



3



WORD PRAYERS

Simple. Powerful. Effective.

A powerful and impactful prayer life can begin with just 3 words. Three simple words may not seem like much, but this daily practice will transform your relationship with God.

DAVID CHADWICK

3 WORD PRAYERS

**A Power-Packed Prayer
Method as Simple as 1-2-3**

David Chadwick

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to all the people who, through the years, have prayed earnestly for me. They are too many to mention by name.

They began to pray for me in my earliest years of spiritual development. Some told me later that they saw something in me that could be used for the Lord and the advancement of His kingdom. They were Sunday School teachers, counselors at Christian camps, friends, peers, and many others who saw giftedness they thought could be used by the Lord.

There was Mom and Dad. I know that they prayed incessantly. Mom told me that Dad cried when he heard that I finally accepted the call to do ministry. I can only imagine the number of prayers they offered to the Lord for me to finally yield to His will for my life.

There are also countless hundreds of people at the Moments of Hope Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. They have been a constant support and abiding intercessors as I am trying to lead them well during this season of life. They have lifted me up regularly to the throne of grace, pleading for the Holy Spirit to give me wisdom, empower me, and use me for God's glory alone. My heart is deeply warmed every time I

think of their fervent prayers and unabashed call to lead them as God's shepherd on this side of eternity.

There are many others, sprinkled throughout the world, who have cared for me through prayer. They have partnered with me and Forest Hill to see people come to faith in Jesus.

And, of course, there is Marilyn, my beloved wife and best friend, who has been praying for me since the moment we met. How many prayers has she offered to the Lord on my behalf for him to give me help, strength, protection, and wisdom? They are too many to begin to count. How much I love her! How grateful I am for her prayers for me. It's been fun to watch her start practicing 3-word prayers as well.

There are my kids. They tell me that they regularly pray for their daddy. I know God hears their prayers.

Finally, there is the Lord Jesus, who regularly makes intercession for me before the Father. Thank You, Lord, for Your patience with me. Thank You for never giving up on me. Thank You for Your numerous, unceasing prayers of grace for me. I imagine that some were 3-word prayers as well.

To God alone and always belongs all the glory!

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Foreword

Three. Word. Prayers. Three simple words describe a power-packed prayer method that has brought new vigor to my prayer life! I've studied prayer, practiced prayer, and even written a book on prayer. Prayer was the foundation of our ministry. It became our lifeline when we longed for a baby. And it was prayer that brought a healing miracle and the birth of our three children. It's no wonder I work hard at prayer – I believe prayer works!

So when David shared his *3-Word Prayers* idea with me, I was thrilled. Finally, a practical approach that cuts through the busyness of daily life. 3-Word prayers have helped me shape more strategic prayers. Sharpened my reading of Scripture. Encouraged me to meditate more on God's presence.

3-Word prayers are for anyone. For the young mom with a fussy baby: "Soothe her soul." For the anxious child: "Calm my heart." For the parents of a wayward teen: "Softening his heart." For a troubled nation: "Heal our land." For the weary worker: "Give me strength." For confession of sin: "Forgive my anger." During the storms of life, "Peace! Be still!" In short, 3-word prayers are sure to help you "Pray without ceasing." "Abide in Christ." Simple as 1-2-3.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marilee". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned at the bottom right of the page, above the page number.

The Disciples' Prayer and 3-Word Prayers

*“Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when He finished, one of His disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.’ And He said to them, ‘When you pray, say:
Father, hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Give us each day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.
And lead us not into temptation.’”*
(Luke 11:1-4 ESV)

When Jesus’ disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray, this was His response.

Jesus first told them *what* they should pray for. He gave them a line-by-line recipe for effective, mountain-moving prayer. The disciples concluded that the source of Jesus' power over sin, death, and the devil rested in prayer. That's why they wanted to learn how to pray.

Jesus knew that there was nothing more important than an effective life of prayer. He also knew that prayers of faith were the source of the Father's power given to Him.

All Christians, like the 12 disciples, should similarly approach Jesus and ask, "Lord, teach us to pray." This is what we all need to be taught. We need simple ways to pray in order to see God move mountains.

What then is the first step that Christians should take?

We need to find a secret place where we can be alone with God (Matthew 6:6). In Luke's gospel, it's called "*a certain place*" for Jesus (Luke 11:1). It was a place where He often withdrew to be alone with the Father (Luke 5:16). Sometimes He would spend an entire night there, seeking His Father's will.

This place of prayer is a solitary, fixed spot. It can be anywhere. But it must be a place where Christians can engage our Teacher and experience the Father's grace, mercy, compassion, kindness, and power. It is

where His sovereign strength becomes alive for us.

Here, we believe passionately that God is the *rewarder* of those who *diligently* seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).

With perseverance, we cling to the promise that the Father, who sees everything we do in secret, will reward us (Matthew 6:6). We know that our prayers bring down His blessings.

In fact, God knows our needs before we even ask (Matthew 6:8). He knows far better than we do what we really need. This truth should strengthen our faith. Any delay should only encourage perseverance for Christians to hold on until the answer comes. We know that God's delay is not denial. Should we be forced to wait, we know that there's something good God is going to bring to us.

Does our Father really know that we need something? Yes! And we know that He knows. We are convinced He hears and answers our prayers.

Daily, more and more confidence fills Jesus' followers as we wait for the longings for which we have asked. God has spoken. His Word is true. His promises cannot be thwarted.

Therefore, to make things as simple as possible, Jesus taught His followers *how* to pray. It's a recipe that grants us insights into prayer that works. It's a line-

by-line invitation for us to emulate a way He probably prayed Himself.

From Matthew's and Luke's gospels, Jesus instructed His disciples to pray by saying,

“Our Father...”

Jesus gave us the revelation that His Father is our Father as well. Through the forgiveness of our sins, we become children of God (John 1:12). These two words, “our Father,” are key to understanding all prayer.

But there's more. Only eternity will reveal how powerful this one word is – *Father*.

Jesus called His Father *Daddy/Abba* in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before His death (Mark 14:32-42). In His agony, He knew His Father as Daddy.

Follower of Jesus, do you?

Abba was the most intimate expression a child could give his father in that day. It expressed the father's deep and abiding love, tenderness, and care for his sons and daughters.

It does for Jesus' followers as well. As He is God's Son, we also are Daddy's sons and daughters.

Therefore, using the 3-word prayers here, pray like this as you remember the opening line of the Disciples' Prayer:

Daddy loves me...Daddy adores me...Father oversees me...He is here...Love conquers all...Daddy really cares...He holds me...
Daddy draws near...I'm not forsaken...Or an orphan...I'm Daddy's child...I'm dearly loved...Daddy is present...In His arms...
On His shoulders...Daddy carries me...
I'm never forgotten...My name known...
Daddy desires me...Daddy seeks me...
Father embraces me...Daddy values me...
I am priceless...Father adopted me...
I'm an heir...

Make your own list. Repeat your 3-word prayers over and over again. When doubts arise, confront them with your 3-word prayers. Memorize them. When the forces of darkness bring fear or anxiety, use your 3-word prayers. Repeat the width, breadth, height, and depth of Daddy's love for you.

