



# *Lord,* TEACH US *to pray*



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# *Lora,* TEACH US *to pray*

CLARENCE SEXTON

FIRST EDITION

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AUGUST 2023



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*Royal Reading*

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**SUNDAY SCHOOL AND  
BIBLE TEACHING SERIES**

**LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY**

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Crown Christian Publications

Powell, Tennessee • 37849

[CrownChristianPublications.com](http://CrownChristianPublications.com)

[FAITHfortheFAMILY.com](http://FAITHfortheFAMILY.com)

ISBN: 978-158981-810-1

Design and layout by Ryan Keiter, Sarah Sullivan, and Tatiana Hester

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Printed in the United States of America



# *Dedication*

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This volume is dedicated to Miss Lucy. My wife's mother lived with us for several years before she went home to be with the Lord. I miss hearing her pray. As she prayed, she opened her heart to God, and you could sense the reality of her relationship with the Lord.

*Clarence Sutton*  
*Feb 5:42*



# Foreword

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The aim of this book is to glorify the Lord. Whether or not we have learned these lessons cannot be measured by an academic test. We will know that we have learned these lessons when we speak to God in prayer and have our prayers answered.

God hears and answers prayer! The idea that we serve a reluctant God who must be convinced to come to our aid could not be further from the truth. Our loving heavenly Father wants us to accept His invitation to come into His divine presence and meet Him in prayer.

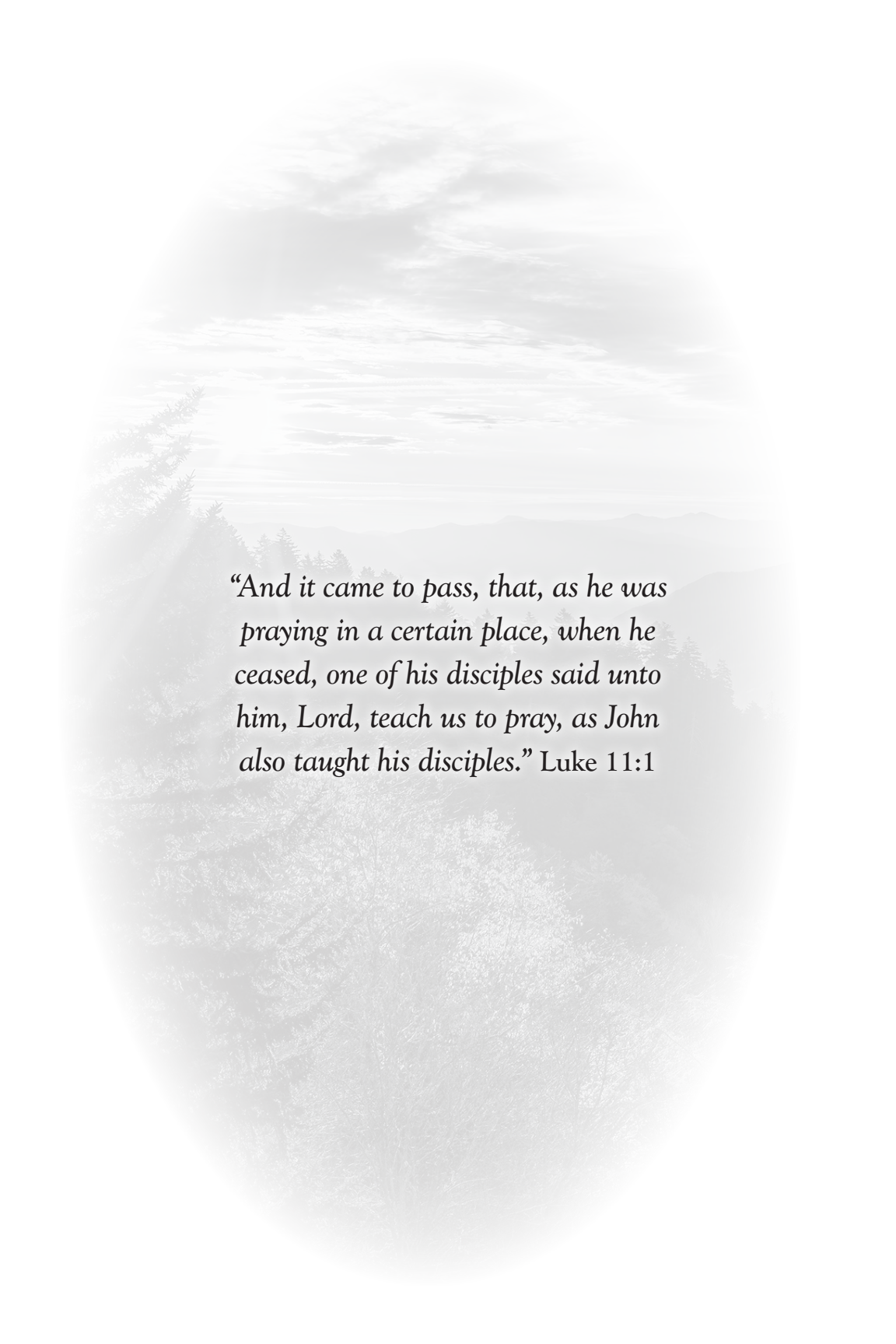
Charles Spurgeon said, “The habit of prayer is blessed, but the spirit of prayer is better.” Prayer cannot substitute for faith; it is an expression of our faith. The object of our faith is the Lord Jesus Christ! As we study these prayer lessons, may we learn to live in the spirit of prayer.





