wish that you knew how to pray more earnestly, more effectually. In some cases, I have had people tell me; well, they do not know how to pray very long. They hear about people praying a long time, but in two or three minutes, they've said everything they know to say. So what is there to do?

Well, my dear friends, prayer is intended to be a two-way conversation. And I recommend to you if you've not already entered into this—if you have you'll agree with me, this is vital—that you take into the laboratory of your own experience this plan. Next time you pray, tonight, tomorrow morning, take your Bible with you. As you kneel down, open the Bible and let God speak to you through the Word as you speak to Him in prayer. Just go back and forth.

It works this way; as you read something—if you're on your knees and regarding the Bible as the voice of God speaking to you, if you're listening through these pages to God talking to you—pretty soon you'll want to say something to Him. If it's a promise you've come to, you'll say, “Oh Lord, do that for me. This is what I need.” If it's a prayer, like in one of the Psalms, as you read a verse, you may say,

“Oh Father, this is just what I want. This is my prayer.” If it’s a command that you have come to your response may be, “Oh dear Lord, this is what you want me to do. Help me to do it. Give me the strength to do it.” Now you see, whether what you have read is a promise or a prayer, or a command, there is a response to it that wells up in your heart. Is that right?

But that may not give you subject matter to speak to God more than a half minute or a minute. And then what do you do? Just get up and go away? Not necessarily. Read another verse. Let God talk to you some more. Keep on reading down and as you do, you and the Master can have, as I say, a two-way conversation. As you pray you open the way for God to speak to you through His Word. As you read and God speaks to you, you open the way for the Spirit to inspire your heart to respond to that.

As we do this, dear friends, combining the reading of the Word with prayer and talking to God about what we read, these two experiences that we studied last night of sorrow for sin and trust in our Savior both will deepen.

Let me illustrate it: Let’s go back to the text we read last night in Zechariah 12:10. Will you please? And we’ll use this text to illustrate the very thing that we’re talking about tonight. Here is a promise. God says:

“...I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications...” Zechariah 12:10.

Now, as we’re kneeling with the open Bible with this text, our heart’s response may be, “Oh Lord, here is Thy promise to pour upon me the spirit of grace and of supplications. Oh, Lord, do that right now as I’m kneeling here in prayer.”

Do you see? Thus this becomes not merely a prophecy, it becomes a promise. And it becomes not merely for some future occasion, it becomes something to be fulfilled right now. As Jesus said:

“...This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears”  
Luke 4:21.

But now having responded to God in prayer and asked Him to fulfill His Word here and pour upon us the spirit of grace and supplication, we continue on now with the verse. Remember, we’re kneeling in prayer, all alone.

“...and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced...” Zechariah 12:10.

And we may say, “Oh Lord, help me right now to look upon the One that I have pierced.” And with our eyes closed, we may begin to picture in imagination the scenes of Calvary. We’re responding to the text. Do you see what I mean?

And I read on:

“...they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn” Zechariah 12:10.

And there on our knees, we ask God to fulfill what He has said here as we meet the conditions.

You know to every promise of God there are conditions. What is it that this says will bring about this experience where we mourn for the One we have pierced? They shall do what? Look. It is by beholding that we become changed. So, one of the great purposes of prayer is to shut out all the busy, noisy, rushing world, and shut us in with God and to let us behold the Savior in His suffering and death.

Because this is so important, God has put in the Bible more on the actual experiences of the last suffering and death of Christ than any other thing in the Bible. You remember that the Holy Spirit arranged for four different men to write about the life and death of Jesus. What are their names? Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Now, if you want something very interesting, count the number of chapters in Matthew and see how many of them relate to the last week of the life of Jesus. If you were writing a person's biography, I doubt if you would put as much time in one week as Matthew did. But the Holy Spirit inspired him to do it. Then take Mark and note how many chapters there are in Mark and see how many of them relate to the last week of Christ's life, from the Sunday when He went into Jerusalem on the colt, until He died and rose again. Do the same with Luke. Do the same with John. Unless you have thought about it and studied it, you will be amazed.

Now, do more than that. Study how much space, how much time is devoted to the last 24 hours of the life of Jesus, from the time when He gathered with His disciples in the upper room to eat the Passover until He was laid at rest in Joseph's tomb just before the Sabbath came on.

Now there's a meaning in all this and a lesson in all this. It is God's purpose that we shall give the most attention to that which He has given most attention to. You will remember that oft-quoted, never too often, statement in *Desire of Ages*:

“It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ” *The Desire of Ages*, page 83.

This is not talking, my dear friends, about 60 minutes by the clock. It's talking about a period. We speak of the hour of family worship, but the family worship may not be 60 minutes long. And if you and I instead of being discouraged at the thought of how we are going to spend 60 minutes doing just this, will do what this suggests and have each day a thoughtful time, hour, period—call it what you will—when we go over the life of Christ, we'll get a great blessing just as this suggests we may.