And watch fear flee. Perfect love casts out all fear (1 John 4:18).

“Who is in heaven...” (AMPC)

God is transcendent. He rules over all from His Heavenly throne. Every atom in the universe is under His control. If one atom is outside the Father’s control, then every atom is beyond His control.

God is a *Daddy* who sovereignly controls everything. He is an intimate, close friend who rules the world – and oversees our personal lives. Every second of our lives is under His celestial oversight. Everything that happens to us is for our good and His glory (Romans 8:28).

Therefore, using 3-word prayers, pray this line like this:

Daddy controls all...There’s a plan...Father has purpose...For my good...He knows all...Daddy’s using all...I’ve no fear...Why ever worry?...It’s Father’s world...Whatever Daddy wills...In His hands...He oversees all...Will be done...I trust completely... No more fear...I surrender all...Cling to Father...His love wins...I’m in Daddy... Daddy’s in me...Why be afraid?...

Make your own list. Focus on the fact that our Daddy controls everything – both the good and the bad in our lives and in the world. Should doubt and unbelief raise their ugly heads, keep speaking your 3-word

prayers. Over and over again. Remind all fears that our Daddy controls everything in this world.

And watch fear flee.

“Your name is holy...” (NLV)

God’s name is different than ours (holy means different). What name? It’s the name of the Father. In the name of Father/Daddy we find God’s perfect love, holiness, and glory. Divine, hidden power is found in the name of the Father. This name must be recognized as *holy/hallowed/different* in our prayers.

In prayer, we Christians normally think of bringing our needs to God. Here, Jesus reverses the order. It’s all about *His* name as “Father” having priority. This means that the Father must be first. Prayers are ineffectual if we have any god higher than Him. He alone must be glorified above all else.

The grown-up son or daughter who delights for the father’s interests to be advanced over all is the one who gets what they ask from the father. The life consecrated to the Father’s service is the one that receives results in prayer. It’s what Jesus meant when He said if we seek first God’s kingdom, then the other things we desire will be added to us (Matthew 6:33).

But Jesus' followers must first have His name above theirs.

Therefore, using 3-word prayers, pray this line like this:

You're first, Daddy...You're above all...Your name first...All about You...All for You...
Your glory first...*Not* about me...My heart yielded...You are exalted...You are glorious...
You are perfect...You are great...You are primary...Name above all...Father is first...
Your kingdom priority...Father first place...
None beside You...None before You...

Make your own list. Focus on the unique, special name of the Father who has revealed Himself in Jesus. Think about the name of Jesus. The name means *Savior*. He has saved us from our sin and granted eternal life. What a powerful name it is! It is the name above all names. One day, at the name of Jesus, all knees will bow and tongues confess that He is Lord over all. There is great power in praying in Jesus' name.

Pray 3-word prayers about God's special name as "Father," revealed through Jesus.

And watch fear flee.

“Your kingdom come. Your will be done...”

My Father is a King and has a kingdom. In Heaven, God’s kingdom operates as the King wills. His will is perfectly done in every crevice of Heaven.

But it’s not so here on earth. We children still live in enemy territory. The Father’s will on earth is not yet fully realized. Sin still stains creation. The world remains terribly broken. Death stalks humanity. The prince of this world still wreaks havoc.

That’s why Jesus’ followers *must* use the spiritual weapon of prayer. And when we have learned how to praise our Daddy’s holy name, the next step is to cry out with boldness and passion: *Your kingdom come and Your will be done as it is presently operating in Heaven.*

Here is an intriguing insight about this phrase in the prayer. It’s an imperative. It has the same implication as Genesis 1:3 when God spoke a command, “*Let there be light,*” and light shattered the darkness.

This phrase is not meant to be said dispassionately or frivolously. Vain repetition can never be associated with this part of the prayer. It must be spoken with force and conviction. It’s an imperative – words stated from the lips of one who has Daddy’s authority in Heaven to speak it.

Do you see how Christians are meant to pray? Jesus' followers are to command what is happening in Heaven to come to earth.

Therefore, thinking about what is in Heaven that is not yet fully realized here on earth, using 3-word prayers, pray this line like this:

Stop war now...All abortions cease...please heal _____ (you fill in the name of the person for whom you are interceding for healing)...Save my child (there are no unbelievers in Heaven)...Feed hungry children (no hunger in Heaven)...Stop trafficking now (or human trafficking)...Give clean water (no unclean water in Heaven)...Adopt foster kids...Adopt all orphans (all people in Heaven have a family with God as Father)...Heal broken hearts (no emotional or mental illness in Heaven)...Give _____ hope (there's no despair in Heaven)...Job for _____ (there's no unemployment in Heaven)...Racism go away (only one race in Heaven)...Injustices be overcome (perfect justice in Heaven)...

Yes, daily headlines may discourage us. But don't let them! Keep praying. There are evidences of God's kingdom advancing on earth. For example, over the

last three decades, the percentage of poverty world-wide has decreased exponentially. The arc of justice *is* bending more toward righteousness. Racism is diminishing.

God's kingdom is advancing slowly. But it is happening.

And one day, all evil will be eradicated when Jesus returns. His kingdom *will* come. His perfect will in Heaven *will be done* here on earth. What a glorious day that will be!

And if Jesus' return should be delayed over years? Or decades? Keep praying for His kingdom in heaven to come to earth! Only the Father knows when Jesus' return will happen. It is fixed in His mind. But it *will* happen. Count on it!

“Give us this day our daily bread...”

When we who follow Jesus have fully yielded ourselves to the holy Father and desire first to obey His kingdom rule, we may now ask regarding our needs. Our daily bread.

Will not a loving Heavenly Father care for the child who has yielded himself to His oversight? If not, He is not a loving Father.

What are your daily needs? No one is guaranteed tomorrow. For today, what do you need from the Heavenly Father?

Ask the Father to meet your needs with 3-word prayers from this line of the prayer:

Supply a job...I need food...A new job...
Fix my car...Calm my heart...Success in
interview...Close this account...Favor with
boss...Give needed raise...My kids' needs...
Give new friends...A church home...See
a miracle...Feel Your presence...My faith
increased... Faith for today...Every second
Yours...Enjoy every moment...Serve some-
one else...Give life away...

Don't allow fear to rob your day of joy. Pray your daily needs. Believe the Father in Heaven will supply your every need according to His riches in Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

And see fear flee.

“And forgive us our debts...”

As daily bread is the primary need for the body, so forgiveness is for the soul. Confession cleanses the heart. Though we are children, sometimes sin builds

up over time and clogs our prayer pipeline.

That is when Christians need to reclaim the precious blood of Jesus. Even the most faithful of God's children continue to sin. Even when we don't desire to do so, we sin.

Let the regular, daily prayer for forgiveness flood your soul anew. For what is confessed from the heart is truly forgiven. Let us receive afresh the power of the cross of Calvary.

Therefore, pray this line with 3-word prayers like this:

Forgive my sins...I confess _____
(bitterness...hatred...envy...strife...
slander...jealousy...adultery...lust)...Give
me mercy...Show me grace...Overcome my
alcohol...I am sorry...Give me grace...Heal
my rebellion...Make me submissive...Love
me anew...Joy of salvation...Choose against
sin...Grace over sin...Light over darkness...
Faith over fear...Life over death...Hope over
despair...Joy over discouragement...Your
promises anew...New every morning...You
are faithful...