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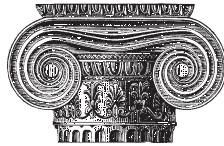
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*“And it came to pass, that, as he was  
praying in a certain place, when he  
ceased, one of his disciples said unto  
him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John  
also taught his disciples.” Luke 11:1*

## CHAPTER ONE

# PRAYER LESSONS



he bigger God becomes in your life, the greater things for which you will trust Him. Learn that He is able. When the disciples saw the Lord Jesus in prayer, their hearts were stirred. They knew that they could never accomplish what they should in the Lord's work without learning to call on God for His aid. From their hearts they pleaded, "*Lord, teach us to pray.*"

The Bible says in Luke 11:1-13,

*And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is*

## *Lord, Teach Us to Pray*

*indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.*

*And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.*

*And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

Notice the expression found in the first verse, “*Teach us to pray.*” The aim of this book is to glorify the Lord. Whether or not we have learned these lessons cannot be measured by an academic test. We will know that we have learned these lessons when we speak to God in prayer and have our prayers answered.

God hears and answers prayer! The idea that we serve a reluctant God who must be convinced to come to our aid could



not be further from the truth. Our loving heavenly Father wants us to accept His invitation to come into His divine presence and meet Him in prayer.

Seeing the Lord Jesus in prayer stirred the hearts of His disciples. They were not asking for a “how-to” prayer lesson. They were seeking motivation. So they spoke from their hearts, “*Lord, teach us to pray.*” Note these lessons that the Lord gave.

## THE PERSON to WHOM WE PRAY

The Bible says in Luke 11:2, “*Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.*” Our Lord Jesus first emphasized that we must know the Person to whom we pray. As we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord, we will come to expect greater things from God in prayer.

When you hold your Bible in your hand, you have God’s revelation of Himself to us. The Lord in His Word writes to us of Himself. This revealing of God to us in written form is a progressive revelation.

The book of Genesis reveals that God is our Creator. The Lord does not tell us everything He knows, but everything He wants us to know about Him. In each book of the Bible, the Lord reveals more of Himself. Then He is perfectly revealed to us in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

God became a man without ceasing to be God and lived a sinless life. He wants us to know Him! As we read through the Old and New Testaments, we see how He reveals Himself to people in the Bible. We understand that He is the Almighty God. He is the God who provides.

When the Lord Jesus gave this prayer lesson in Luke 11, He started by saying, “Begin with ‘*Our Father.*’”

## *Lord, Teach Us to Pray*

Do you know God as your heavenly Father? Do you have a relationship with Him? Is He a distant God, far removed, or do you truly know Him to be your heavenly Father?

A faithful Christian said many years ago, “When it comes to men, we must always be men. But when it comes to God, we must always be children.” This principle is found in Scripture. In Mark 10:15, our Lord taught His disciples, *“Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”* As long as we live, we must always come to God as children. The Lord will care for us as His own.