But now watch as I read on:

“We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross” *Ibid.*

So, down on our knees then with the open Bible, we will read, for instance: Matthew 27 or Mark 15 or Luke 23 or John 19—those chapters in which point by point of the closing scenes of the life of Christ is brought out. Or it may be we go to the Old Testament. We may open to Isaiah 53 and go line by line through those 12 verses in that wonderful chapter. There’s nothing in the New Testament more wonderful on the substitutionary death of Jesus than Isaiah 53. Or perhaps Psalm 22 may be what the Spirit leads us to. I give you those six chapters, especially, as subject matter for prayer kneeling down. That will last you a long time. And don’t try to go through them quickly. Oh, no. Don’t try to cover them in a day or a week. But, let the imagination grasp each scene.

I want to read this statement that I have read from *Desire of Ages* as it was first written to a minister:

“It would be well to spend a thoughtful hour each day reviewing the life of Christ from the manger to Calvary. We should take it point by point and let the imagination vividly grasp each scene, especially the closing ones of His earthly life... If we would be saved at last...”

Now listen.

“...if we would be saved at last we must all learn the lesson of penitence and faith at the foot of the cross”  
*Testimonies for the Church, Volume 4, page 374.*

What’s another word for penitence? Sorrow. What’s another word for faith? Trust. That’s the two I gave you last night. And the place to get the sorrow is at the cross, kneeling at the cross. Not standing as the jeering multitude did, but kneeling that we may behold that love.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down.

And as we see His sorrow, sorrow will awaken in our hearts for the sin that made His sorrow. No longer will we laugh at that which makes Him weep. No longer will we share in the sin which nails Him to the cross. We shall renounce it, repudiate it. That’s repentance. This is the great purpose of prayer.

But following on, you notice that we’re to learn not only the lesson of penitence, but what? Faith. Ah friends, the great marvel of it is that the same revelation of the cross which makes us sorry, makes us glad. For as we behold His

suffering and share His sorrow, we come to know and feel that His sacrifice was made through love, and all for us. As we enter into the repudiation of sin, His dear face is turned toward us in forgiveness, and we know that our sins are pardoned.

I like the way John Newton put it generations ago. He wrote some of the wonderful hymns in our hymnal, like "There Is a Fountain Filled With Blood." But this one I love. You know John Newton had been a drinking man, and a slave dealer. He'd been a wicked man. But God got hold of him. He met Jesus at the cross. And he put it in verse like this:

In evil long I took delight,  
Unawed by shame or fear;  
Till a new object struck my sight,  
And stopped my wild career.

I saw One hanging on a tree  
In agony and blood;  
Who turned His languid eyes on me  
As near His cross I stood.

And never till my latest breath  
Can I forget that look;  
It seemed to charge me with His death,  
Though not a word He spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt,  
And plunged me in despair;  
I saw my sins His blood had spilt  
And helped to nail Him there.

Alas, I knew not what I did,  
But now my tears are vain;  
Where shall my trembling soul be hid,  
For I the Lord have slain.

A second look He gave which said,  
'I freely all forgive;  
This blood was for thy ransom paid.  
I died that thou mayest live.'

Thus while His cross my sin displays  
In all its blackest hue;  
Such is the mystery of grace,  
It seals my pardon too.

Ah you see, dear ones, we do not need to move from one classroom to another to learn the two lessons. We learn first the lesson of sorrow at the cross, and then the lesson of trust. And it is the bleeding Savior that teaches us both lessons.

But remember, it is as we take the Bible and open its pages to the description of the scenes of the suffering of Jesus and plead with Him for this revelation—this is the way that this experience comes to us. It is not just by wishing that someday something would happen to us.

Ah, my friends:

“Ask and it shall be given you. Seek and ye shall find...  
For every one that asks receives...” Matthew 7:7–8.

God longs to impart these blessings to everyone.

But now, along with the Word, I would bid you study and understand the function of the will in this experience. Just to read, even on your knees, these scenes, is not enough. The will, your will must be involved in the experience. This is so important.

Now let me give you two verses from the Bible in which the will is plainly involved in these two lessons we studied last night. Turn first to Psalm 38:18. (Brother Collins, will you come and read that for me please?) What is it we’re looking for, the place of what? The will in this experience of sorrow.

“For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin”  
Psalm 38:18.

That’s it:

“...I will be sorry for my sin” Psalm 38:18.

You see, too many people have the idea that sorrow for sin is simply an emotional experience. And if you weep, well, that’s it. And if you don’t, well, you might wish you could, but you don’t. Let me say, God is dealing not so much with the emotions as with the will, the choice, my friends.

You cannot control your emotions. You do not have a faucet that you can turn on the tears or turn them off. And there are plenty of people that weep every time they get drunk, and then go right back to the bottle in a few days or even a few hours. It takes more than weeping to cure sin, doesn’t it? Oh, the choice must be fully aligned with God.

And so back to our laboratory experience: Here on our knees as we see Jesus dying for us, we’re not only to ask for sorrow, we’re to say, using the very words of scriptures:

“...I will be sorry for my sin” Psalm 38:18.