The devil will try to convince us that we are not forgiven. But when we pray with faith, we believe that there is no condemnation for those in Jesus

(Romans 8:1). We claim that our prayers have victory over the enemy. We are more than conquerors through Jesus who loves us (Romans 8:37). Jesus who lives in us is greater than the evil one who oversees this world (1 John 4:4).

This kind of faith forces the founder of fear to flee. We persist in praying the blood of Jesus over him. He hates it when we do.

“As we also have forgiven our debtors...”

Christians are forgiven. Jesus has paid our billion-dollar debt to the Father because of our sin. We are now free from the power of sin and death. It's a debt only the Father could pay.

What is the proper response of Jesus' followers to this great gift of forgiveness? To forgive those who are our debtors. Comparatively, it's nowhere near the debt that He paid for us. And if He paid a billion-dollar debt for us, we can pay a hundred-dollar offense against us.

Being forgiven is Heaven's gift to us. Forgiving is our gift to the Father. It shows we truly understand grace.

Therefore, for this line, pray 3-word prayers about forgiving those who have hurt you:

You've forgiven me...I forgive _____...I
release _____...No more retaliation...
No more revenge...Father take revenge
(read Romans 12:19 – “*Vengeance is Mine...
says the Lord*”)...I choose love...I choose
forgiveness...All bitterness released...Mercy
to _____...Love not hate...Kindness not
anger...I won't retaliate...Justice is God's...
Love over hate...I want peace...

Bitterness can thwart the miraculous power of God. We can speak to mountains, have no doubt, and believe that we've received, but if we hold on to bitterness, the mountain will never melt into the heart of the sea (see Mark 11:22-25 – especially the last verse which is this exact teaching in the Disciples' Prayer).

Release the person who hurt you to God (Romans 12:19). God exacts justice better than we do. Only He knows everything and has the perfect perspective. Trust Him with those who have hurt you.

When we believe that God owns all vengeance, we also realize that recompense is His as well (Deuteronomy 32:35). It's His job to take vengeance. And when we give Him space to do so, it's also His job to reward us and restore what was stolen. Remember that Job's double restoration (Job 42:10) only occurred after he had forgiven his haughty

friends and interceded for them.

Perhaps bitterness has given you an unforgiving spirit. Your refusal to let go of the hurt is preventing God's miracles from coming to you. Maybe if you forgave that person and gave vengeance to God, He would give you fresh power and authority.

You would then experience more answered prayers. And God's promised recompense would happen.

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one...” (AMPC)

The Father in Heaven, who rules over His kingdom, supplies our daily bread. He pardons our sins.

Now Daddy's kids should ask for power over the evil one. He still wants to kill, steal from, and destroy us. He hates God. He despises us.

But the indwelling Spirit guards and protects the Father's children. When we ask Him, He daily leads our feet away from those places where we can be tempted and ensnared. He knows our frailties and weaknesses. He knows the devil's traps.

Every day we need to pray to be led away from blind spots. From any snare of the devil. And the Holy

Spirit who indwells us will answer this prayer.

Should we have become ensnared out of weakness or willful disobedience, we can return to the Father's infinite grace and ask for deliverance. He will forgive anew and grant a fresh infilling of His Spirit. His mercies are new every morning. Great is the Father's faithfulness! (Lamentations 3:22-23).

Therefore, pray 3-word prayers like these:

Away from alcohol (or drugs, or pornography, or social media – anything that has addicted my soul)...Guide my paths...Lamp to feet...
Obey Your will...Expose all evil...Reveal all truth...Forsake all evil...Hate all evil...Love only good...Desire Your will...Rule my life...Control every thought...Love permeate everything...
Forgive my entrapment...Free from sin...Give mercy anew...Give grace anew...A new day...
New every morning...Only Your way...

The enemy hates prayers like these. When prayed, he flees.

Final Thoughts

The Disciples' Prayer is what the Father desires His children to pray. It's His recipe for prayer that works.

And Jesus wants His followers to be able to pray with positive results.

Try praying daily the Disciples' Prayer, line by line, with 3-word prayers. Maybe you only need one 3-word prayer per line per day. That's fine. They are easy to remember that way. You also can repeat them throughout the day. It's a way to pray without ceasing! (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Just make sure that you pray them. From your heart. With all that is within you.

Which leads to the next section.

The Passion of Prayer

In Luke 11:5-13, Jesus moves His followers from *what* to pray to *how* to pray. Our hearts need to be ablaze with a passion for prayer. Rote, empty prayers have no power. They are meaningless and vain.

Jesus gives us a story to show His followers the need for deep emotion when we pray. These emotions are fuel to prayer's power. They are the match that sets ablaze our 3-word prayers.

The parable goes like this...

“And he said to them, ‘Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; and he will answer from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children

are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything? I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs. And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:5-13 ESV).

Without passion, few accomplish anything of significance. Whether it is business, sports, entertainment, or academia, passion is essential for success. When obstacles arise, it is passion that motivates the person to press on. Passion proves the desire of the person to have that which they are working for.

The same is true with prayer. God despises lifeless prayers from empty hearts. There is no power in the hearts of people who honor God with their lips and mouths while their hearts are far from Him

(Isaiah 29:13). Jesus echoed this same thought from Isaiah (Matthew 15:8). He challenged the babbling of pagans in prayer and the meaningless repetition of the Pharisees' prayers (Matthew 6:7).

For prayers to have power, they need to have passion.

3-Word prayers must have passionate emotion fueling them as well. They cannot become meaningless babble and vain repetition. They must flow fervently from our hearts to God's.

Prayer needs passion.

The Heavenly Father loves prayers that erupt enthusiastically from a heart that yearns for an answer. He is a *Father*. He is *our* Father. He is a *good* Father. If we ask Him for anything, He will hear our request.

Jesus asked His followers a poignant question: If the Father's children ask for a fish, will He give us a serpent? Of if we ask for an egg, will He give us a scorpion?

The answer is rhetorical: *Of course not!* Earthly fathers, who are filled with selfishness themselves, only desire to give good gifts to their kids. Even the worst mafia boss showers good gifts on his kids.

Jesus then argued from the lesser to the greater. If sinful, selfish earthly fathers yearn to give good gifts to their kids, *how much more* does the good, loving, kind Heavenly Father desire to give good gifts to His children?

But prayers to the Father need passion. They need emotion from the heart. And the Father's love is even greater than that of a friend.

Ponder that for a moment. The friend in this story finally relented to the incessant crying and knocking of his friend. *How much more* would a loving, good Heavenly Father, who is also our close friend, give us the good gifts we desire?

This truth is clearly seen in Luke 11:5-13. It's the story of a friend who unexpectedly visits another friend at midnight. The visitor was famished. But the friend whom he was visiting was in a difficult dilemma. He didn't have anything to give him to eat. Since hospitality was highly valued in that culture, it was unthinkable for a host to have nothing to eat for a guest. But his cupboard was empty. He had no food.