Then Jesus Christ says in this model prayer, *“Hallowed be thy name.”* Think about who He is. With Him, nothing is impossible. As we esteem the name of God, our faith is increased to trust Him for greater things.

The Bible says in Jeremiah 16:14, *“Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.”*

Here the Lord is saying to the prophet Jeremiah, “There is going to come a day when the point of reference that men make concerning the mightiness of God will not be how God delivered His children through the Red Sea out of Egyptian bondage.” The Bible continues in Jeremiah 16:15,

*But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.*

God said, “I will do something so great that everything I have ever done in the past will seem little in comparison.” The Lord



*“Our praying needs to be  
pressed and pursued with an energy  
that never tires, a persistency  
which will not be denied, and  
a courage that never fails.”*

---

E. M. Bounds



## *Lord, Teach Us to Pray*

will call His people from all over this earth back to the land that He has given them. This prophecy is God's promise to the nation of Israel.

The Lord is also teaching us a principle in this passage. As we believe God, exalt His name, and think of who God is in our prayer life, our faith will increase to ask God for greater things.

The greater the answer to prayer, the greater glory is brought to God. It may have been difficult for you to believe at some particular time that you could ask the Lord for something that now seems very small. As you grow to know the Lord and hallow His name in your thinking, you will ask the Lord for greater things.



*Our loving  
heavenly  
Father wants  
us to accept His  
invitation to  
come into His  
divine presence  
and meet Him  
in prayer.*

Every local church has great needs for which they must learn to seek God. We have a great God who can and will provide. Let us believe Him for great things!

The Bible says in Jeremiah 33:3, *"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."* As we come to know the Lord as a great and mighty God, then by faith we will ask Him for great and mighty things. I want to live on that plane in my prayer life.

The needs are so great around the world. The Lord is able to break through. He can do what men cannot do. As great as the need is, the Lord is always greater.

Many years ago, the Lord gave us the desire for a place to do gospel work in England. He showed us that the United Kingdom could become a training ground and launching pad for young people preparing to serve Him. We did not have the funds to



begin what God has since given us there, but we knew we served a great and mighty God who could touch the hearts of those who could help.

Great needs will arise in God's work to test and strengthen our faith. Will we believe in the greatness and faithfulness of God and trust Him to provide? How big is God in your life? Does He have an exalted position, separate from sinners; or is He someone else on a list? The Lord must never become commonplace to us. May God help us to comprehend His greatness.

## THE PURPOSE of PRAYER

The Bible says in Luke 11:2, *"And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth."*

Why did the Lord pay the price for us to enter into the Holy of Holies and speak with the true and living God? God's purpose for prayer is not for us to get things from Him. Prayer joins our will with His will. Seek from God what He desires for your life. The prayers God answers are the prayers that originate with Him.

The Lord does many things to make us aware of what we should ask Him. God allows many things in our lives to prompt us to think, "We need this. Is it God's will? How shall we pray about this?" You may have an illness or a friend in need. The purpose of prayer is to bring us to the place where we want from God what God wants for us.

The Bible says in John 14:13-14, *"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."*

Praying in the name of the Lord is more than tacking on Jesus' name at the end of a prayer. If we have not prayed in the will of

## *Lord, Teach Us to Pray*

God and asked for things in harmony with His will, we will not have our prayer answered.

The Bible says in John 15:16,

*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*

If we are asking in the name of Jesus, He says, the Father will give it you, but you must ask in His name!

Our prayer life begins when we come to know the Lord. The Bible says in I John 5:13-15,

*These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

*And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*

If someone comes to us and says, "We have property for sale," does that mean that we are to buy it? Is it God's will? I have a responsibility to The Temple Baptist Church to seek the Lord before I stand up and say, "This is the will of God; we must go forward!" I must be convinced in my own heart that something is the will of God before I start encouraging the church to do what I want them to do.

If I say that I believe the Lord is in a certain thing, I want to be as confident as I can be that God is in that matter. We must

pray in the will of the Lord. This is one of the prayer lessons. The purpose of prayer is to learn the mind of Christ.

Why should we ask God for things? If we are asking for something we need that is in God's will, then we have every right to ask God for that and trust Him to provide. If not, we should not foolishly waste our time begging God for something that we only want for ourselves.