“God help me, I will be sorry for my sin.” And even if it’s some darling sin that is hard to give up, put your will on the side of repudiating it. Put your will on the side of being sorry for selfishness, instead of cherishing it. Put your will on the side of being sorry for pride, instead of feeding it. Put your will on the side of giving up

laziness, lethargy, indifference. Say, "Oh, God. Help me. I will be sorry for my sin." Do you see? I will. I will. I will.

Now that second lesson that we studied last night: Note tonight how not only the Word, but the will is involved in this second step. Isaiah 12:2. (Bruce, will you come and read this one for me?) Oh, I want you to get these two great "I will" texts. If you forget everything else tonight, be sure you carry these home with you.

Psalm 38:18:

"...I will be sorry for me sin" Psalm 38:18.

And now, Isaiah 12:2: Here is another, "I will." Listen:

"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation" Isaiah 12:2.

Yes. Now notice those two little words, two mighty words, "I will." I will what?

"...I will trust, and not be afraid..." Isaiah 12:2.

Ah, dear ones, when we're kneeling in prayer, and the burden of sorrow begins to be heavy upon us, we must not lie there forever crushed under the sense of guilt. Our faith must begin to operate. We must, having put our will on the side of being sorry for sin, climb the heights of trust and say:

"...I will trust, and not be afraid..." Isaiah 12:2.

"I will believe that Jesus takes the burden and gives me His righteousness. I will believe.

"...I will trust and not be afraid..." Isaiah 12:2.

Now in this little book, *Messages to Young People*, we have both of these great expressions of "I will" put in just one paragraph on page 153. This is a testimony that Sister White wrote to a young man in Battle Creek years ago. And this is wonderful. Young people listen to what the Spirit of God wrote to a young person years ago:

"Will you not, without delay, place yourself in right relation to God? Will you not say, 'I will give my will to Jesus, and I will do it now,' and from this moment be wholly on the Lord's side? Disregard custom, and the strong clamoring of appetite and passion. Give Satan no chance to say, 'You are a wretched hypocrite.' Close the door, so that Satan will not thus accuse and dishearten you. Say 'I will believe, I do believe that God is my helper,' and you will find that you are triumphant in God" *Messages to Young People*, page 153.



There you have it friends. There are the two “I wills.” We read it in the Bible:

“...I will be sorry for my sin” Psalm 38:18.

Here it is expressed:

“I will give my will to Jesus and I will do it now” *Ibid.*

We read it in the Bible, Isaiah 12:2:

“...I will trust” Isaiah 12:2.

Here it is written:

“Say, ‘I will believe. I do believe that God is my helper’” *Ibid.*

There are the two great steps, my friends. And God intends that every morning before we talk with men, we shall first talk with God. Before we look upon the face of men, we shall look upon the face of Jesus, and that we shall learn down on our knees, through using the Word and the will, the lesson of sorrow and trust.

And thus, friends—watch the point!—when we go out to meet the world, we don't have to go out with a gloomy face because we're fearful. Neither do we have to go out with a tottering resolution. In the secret place of prayer, we have settled the question of being sorry for sin. And in the secret place of prayer, we have settled the question of trusting our Lord. Thus we can go forth to meet men reflecting the smile of Jesus, reflecting the sunshine of Heaven.

How long should that take? I cannot give you the time. Ah, my friends, how quickly a doctor is able to help a certain patient? A few minutes may take care of his problem. Here some other patient comes in, and the other patients out in the waiting room wait and wait and wait. What's the matter? Well, there in the consultations room, the doctor is having a long session with that particular patient on that particular day. And how foolish it would be to say: “Every patient must spend 15 minutes with the doctor,” or “Every patient must spend 30 minutes.”

Ah friends, let us go to God not to clock off a certain number of minutes. Let us go to God to get an experience. What do you say? And we dare not go without this. But if we have it, oh, then thank God, we can go forth to our work knowing that our sins are covered with the precious blood, and that our hearts are at home with Jesus in the Most Holy Place in faith and peace. Then we can share that wonderful love, that smile of Heaven with others. What do you say? Thank God my friends!

Now I want to give you a few minutes, and I wish that those of you that got something last night and have done something about it during the last 24 hours, would you like to say a word? Or there may be somebody that in this meeting tonight, you got something, you really got something, and by God's grace, you're going to do something about it. As I said last night, while the impression is fresh in

your mind, let the expression deepen that impression. Jesus loves to hear you. What is your word of response?

[Testimony service follows]

My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine;  
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign;  
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou  
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

If there's anyone having a special struggle, carrying a special, heavy burden, and we can help you in seeking the Lord with you in prayer, tarry with us. And through the week dear ones, if you need more help in learning more about how to pray effectually, I know there are a number of us here that would be most happy to join with you in entering into the prayer experience. Let everyone feel it's for you, friends, every one of you.

Dear Lord, we thank Thee with all our hearts for the cross where we can meet our Lord. We thank Thee for the sorrow that makes sin look repulsive to us. And we thank Thee for Thy smile of forgiveness which gives us trust. As we go forth to share with others Thy wonderful love, make this the best week of our lives; for Jesus' sake, amen.

God bless you all.

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