What could he do? He went next door and started banging on the door of another friend to ask for food.

But this decision produced another set of obstacles.

It was midnight. This other neighbor and his family had already gone to bed.

In that day, it was not unusual to have what is called a “family bed.” That meant that they all, kids included, were sleeping together. For the father to awaken, get out of bed, and likely awaken his entire family was a potential debacle. Imagine little ones, already having had a hard time going to sleep. Now awakening. The baby starts to cry. The other children become cranky. The wife grumpily asks her husband, “And are *you* going to get them back to sleep?”

That’s probably why the friend initially ignored his other friend’s persistent knocks and passionate cries for help. He and his family were already in bed. It had been arduous to get the kids asleep. Getting up would throw the entire family into a tizzy. It wasn’t worth it.

Therefore, as the knocking and shouting increased, there were only crickets on the other side of the door.

But with each passing second of silence, the banging and shouting only heightened. He knew his friend was inside. He had to have an answer. He desperately needed the bread. His reputation was at stake. He wouldn’t give up.

The friend inside finally gave in. He reluctantly

relented and got up – perhaps to grumpy kids and a frustrated wife. Nevertheless, he got up and answered his friend's request.

Why? Because of the desperate friend's passionate knocking.

I see three words that describe the friend's passionate pleas: fervor, impudence, and persistence. Look at these emotions and ask if your prayers mirror them.

Fervor

The humiliation of not having food for a traveling friend was unimaginable. It was a social embarrassment and an obstacle that *had* to be overcome.

That's why the knocks from the friend on his neighbor's door couldn't have been a quiet tap – especially as moments of silence passed. His knocks had to be filled with fervor. Intense pounding. Loud noise. Louder by the second.

Until the door was finally creaked open.

God loves fervent prayers.

In the book of James, the author wrote that the fervent prayer of a righteous person avails much (James

5:16). Then James used Elijah as an example of a fervent man of prayer.

Elijah was a man with a sinful, fallen human nature just like ours. He had no more influence with the Father than anyone else. Yet he prayed fervently for rain not to come, and it didn't come for three and a half years. Then he prayed fervently for rain to come again, and it came (James 5:17-18).

We see this same kind of fervor in the friend at midnight. Paint a picture in your mind of what this looked like. He was desperate. His need was great. He had to have an answer. Therefore, he knocked on his neighbor's door...over and over again...with fervent *passion*.

Is there fervent passion in your prayers? Or is there a quiet, milquetoast attitude within your heart?

Think here of blind Bartimaeus. He was begging for money when he heard that Jesus was passing by (Mark 10:46-52). He knew the stories of Jesus' wonder-working power. He believed that Jesus could heal him.

So, he *cried out* to Jesus. He didn't whisper. He yelled – fervently. Jesus' entourage tried to silence him. Was he intimidated? Absolutely not! He cried out even more passionately until he got Jesus' attention.

Imagine your child or loved one getting ready to step off a curb into the path of an oncoming truck. Only your warning cry will save him. *Look out!* That's what you would yell. And I'm certain it would be a piercing shout. The greater your desire, the louder the yell. And the more persistent you would be if no attention was given to you.

Bartimaeus' cry was similarly fervent. It was repeatedly loud. He had a heartfelt need.

Bartimaeus then threw away all his old clothes and stumbled blindly toward Jesus. It was a bold move. He needed his garb to gather his daily coins. His old life as a beggar was now gone. If Jesus didn't heal his eyes, there would be no way he could ever recover his clothes. It was a risky faith.

I once met one of the great Wallendas. He told me that he had to make a bold move to become one of the world's greatest tight-rope walkers. What was it? It was when he removed all his safety nets. Only then did he become great.

That's what Bartimaeus did. He removed all safety nets. And it was only then that his faith became great.

Jesus then asked Bartimaeus what he wanted. He responded that he wanted to see.

Jesus said, “*See!*” One word from Jesus, and Bartimaeus’ sight was given to him. If God spoke one word to your problem, as He did with creation when the earth and heavens were formed, your problems would cease.

Bartimaeus believed this. Do you?

But this miracle could only occur if Bartimaeus first cried out fervently to Jesus. It was a kind of prayer.

The friend could only receive food if he fervently pounded on the door of his neighbor.

Does *fervor* define the passion in your heart in prayer?

Impudence

The word *impudence* in these verses is the Greek word *anaideia*. This is the only time it is used in the New Testament. Therefore, it must have a special significance.

In all its other usages in ancient literature, *anaideia* means “a lack of sensitivity to what is proper,” “impertinence,” or “impudence.” It describes someone being without *aidos* – “respect” or “modesty” (from the ESV study notes on Luke 11:5-13).

If you look at online synonyms for impudence, the word becomes even more interesting. Here are many of them: insolence, audacity, cockiness, cheekiness, sass, brass, boldness, and swagger. For those who know Hebrew, perhaps the most interesting synonym may be the word *chutzpah*.

If I, or my brother or sister, could ever get my dad to promise us something, we were certain that it would be done. Guaranteed. A fact.

That's why Dad tried to be very careful with saying "I promise" to us kids when we asked him for something. He knew that we would hold him to his word – as we should. He was certain that we would come back to him and say, "But you said so. You gave us your word!" We would exercise appropriate impudence with him. We would approach him with a swagger and cockiness because he had promised it.

Our prayers to our Father should be permeated with, "But You said."

You said, Lord, that You would restore my damaged soul (Psalm 23:3).

You said that You would be with me in the floods and fire (Isaiah 43:1-2).

You said that I could ask You anything in

Your name (John 14:13).

You said that no weapon formed against me will prosper (Isaiah 54:17).

You said that I am more than a conqueror through You (Romans 8:37).

Look at your problem. Find a promise in God's Word. Then believe. Practice the prayer of faith. Be fervent and impudent. Don't give up. This kind of fervent impudence moves God's heart. It ignites miracles.

The friend who went to his neighbor was shameless. Talk about passion! He went to his friend with an improper, impertinent, insolent, audacious, cocky, cheeky, sassy, brassy, bold swagger! He expressed total *chutzpah* in his passionate knocking. He boldly expected an answer from his friend. Silence just wasn't an option.

Jesus' point in using *anaideia* to describe the friend's passionate request was this: If even a human will respond to a friend's needy request in this way, shouldn't God's children go similarly to a loving Father in Heaven with any need they have?

God is more gracious than any friend we might have. He is more giving than any neighbor next to us. He is more loving than anyone we may know on this side of creation.

And if a neighbor friend finally answers after impudent knocking, *how much more* will a Heavenly Father who desires to give good gifts to His children?

Also, always remember that our God never slumbers or sleeps (Psalm 121:4). He never takes a day off. He is always with us, by our side, fighting for us, and ready to respond to our needs.

Persistence

Some other interpreters believe that *anaideia* means “persistence” here. The problem is that there is no other known source in antiquity expressing that meaning.

However, the idea of persistent prayer does fit the context of Luke 11:5-13. But it’s found in a different place than the word *anaideia*.

Jesus adjured His followers to ask (a common term for prayer), to seek (the God who is also seeking us), and to knock (on the gates of God’s treasure vault) in verses 9-10. These verbs are in the imperfect tense in the Greek, thus implying a continual asking, seeking, and knocking. An appropriate translation would be, “Keep on asking. Keep on seeking. Keep on knocking.”