The Lord wants us to know His will. When I lack confidence in whether a matter is in His plan, I should not run full speed ahead. I should wait until the Lord gives me confidence or removes all thought of it from my mind.

Many foolish mistakes could be avoided if we would wait on God to tell us what we should do. Too often we run ahead of the Lord. When we do, we think that God is late because He did not come through when we expected. In the Lord's perfect timing, He will provide.



*The prayers  
God answers  
are the prayers  
that originate  
with Him.*

If you added up everything God has done for The Temple Baptist Church materially and piled it up in one place, it would be such a pile that you would think, "How in the world did you trust God for all of that?" We did not. God led us along. We believed Him for this, and then He led us to believe Him for the next thing.

Fellow laborers in this ministry have said to me many times, "Years ago, I never would have thought to ask God for such a thing, but God has brought me along to believe Him and attempt greater things for His glory."

My heart and mind are still full of dreams. I must run every one of them by the Lord and ask Him, "Have You put this in my heart, or is this just some good idea that I had?"

# *Lord, Teach Us to Pray*

When I was in my mid-twenties, I said to a pastor, “I am trying to find the mind of God. I want to be sensitive enough to know what God wants in this matter. When I know what God wants in this matter, I am going to follow Him.”



*The purpose  
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of Christ.*

This pastor responded to me and said, “Well, that sounds like good talk, but I do not believe anyone can be that close to the Lord and know the mind of God.”

I was shocked by this because I believe just the opposite. The Lord is not playing hide and seek with us! He wants us to know His will. God desires to show us His way. As we seek Him, He will give us faith to step out and trust Him. Faith gives us confidence in the character of God so we can carry out His will.

When the children of Israel crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land, they had to believe God. It was only when they had stepped in the Jordan that it parted. At times, God will lead us this way. We must believe Him for that first step, and He will lead us on.

The purpose of prayer is to bring us into harmony with the will of God. This is God’s desire. We have every right to ask God to show us what He wants in our lives.

## THE POWER of NOTHING

You might imagine that a man who has preached for over fifty years could minister on automatic pilot, but that thought has no merit. The longer you live and serve the Lord, the more helpless

you become. After all these years in the Lord's work, I feel more helpless than I have ever felt in my life.

The Lord has made me aware of my overwhelming need. I have been challenged to trust God for greater things. I do not know all the reasons God has done what He has done, but I know that I have never been able to live the Christian life and lead in a ministry without exercising faith in God.



*Many foolish mistakes could be avoided if we would wait on God to tell us what we should do.*

If you are one of God's children, He will not allow you to live victoriously on this earth without exercising faith in Him. It may be a personal matter in your family that causes you to look to the Lord. It may be an illness or some great disappointment in life that requires great faith. The temptation is for you to think, "I have been in this long enough that I can get along without God. I can sit back and coast." It does not work that way.

The Bible says in Luke 11:5-8,

*And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?*

*And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.*

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*“The Lord reveals to us His purpose in prayer. Why did God institute prayer? Why did the Lord pay the price for us to enter into the Holy of Holies and speak with the true and living God? God’s purpose in prayer is not for us to get things from Him. Prayer joins our will with His will. Seek from God what He desires for your life. The prayers God answers are the prayers that originate with Him.”*

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Clarence Sexton

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Fix this story in your mind. Someone comes calling at midnight and says, “I need help! A friend has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.”

The man from inside says, “Do not bother me! I am in bed, and I do not want to wake my children. I cannot help you.”

The man who is knocking at the door trying to get help says, “You do not understand! Someone has come to me in need, and I cannot help him! I have no other place to go! I am up against it! There is absolutely no reserve! The only thing I can do is stand at this door and keep knocking.”

Why did he persist? He was thoroughly convinced that he had nothing. It saturated every bit of his thinking.

Pastors all over this country think that the way to pastor their church is to follow man-made programs. They see themselves as CEO’s, and they see their workers as employees in their business. They have their planning meetings, thinking that if they work it all out, the results will follow.

Sadly, some Bible colleges and seminaries promote this line. They train students in methodology instead of theology. Man’s methods promote growth by what men can do. They measure success by the size of their crowds and work to please people instead of God.

