

How to Labor in Prayer for Breakthrough

Dr. John Carmichael

[Col 4:12 NASB95] 12 Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.

- Lazy, passionless prayer is not a NT kind of praying.
- Αγωνιζομενος - agonizing
- JFB – “literally, ‘striving as in the agony of a contest.’”
- LITS – “In other words, the disciple had learned well from his mentor and was now modeling the kind of prayer activity that Paul wanted to see reproduced in the life of the Colossian congregation.”
- Fire Bible notes: We must pray with passion and inner persistence, knowing that as we wrestle in prayer, Christ’s energy is working powerfully in us (cf. 1:29) and his purposes are being realized on behalf of others.

What does laboring in prayer for a breakthrough involve?

Here are three things to consider about laboring in prayer for a breakthrough.

I. OT example of laboring in prayer for breakthrough.

- a. Hannah, the mother of the prophet Samuel. [1Sa 1:10, 12-13, 15, 17 NASB95] 10 She, greatly distressed, prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly. ... 12 Now it came about, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli was watching her mouth. 13 As for Hannah, she was speaking in her heart, only her lips were moving, but her voice was not heard. So Eli thought she was drunk. ... 15 But Hannah replied, "No, my lord, I am a woman oppressed in spirit; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have poured out my soul before the LORD. ... 17 Then Eli answered and said, "Go in peace; and may the God of Israel grant your petition that you have asked of Him."
- b. Learning to pray from a sense of urgency helps us to birth a breakthrough.

II. NT example of laboring in prayer for breakthrough.

- a. Jesus’ prayer life.
 - i. [Heb 5:7 NASB95] 7 In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.
 - ii. [Mar 1:35-39 NASB95] 35 In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left [the house,] and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there. 36 Simon and his companions searched for Him; 37 they found Him, and said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You." 38 He said to them, "Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came for." 39 And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons.
- b. Jesus’ earthly ministry and life serves as an example of how we NT believers are expected to live. This includes His prayer life.

III. Three principles of laboring in prayer for breakthrough.

- a. The FIT principle
 - i. F
 1. Frequent
 - a. [2Co 4:16 NASB95] 16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

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- b. [1Th 5:16-17 NASB95] 16 Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing;
- 2. Faithful
 - a. [Lev 6:12-13 NASB95] 12 'The fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it. It shall not go out, but the priest shall burn wood on it every morning; and he shall lay out the burnt offering on it, and offer up in smoke the fat portions of the peace offerings on it. 13 'Fire shall be kept burning continually on the altar; it is not to go out.

ii. I

- 1. Intensity
 - a. [Jas 5:16 NASB95] 16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.
- 2. Intentional
 - a. [Act 16:13 NASB95] 13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to a riverside, where we were supposing that there would be a place of prayer; and we sat down and began speaking to the women who had assembled.

iii. T

- 1. Time
 - a. [Mar 14:37-38 NASB95] 37 And He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? 38 "Keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."
 - b. [Act 3:1 NASB95] 1 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth [hour,] the hour of prayer.
- 2. Teachable
 - a. [Luk 11:1-2 NASB95] 1 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples." 2 And He said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come.
 - b. Pattern – keep you focused and covers what needs to be covered.
 - c. Preference – Sing, write, speak.

- **God wants us to labor in prayer to Him so we and others can experience a breakthrough.**