In other words, Jesus did not want us to give up when there is silence after we ask the first time. Ask repeatedly. Keep on seeking, even when it feels like nothing has happened. Keep on knocking on the Father's door, even when it seems He is sleeping.

The Father knows the value of persistence for our faith. It is essential to develop a forged, steely character within us. We learn how to keep trusting Him no matter what.

And it helps us not turn the Father into a celestial genie whose purpose is to always serve us, not us serve Him.

We appreciate this truth in the natural world: An athlete goes through a series of different injuries. But he persists. Eventually he overcomes them all and succeeds. We applaud. And ESPN's 30 for 30 does a special on the athlete's perseverance.

The Father wants a passionate persistence in our prayers. He wants us to develop a firm faith in Him. When Jesus returns, that's what He wants to find in all our hearts: a forged faith, one that believes delay is not His denial (Luke 18:8).

Even if the Father's answer may not be exactly what we want, we know that He is working everything for our good and His glory (Romans 8:28; 1 Corinthians 2:9). That too is a strong faith!

Here is one more insight. As you pray persistently, focus less on what you are asking for and more on your faith that the Father will answer. Repeat less the promise and more, “*But I believe You will answer. It’s coming. And I know the answer will be good because You are good, Lord. And my situation isn’t over until it’s good because of Your goodness.*”

Constantly remind yourself that God answers all our prayers with yes, wait, or there’s a better plan. We love the *yes* from God. We persist through the wait, believing that God is still working in *His* time. And we must trust His promise for a better plan if we don’t receive exactly what we want when we want it.

How do you know that you are praying a persistent and passionate prayer of faith? There will be peace in your heart. It’s the peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7). It’s Jesus’ personal presence in your heart as you wait. You just *know* beyond any doubt that God will one day answer. It’s *His* promise. Therefore, He must answer. And it’ll be good because He is good.

Until God does answer, we choose to be persistent with our prayers of *faith*. We remind God of our faith in His promise. And we wait expectantly.

Final Thoughts

Prayer needs passion. Going through religious motions without emotion is meaningless.

Ask yourself these questions:

1. Do my prayers have fervor?
2. Do my prayers have impudence, sass, and a swagger?
3. Do my prayers have persistence?

3-Word prayers are a way to help you pray. They are simple, concise, and memorable. They are a way to pray more effectively throughout the day. They can be powerful and useful.

But if any prayers you ask, including 3-word prayers, don't possess the passionate, emotional qualities of the friend who needed food from his neighbor at midnight, they most likely never go higher than your ceiling. They fall by your bed and melt like a snowflake on a summer's day.

Please learn to use 3-word prayers. They can be a helpful, new way to pray. But make them fervent, impudent, and persistent.

After all, it was Jesus Himself who taught us to pray this way.

And the Lord of this universe should know about the power of passionate prayer.

3-Word Prayers in the Bible

3-Word prayers are easy, concise, pointed, and effective. Successful prayer warriors can now possess a new weapon in their arsenal of spiritual warfare. You now have a sharp dagger at your disposal for close hand-to-hand combat with the enemy. Swords or lances will do you no good in certain battles with the enemy. You need a smaller, effective weapon to defeat your foe.

That dagger is the 3-word prayer. It can be quickly plunged into the enemy's heart.

It is found in the Bible. Some of God's greatest saints used it effectively. Here are a few of those examples.

Queen Esther

A genocide of the Jews was on the horizon. An evil man named Haman had manipulated the king to sign

an edict to permit a mass slaughter of the Jews. It was sealed in the law of the Medes and the Persians. That means it was unalterable.

Queen Esther, a Jew, was made aware of the heinous plot. She was convinced by her uncle Mordecai that the only hope for her people was for her to appear before the king and seek mercy for her people. To find a way to revoke the law.

But she knew that an unannounced, unexpected appearance from anyone before the king, including the queen, might cause their own death. Sovereign monarchs in that day wanted to control everything – even the daily guest list and visitors.

That's when Queen Esther prayed two 3-word prayers. *"If I perish...then I perish"* (Esther 4:16).

Notice the two 3-word prayers.

"If I perish..." She knew that she might die appearing before the king unannounced. It was a risk – but one she must take. She had counted the cost of faithfulness. Her decision to try to save her people had been made.

"Then I perish..." This part of Queen Esther's 3-word prayer was not quiet resignation. Rather, it was a faith declaration. If she died, she died. There was no turning back. She had decided to obey her God, not her fears.

I wonder if Queen Esther incessantly repeated these two 3-word prayers throughout the night preceding her entrance before the king. And as she made her way toward and into the king's presence, surely fear tried to rear its ugly head. But she moved forward with faith, knowing full well her potential destiny.

Queen Esther had already given up her right to live. What else could the king do to her?

But the king did receive her. She pleaded her case, and he relented. He found a way to circumvent the law. Evil Haman was hung on the gallows he had built for the Jews, ensnared in his own treachery. He reaped what he had sown. The Jews were saved. And both Esther and Mordecai were elevated to positions of grand influence in the Persian empire for years to come.

All because she practiced the power of 3-word prayers. Queen Esther had given up her rights for anything on this side of eternity.

When we let go, we see God holding us. When we know that we are holding on by a thread, we see that God is the one who knitted the thread together.

If I die is a prayer that unleashes power from Heaven. It is giving up our right for anything.

It's an example people of faith would be wise to follow.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were three young Jewish men who worked in the court of Nebuchadnezzar. They were gifted and astute. That's why Nebuchadnezzar had elevated them to positions of influence and authority.

Nebuchadnezzar used religion as a way to unify his subjects. He believed that if all worshiped the same gods then they would be more loyal to his edicts.

That was the motivation for Nebuchadnezzar to build a large golden idol for all to worship. He passed a law that everyone *must* bow down and worship it. There were no exemptions. If any did not, they would be thrown into a fiery furnace.

This mandate from the king posed an enormous problem for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. As faithful Jews, they loved and worshiped only the one true God. He was their life, hope, and passion. To bow down to the golden idol represented apostasy. They could not do so. They refused to do so.

When Nebuchadnezzar heard of their obstinance,

he knew what had to be done. Although he greatly admired these three Jewish leaders, he could not allow their disobedience to infect others with a rebellious spirit.

Nebuchadnezzar ordered that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be thrown into the fiery furnace. It was such a hot fire that even the guards' eyebrows were singed with the heat when the door was opened.

What was Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's response to the king's edict?

First, they recognized the God of the impossible. They told King Nebuchadnezzar that God was able to save them from the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:17). They believed that God could say one word on their behalf and the flames would be doused.

However, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego also knew that God might not intervene on their behalf. That's when they prayed together a 3-word prayer: "*And if not...*" (Daniel 3:18). If they were thrown into the fiery furnace and God chose not to deliver them, they still would never bend their knee to any Babylonian gods.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego *were* thrown into the fire. Astonishingly, a figure like a son of God appeared. Personally, I believe that this was a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus. He protected them from the fire.