When I think about what people need, I am more aware than ever that I have nothing to set before them. Some of you have unsaved loved ones. Did you ever stop and think that you might be



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## *Lord, Teach Us to Pray*

trying to do more than you are capable of doing? You must come to the place where you say, "Dear God in heaven, this one I love is going to hell forever. If You do not save them, there is nothing I can do to help them." The power of nothing will take over.

We can only do what God leads us to do, and we shall only have what God provides for us to have. Everything God has provided, He will take away from us if we do not use it wisely.

A man with a thousand dollars has more to be accountable for than a man with a hundred dollars. I have a lot to answer to God for, and so do you. We must give God the glory for what He has done, and remember that we are tremendously accountable to God for it. We cannot go any further unless we sense our nothingness and understand that we need God for everything.

The Bible says in Luke 11:9, *"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."* We ought to ask and keep on asking, seek and keep on seeking, knock and keep on knocking. When we know a matter to be the mind of God, we must continue to ask, seek, and knock. God will prepare our hearts. When we are ready to receive, God will pour out His blessing. We will get well acquainted with the power of nothing.

No one knows the secret, private place of my life except God. My wife comes close. I do not try to hide anything from her, but there have been many times when God alone knew how overwhelmed I was by my need. Every time I have come to Him with my nothing, He has supplied!

I have been sorely tested, but Jesus Christ has never failed. I have wondered about the supply, but I have never doubted that He is able to supply. Bless His holy name!

Our Lord continued these prayer lessons in Luke 11:10-13,



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*“When I think about what people need, I am more aware than ever that I have nothing to set before them. Some of you have unsaved loved ones. Did you ever stop and think that you might be trying to do more than you are capable of doing? You must come to the place where you say, ‘Dear God in heaven, this one I love is going to hell forever. If You do not save them, there is nothing I can do to help them.’ The power of nothing will take over.”*

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Clarence Sexton

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## *Lord, Teach Us to Pray*

*For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?*

*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

When Evelyn and I fell in love and were married, we did not think we had reached the finish line. We were just getting started! When God gave us a son, we did not hold him in our arms and say, “Well, that is done. Now what?” No, we had just started! In the same sense, everything God has given, done, and provided is now for us to use, apply, and put into the wonderful work of our Lord. This is God’s design.

If you think you can store up enough spiritual truth in your heart to become self-sufficient in the ministry, you are wrong. God is the only reserve. He chooses to provide “*our daily bread*.” Notice in Luke 11:13, God says, “*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*”

These are the prayer lessons we must learn. Continue to exalt the Lord in your life. The bigger God becomes in your life, the greater things you can trust Him for because you know He is able. Nothing must ever be precious to us except the Lord Jesus. The buildings and properties of The Temple Baptist Church and The Crown College are only to be used. The pulpit in our church auditorium is a beautiful piece of furniture, but it is only to be used. Our lives are meaningless unless we place them in His hands.

## *Prayer Lessons*

Continue to seek God's purpose in prayer. When you know a matter to be the will of God, then go after it with all of your might. Keep asking, seeking, and knocking because you have been convinced that your will has been brought into harmony with the will of God.

Do not expect that you will have sufficient for your needs. God will always keep it so that our sufficiency is not of ourselves, but of Him. We can never complete the job God has given us except He breaks through and provides.