And when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego finally departed from the furnace, there was no smell of smoke on their clothes! God had completely protected and rescued them from every evil attack. He had brought them safely from the danger.

Don't forget their simple, powerful, poignant 3-word prayer: "*And if not.*" It was probably prayed repeatedly as they stepped into the fires. And God met them there.

During World War II, the Brits were being incessantly bombed by the Germans. Hitler's motivation was to bomb Britain into submission. They would become so weak that Germany's army could cross the English Channel and easily conquer the island.

As the bombs fell, the Brits fled into bomb shelters. Many Brits were still under the influence of a deep Christian faith that had been transmitted to them through history. Christian themes and Bible stories were still lodged into their psyche and memory.

As Hitler tried to create fear, the Brits would recite among themselves a common prayer: "And if not." They knew the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They remembered and recognized this 3-word prayer, and they adopted it as their own.

Essentially, the Brits were saying, "We know that God is able to deliver our beloved island from the

evil power of the Nazis. All things are possible with God. He is able to do more than we could ever imagine.” That was their faith declaration.

The Brits then concluded their faith statement with the 3-word prayer, “And if not.” If God should choose not to deliver them? They would never bow their knees to godless Nazism. They would never submit to Hitler’s agenda.

Some Christians call it *the prayer of relinquishment*. It’s the consummate prayer of surrender. It is a prayer of enormous power.

This kind of 3-word prayer is an example for all people of faith. We will love God first, with all our heart. We seek first His kingdom. And we will never bow our knee to any false god.

It’s the kind of prayer that allows God to suddenly appear and protect us from the enemy’s fiery darts and rescue us from his evil attacks.

Isaiah

I’m envious of Isaiah. God gave him a glimpse of Heaven in Isaiah 6. Can you imagine what that scene resembled? It’s probably impossible to do so without

an actual visit to Heaven ourselves.

There were seraphim and cherubim surrounding God's throne. They cried to one another: "*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory*" (v. 3).

The foundation of Heaven shook at the sound of God's voice.

Standing before God's perfect holiness, Isaiah could only tremble in his sin. He cried out, "*Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts*" (v. 5).

One of the seraphim then flew from God's altar and touched Isaiah's mouth with a purifying coal. The seraphim declared that Isaiah's guilt before God was now forgiven and removed. His sin had been atoned for (vs. 6-7).

God then asked, "*Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?*" (v. 8). (I believe the "us" here is the holy Trinity: one God in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.) He was looking for someone to go to Israel and confront the sin of His chosen people.

What was Isaiah's response to God's question? He prayed a 3-word prayer: "*Here I am*" (v. 8). He then

offered himself to be sent as God's prophet. Perhaps he offered another 3-word prayer by saying, "I will go."

Isaiah's prayer was simple, concise, and poignant. God was pleased. It's a 3-word prayer He yearns to hear from the lips of all His forgiven saints.

Isaiah opened his heart to God. "Here I am," he prayed. "Please send me."

These were 3-word prayers that thrilled the heart of God. It's a prayer that will always be answered by God.

They should be prayers that all followers of Jesus regularly pray.

King David

The psalms are replete with 3-word prayers. King David repeatedly used them. I would invite the reader to go through all 150 psalms and note how many 3-word prayers there are.

I went through the first 30 plus and noted these, occasionally changing a few words in different verses in the psalms to show how they can be easily adapted to 3-word prayers:

1. "Arise, O God" – Psalm 3:7 – This is a 3-word

prayer asking God to fight my battles for me. Our battles belong to Him.

2. “*Hear my prayer*” – Psalm 4:1 – This 3-word prayer is a prayer of humility, asking the Lord God of the universe to hear the plea of a humble subject.
3. “*Deliver my life*” – Psalm 6:4 – A 3-word prayer for deliverance from problems and enemies. God desires to be our deliverer.
4. “*Not be moved*” – Psalm 10:6 – A 3-word prayer that is a faith declaration. It means that no matter what happens, my faith will not be moved or shaken.
5. “*I take refuge*” – Psalm 11:1 – A 3-word prayer acknowledging that God is my refuge. To Him, I run with all my problems.
6. “*Save, O Lord*” – Psalm 12:1 – A 3-word prayer asking God to save me from a difficult situation or enemies who are against me.
7. “*How long, Lord?*” – Psalm 13:1 – This is a 3-word prayer from the heart of a saint who has been waiting a long time for an answer

to prayer. God is not offended by this prayer.

8. *“I love You”* – Psalm 18:1 – A 3-word prayer God loves to hear from us. He never tires of hearing it. It covers the first part of the Great Commandment: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and might.
9. *“You’re my Shepherd”* – Psalm 23:1 – A 3-word prayer that makes the opening line of the Shepherd’s psalm very personal.
10. *“Restore my soul”* – Psalm 23:3 – A 3-word prayer becomes a promise from the Shepherd that He desires to restore all our famished, broken souls.
11. *“You are holy”* – Psalm 22:3 – A 3-word prayer that recognizes a chief characteristic of God. We need to remember that God is God and we are not God.
12. *“I trust You”* – Psalm 25:2 – This 3-word prayer is another one that God loves to hear from His people. It’s a childlike statement of faith and trust, believing that God will take care of us.

13. “*Vindicate us, Lord*” – Psalm 26:1 – A 3-word prayer that puts vengeance in God’s hands but still trusts Him for His day of vindication and justice for us.
14. “*Teach me, Lord*” – Psalm 27:11 – A 3-word prayer that expresses a teachable heart – one of the chief earmarks of humility.
15. “*You’re my God*” – Psalm 31:14 – This 3-word prayer expresses a belief that God is not removed from my life, but personally involved in every area.

The list could go on and on. As you read through the rest of the psalms, you will observe many more. The psalmist knew the power of 3-word prayers. He repeatedly used them.

And if King David, a man after God’s own heart (1 Samuel 13:14), often used 3-word prayers, shouldn’t we?

The Centurion

A centurion, a Roman soldier in charge of 100 men, loved his servant who had fallen ill. He knew of Jesus’ miraculous power. He wanted Jesus to come and heal his servant (Luke 7:1-10).

The centurion sent a Jewish delegation of leaders to Jesus to see if He would come. They told Him that the centurion loved Israel and was a friend. He had helped in the construction of the synagogue in the city. He may even have conscripted his 100 soldiers to construct the building.

Jesus started toward the centurion's house. While going, another group approached Him. The situation seemed impossible. But they gave to Jesus a personal message from the centurion.

This group told Jesus that the centurion knew what it was like to have and be under authority. If he told any under his command to do something, they were compelled to do it. Similarly, he saw that Jesus had authority over everything in the universe.

It was then that the centurion spoke his 3-word prayer. He said to Jesus, "*Say the word.*" He recognized that if Jesus spoke just one word of healing to his servant, he would be healed.

Perhaps the centurion knew from studying the Hebrew Scripture (remember his love for Israel), that God spoke one word in Genesis 1 and all the world came into existence. He believed Jesus had sovereignty over everything in this world – including sickness.

Therefore, the centurion stated a 3-word prayer to

Jesus: “*Say the word.*”

Jesus marveled at his great faith. He had never seen faith like it among any Jews. And He spoke the word.

The servant was healed.

A 3-word prayer that we can say to Jesus is, “Say the word.” It is the consummate faith declaration. We are certain that Jesus is able to solve any issue in our lives by stating one word. If He does, our mountain will move.

And Jesus loves it when we express prayers of faith to Him.

The Blind Man

In John 9, Jesus healed a blind man. It was a marvelous miracle.

The Jewish leaders went to the blind man, now healed, for an explanation. He couldn't give one, except that once he was blind and now he could see. His personal testimony could not be argued. How could it be? It was what had happened to him.

Over the next hours and days, the now-healed blind man went from believing that Jesus was just a good

man, to a prophet, to finally succumbing to his commitment that Jesus was the Messiah – God in human flesh.

Upon this realization, he prayed a simple but profound 3-word prayer. He looked at Jesus and said, “*Lord, I believe*” (John 9:38). It’s a prayer Jesus loves to hear. I doubt we can ever pray it too often.

On those days when doubt seems to overcome faith, pray like the once-blind man. Imagine looking Jesus in the eye and saying, “Lord, I believe. No matter how much darkness or confusion may enshroud me, Lord, I believe.”

It’s a prayer Jesus wants all His followers to pray.

It’s a prayer that Jesus loves to hear His followers pray.

A Desperate Father

A father had a demon-possessed child (Mark 9:17-27). He approached Jesus for help. He began with an “*if*” Jesus was able. Jesus responded with a 3-word reprimand: “*If you can!*” He then told the father that all things are possible for one who believes (another possible 3-word prayer: “All things possible”).

Immediately the father of the child cried out (a kind of prayer), “*I believe.*” Then came his powerful, poignant,

simple, and concise 3-word prayer: *“Help my unbelief”* (v. 24).

Sometimes we don't have enough faith. Circumstances overwhelm us. Doubt destroys us. Unbelief consumes us. And we have to cry out to God, “Help my unbelief.”

Guess what? Jesus isn't offended. He wasn't offended with the father, and He won't be with us. He loves honest, heartfelt prayers – even ones that express a lack of faith.

Immediately after the father's humble, honest confession, Jesus exorcized the demon from the child and exhorted it never to return.

The demon never did.

Jesus then lifted up the child by the hand. New life pulsed through his body – all because of the simple 3-word prayer of his father.

Jesus is ready and willing to help us confront our unbelief and give us more faith. He knows we are mere dust. He realizes we are weak. He knows that we need His strength.

We simply have to ask...a 3-word prayer: “Help my unbelief.”

Paul

Paul knew that the Christian's war was not against flesh and blood, but against powers and principalities of the dark world (Ephesians 6:10-20). We are fighting a spiritual war against demonic hordes.

That's why Paul adjured all believers to put on the armor of God. It is necessary to defend ourselves against the enemy and win.

I would suggest that 3-word prayers can daily remind us of each piece of the armor. Every day, simply pray, "Lord Jesus, I dress myself with..."

1. Belt of truth
2. Breastplate of righteousness
3. Shoes of peace
4. Shield of faith
5. Helmet of salvation
6. Sword of Word
7. Pray without ceasing

Christians can use 3-word prayers to pray each part of the full armor of God over us. And our children. And others we love who are being demonically assaulted. It's an easy way to remember each piece that needs to be our attire every day.

Jesus wants His followers to win against the devil's wiles.

Jesus

The disciples were in a boat on the sea of Galilee in the middle of a storm. Jesus had placed them in the boat. He knew that the storm was coming.

When the storm did come, the disciples were overcome with fear. They started bailing water. But they couldn't overcome the storm in their own strength. They rushed to Jesus. *"Don't You care?"*

Jesus spoke a 3-word prayer to the storm: *"Peace, be still!"* (Mark 4:39). He then confronted their unbelief: *"Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"* (v. 40).

Did the disciples have the authority to calm the storm? Jesus gave them authority over the enemy and all his power (Luke 9:1-2). Could they have spoken this 3-word prayer for themselves with the same

result? Was that why Jesus admonished them for their lack of faith?

Is this a power and authority we now possess? Is this at least partly what Jesus meant when He said that we would have even greater power than He (John 14:12)?

The bottom line: Jesus occasionally used 3-word prayers. They can possess a potent power when properly used.

Paul adjured his followers to imitate him as he imitated Jesus (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Jesus did.

And, as someone once said, “If it’s good enough for Jesus, it’s good enough for me.”

Two Other Biblical Examples

Don’t forget these two Biblical examples of 3-word prayers.

In His Name

From Jesus’ teaching, we need to remember to pray the 3-word prayer of praying “*in Jesus’ name*.” He taught us, “Whatever you ask in My name, I’ll do it

for you. If you ask Me anything in prayer, believing, you will receive it” (John 14:13-14).

Christians can't demand something in prayer from Jesus that is outside His will. But if it *is* His will, then there is something exceedingly powerful when we pray in Jesus' name. Jesus said the same thing in other places as well (John 15:16; 16:23-24).

If I gave you a check and signed my name to it, you'd have access to my limited bank account. You'd be able to withdraw some money. But if the Lord of the universe gave you a check and signed it with *His* name, then you'd have the ability to invade the treasure vault of Heaven.

That's partially the meaning of praying in the powerful name of Jesus.

The name of Jesus is above all names. At His name, every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord over all (Philippians 2:9-11).

Jesus' mighty name needs to be used in prayer. Jesus said so. Peter said it's the only name that grants salvation (Acts 4:12). Paul said that Jesus' name is available to all His children everywhere (1 Corinthians 1:2).

Let's accompany all our 3-word prayers with *in Jesus' name*.

There is something amazingly powerful in that name.

Maranatha

Another 3-word prayer that Christians are adjured to pray is found in the Aramaic word *maranatha* that is used in 1 Corinthians 16:22 and Revelation 22:20.

The simple translation of *maranatha* into English is a 3-word prayer: “Come, Lord Jesus.” The early church used it repeatedly. Threatened by persecution, suffering, trials, and tribulations, Christians would long for Jesus’ return.

These saints would often pray, “*Maranatha*.”

In the *Didache*, a catechetical study in the early church, *Maranatha* was given by the church fathers as a way to pray. This study was comprised to help Christians know what to believe and how to live properly for the Lord.

They taught that the prayer “*Maranatha*” should be a regular 3-word prayer in the lives of Christians. It was meant as a teaching for us as well.

As the world becomes darker and questions and doubts ransack our minds, we should pray, “Come, Lord Jesus.” One day He will. He *will* return and

make all wrongs right, all evil good, and all despair healed.

“In Jesus’ name” and “Come, Lord Jesus” are two more 3-word prayers found in the Bible that need to be added to the Christian’s arsenal in prayer.

They are two prayers Jesus loves to hear us utter.

Final Thoughts

I would imagine that there are many other Biblical examples of 3-word prayers. Most likely, as you, the reader, continue to ponder and study God’s Word, you will be able to discover them.

Please do so! Please find them!

But, mostly, please pray them. The great Biblical characters and writers did. Jesus’ earthly followers did. The great saints through the ages did. Jesus did as well.

And so should you.

It’s a different way to pray.

But it seems to get results!