*"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Acts 20:32*

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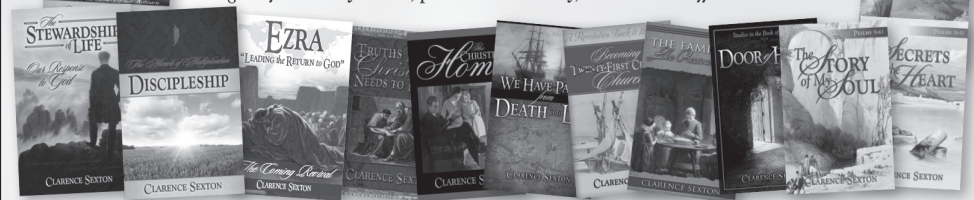
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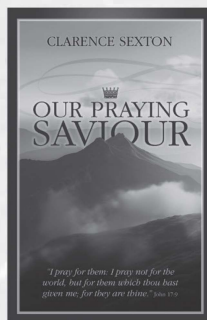
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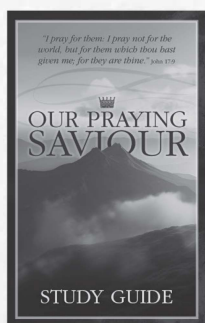
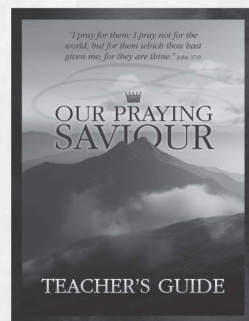
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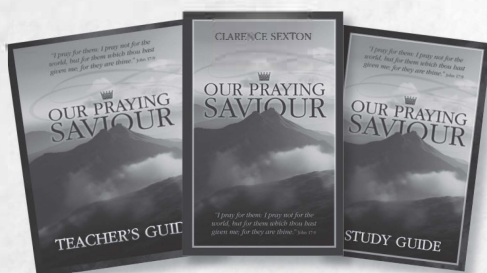
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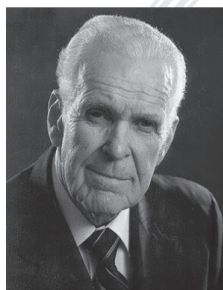
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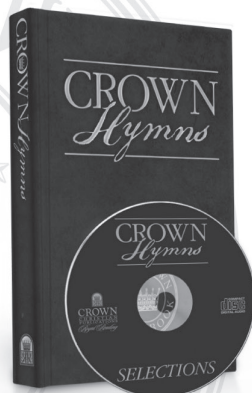
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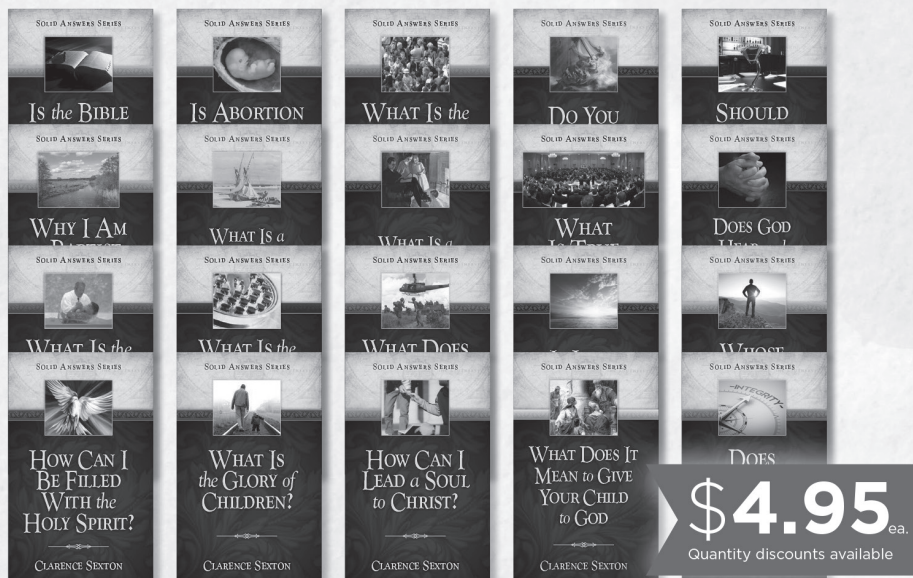


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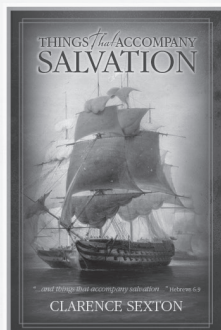
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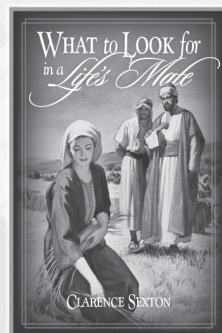
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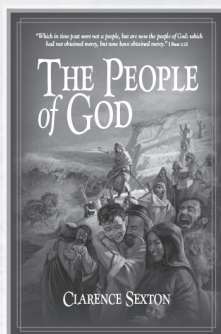
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