Praying 3-Word Prayers

Christians can use 3-word prayers based on each line of the Disciples' Prayer as one way to pray. In Chapter One, I've given examples of how that can be done daily.

But there are many other ways that Christians can pierce the enemy's dark places by using 3-word prayers.

When I preached on the power of 3-word prayers, at the end of the service, we had people yell out their own 3-word prayers. It was a staggering moment. The room was filled with the cries and pleas of God's people for their needs.

Since then, many people have begun to adapt their prayer lives to using this simple, yet precise, new way to pray.

One such person is Nancy Elam. She had a radical

life transformation when she met Jesus. She went immediately from darkness to light. Her life was forever changed. She loves Jesus with all her heart, soul, mind, and might.

Since devoting her life to Jesus, she has several passions. Along with her family, another passion is her ministry of compassion called *A Taste of Grace*. She has taken her love of cooking to care for others. On her website, she has devised a menu of sumptuous dishes. People can order what they desire, and Nancy will prepare it at an affordable price.

These meals are then taken to people with newborns, the infirmed, those just home from the hospital, or families in a tough strait – whatever. It's Nancy's way of serving others – especially those in need. She doesn't profit from the ministry. It is her way of sharing a gift and passion that she possesses.

Another passion for Nancy is 3-word prayers.

After hearing my message on 3-word prayers, she went home and immediately wrote out 30 of them! She told me how easy it was to list them out. She now devotes herself daily and regularly to prayer – and more specifically to using 3-word prayers.

I asked Nancy to give me examples of 3-word prayers she uses. I wasn't prepared for how many she uses.

But here are examples of how she goes to her “secret place” and prays daily 3-word prayers.

RELENTLESSLY PURSUE FAMILY

BE MY STRENGTH

RENEW MY STRENGTH

KEEP HOLDING ON

MAKE ME WISE

BE MY EVERYTHING

BE MY PEACE

BE MY JOY

BE MY EYES

LIGHT MY WAY

TRANSFORM MY LIFE

CONTROL MY WORDS

GUARD MY LIPS

ABANDON OLD WAYS

RESURRECT NEW LIFE

BREAK MY CHAINS
CONFESS MY SINS
TURN TO YOU
FORGIVE ME, LORD
TAKE AWAY TEMPTATION
CHANGE MY DESIRES
BE A BLESSING
OPEN THEIR EYES
GROW THEIR FAITH
HELP MY UNBELIEF
SAVE MY FAMILY
KIDS BE FERVENT
TRANSFORM THEIR HEARTS
MAKE ME BOLD
SPEAK THROUGH ME
HAVE YOUR WAY

SEEK YOUR FACE
MAKE GODLY FRIENDS
CAST OUT FEAR
CLOTHE WITH DIGNITY
ACCEPT YOUR TRUTH
TELL THE TRUTH
YOU ARE SOVEREIGN
NOT GROW WEARY
YOU HEAR ME
YOU LOVE ME
YOU MADE ME
CHRIST IN ME
NAME ABOVE NAMES
I SURRENDER ALL
NO TURNING BACK

And there were many others on her list.

I know Jesus not only heard but also responded to Nancy's 3-word prayers because of the great faith with which she prayed.

And here is the 3-word prayer that I may use more than any other one.

In my opinion, it's the nuclear option in prayer. It carries more destruction for the enemy than any other prayer. The devil hates it when we use it. He quivers when he hears it. He stomps his feet in disgust when it's uttered. When spoken from the heart, it possesses eternal power and authority.

In all situations, good or bad, always pray this 3-word prayer:

THANK YOU, JESUS.

Christians are called to give thanks to God in all things (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Not in a few, some, or most things. But in *all* things.

Christians are not to complain or grumble when life doesn't go our way. That shows God our unbelief. God despises grumbling. It's an offense to His ears. Christians are to do *everything* without grumbling or complaining (Philippians 2:14). Our prayers and supplications should always be accompanied with thanksgiving (Philippians 4:6-7).

The antidote to grumbling and complaining is thanksgiving in *all* things. In the good and the bad. Why should we do it? This theological and Biblical insight should continually guide us: If God controls all, He is using *everything* in our lives for our good and His glory.

Giving thanks thwarts the evil one's desire to get us to choose unbelief and doubt. It keeps us from grumbling and complaining – again, something God has no patience for. It takes the stinger out of life's disappointments.

Giving thanks in all things motivates and encourages faith. It grants the great gift of contentment (Philippians 4:11-12). It is our way of saying that we are certain God not only controls all, but He is using all for good (Romans 8:28).

That's because God *is* good and His mercies *do* endure forever.

Daily use this 3-word prayer: THANK YOU, JESUS. It's a prayer of complete trust. It's a way of focusing not on what we *don't* have, but on what we *do* have.

It's a prayer that RESISTS THE DEVIL.

When you do, the enemy flees (James 4:7).

Final Thoughts

Now it's your turn, followers of Jesus. I have given you a concise, precise, and simple way to pray. Remember that Jesus said to His followers, "When you pray," not "If you pray." He assumed His followers would pray.

Jesus knew the importance and power of prayer. He knew that His disciples would need this potent weaponry in fighting the enemy and his legions of demons.

Again, I'm convinced that 3-word prayers are like a dagger in your hand in close hand-to-hand combat with the evil one. It is a swift, offensive weapon to be used when we wrestle with him. 3-word prayers can pierce the enemy's lies quickly and deeply. They make him take a step backward, buckle, stagger, and eventually leave.

I hope you'll use 3-word prayers in your spiritual arsenal.

Many are – with great confidence and effectiveness.

Let me leave you with these two, final 3-word prayers for your edification.

Always end your prayers with this: AMEN AND

AMEN (Psalm 89:52). *Amen* means SO BE IT.

SO BE IT and SO BE IT – the way to end all our 3-word prayers.

May they all be answered soon!

To God alone and always belongs all the glory.



moments of
HOPE
CHURCH

Moments of Hope Church exists to make disciples who “Know, Grow, and Go” in the name of Jesus. We believe that the Gospel of Jesus is the hope of the world, and we want to share this good news with everyone we can.



David and Marilyn Chadwick

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**Calm my heart.
Save my child.
Release this addiction.**

Repeat your 3-word prayers over and over. When doubts arise, confront them with these simple prayers. Memorize them. When the forces of darkness bring fear or anxiety, use them. Repeat the width, breadth, height, and depth of His love for you. And watch prayer work and fears flee because "perfect love expels all fear."



"I'm convinced that 3-word prayers are like a dagger in your hand while in close combat with the evil one. I hope you'll use 3-word prayers as part of your spiritual arsenal." - David Chadwick

David Chadwick graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill with a degree in Communications. While there, he played basketball under legendary coach Dean Smith and was a part of the 1969 Final Four team.

He also holds a graduate degree in Counseling from the University of Florida as well as both a Master of Divinity and Doctorate of Ministry from Columbia Theological Seminary.

David has been a pastor for over forty years. He presently leads Moments of Hope Church (MOHC) in Charlotte, North Carolina. Along with a radio ministry, he has written nine books.

David is married to the love of his life, Marilyn. They have three children and eight grandchildren.

