

Heb 5:7: In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers & supplications, with loud cries & tears, to him who was able to save him from death, & he was heard because of his reverence.

Intro: Have there been times in your life when you are so needy, so desperate, so scared & afraid, so “at the end of your rope”, so desperate, that you prayed differently? Children, when you got separated from your parents? Parents, when you lost your children? When your child or spouse or other loved one was in the hospital on the verge of possible death? When the doctor finds the lump on your body, & you need a biopsy? When you find yourself in a situation in life that you think & feel is impossible for you to survive & live through (singleness, a break-up, a loss, a hard situation in life, death)? Or when you want something like you’ve never wanted something before! And in those moments, you prayed with passion, vigor, loud cries, & tears like you’ve never prayed before!

I remember hearing Sister Lena pray for the first time. I had never heard anyone pray like her. She prayed with loud cries & tears! What can we learn from her? And more importantly, what can we learn from Jesus?

Spurgeon: Ps 109:4: “But I give myself unto prayer.” Lying tongues were busy against the reputation of David, but he did not defend himself; he moved the case into a higher court, & pleaded before the great King himself. Prayer is the safest method of replying to words of hatred. The Psalmist prayed in no cold-hearted manner, he gave himself to the exercise – threw his whole soul & heart into it – straining every sinew & muscle, as Jacob did when wrestling with the angel. Thus, & thus only, shall any of us speed at the throne of grace. As a shadow has no power because there is no substance in it, even so that supplication, in which a man’s proper self is not thoroughly present in agonizing earnestness & vehement desire, is utterly ineffectual, for it lacks that which would give it force. “Fervent prayer,” says an old divine, “like a cannon planted at the gates of heaven, makes them fly open.” The common fault with the most of us is our readiness to yield to distractions. Our thoughts go roving hither & thither, & we make little progress towards our desired end. Like quicksilver our mind will not hold together, but rolls off this way & that. How great an evil this is! It injures us, & what is worse, it insults our God. What should we think of a petitioner, if, while having an audience with a prince, he should be playing with a feather or catching a fly? Continuance & perseverance are intended in the expression of our text. David did not cry once, & then relapse into silence; his holy clamor was continued till it brought down the blessing. Prayer must not be our chance work, but our daily business, our habit & vocation. As artists give themselves to their models, & poets to their classical pursuits, so must we addict ourselves to prayer. We must be immersed in prayer as in our element, & so pray without ceasing. Lord, teach us so to pray that we may be more & more prevalent in supplication.

May God move in us & grant us to pray with more passion, more loud cries, & more tears for His glory!

1. Jesus’ Prayer Life Described In Hebrews 5:7

Heb 5:1-7: For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. ³ Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. ⁴ And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was. ⁵ So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”; ⁶ as he says also in another place, “You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.” ⁷ In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.

These verses show us that Jesus is the fulfillment of all the old covenant high priest was & pointed to, & they show us that Jesus is the perfect, superior, better high priest! He is the high priest of all high priests!

a. What is a high priest: V. 1: For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. [Conviction: I’m a sinner! My most passionate prayers are for me, my wants, my family!] **GOSPEL!**

b. High priests are called by God: V. 4: no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

Jesus was called by God: **Vs. 5-6:** So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; ⁶ as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."

c. High priests are able to sympathize with those they represent: They can relate! They are chosen from among men; they can deal gently with the ignorant & wayward, since they are beset with weakness (Vs. 1-3).

d. Hebrews 5:7 demonstrates that Jesus is a high priest who can sympathize with us in our needs that drive us to pray: Jesus trusted in His heavenly Father, depended on Him, & cried out to His Father in prayer showing His perfect dependence & perfect trust! "Save me from death!" (Gethsemane: save from cross; Raise me up!)

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Buist Fanning: This vivid description of Jesus' experience of human weakness & utter dependence on God the Father reinforces His compassion as a high priest.

e. Jesus prayed with vigor & passion: Jesus prayed with loud cries & tears! His prayers were not cold, dead prayers! He prayed earnestly! He wrestled in prayer! He cried out loudly! He was moved to tears in prayer!

f. Hebrews 5:7 has special reference to Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane, but the language of the text may indicate this passionate way of praying characterized Jesus' whole life of prayer on earth:

1) Jesus did pray this way in Gethsemane: **Luk 22:44:** And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; & his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

- **Mat 26:39:** going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." (Perfect fear; Perfect hatred; Perfect delight; Perfect will)

2) This way of praying could describe Jesus usual tone & demeanor in prayer – Jesus' whole prayer life was characterized by earnest, fervent, & passionate prayer: "In the days of his flesh" **Commentator:** During His entire life on earth; **Commentator:** His whole earthly life is likely in view but with special attention to the agony at Gethsemane; **Al Mohler:** this reference does not limit Jesus' loud cries & tears to His experience in Gethsemane, for Jesus faced the anguish of becoming sin for those who believed in Him & bore the burdens of human existence all the days of His flesh. Scripture shows us Jesus offering up prayers & supplications even before the cross . . . the high priestly prayer of John 17. Loud cries & tears were regular features in Jesus's prayer life.

- **Mar 1:35:** rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed & went out to a desolate place, & there he prayed.

- **Luk 5:16:** But he would withdraw to desolate places & pray.

- **Mar 6:46:** And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray.

- **Luk 6:12:** In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, & all night he continued in prayer to God.

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2. Praying With Passion And Vigor

- **Spurgeon:** A silent prayer may have a louder voice than the cries of those priests who sought to awaken Baal with their shouts. [People can also fake passion & vigor/people can learn passion & vigor]

- **Spurgeon:** Praying in the Holy Ghost is praying in fervency. Cold prayers ask the Lord not to hear them. Those who do not plead with fervency, plead not at all.

Pastor: Donald Bloesch says, "Prayer is not simply petition, but strenuous petition. It is . . . active pleading with God. It consists not merely in reflection on the promises of God but in taking hold of these promises" . . . Paul asks the Roman Christians to "join me in my struggle by praying to God for me" (Rom 15:30). Prayer has been called "rebellion against the world's evil status quo." Indeed, it is listed as a weapon in the spiritual warfare against the forces of darkness (Eph 6:12).

J. C. Ryle: I commend to you the importance of earnestness in prayer. It is not that a person should shout, or scream, or be very loud, in order to prove that they are in earnest. But it is desirable that we should be hearty & fervent & warm, & ask as if we were really interested in what we were doing. It is the "effectual fervent" prayer that "avails much." (James 5:16.) This is the lesson that is taught us by the expressions used in Scripture about prayer. It is called, "crying, knocking, wrestling, laboring, striving." This is the lesson taught us by scripture examples. Jacob is one. He said to the angel at Penuel, "I will not let You go, except You bless me." (Genesis 32:26.) Daniel is another. Hear how he pleaded with God: "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Your own sake, O my God." (Daniel 9:19.) Our Lord Jesus Christ is another. It is written of Him, "In the days of His flesh, He offered up prayers & supplications with strong crying & tears." (Hebrews 5:7.) Alas, how unlike is this to many of our supplications! How tame & lukewarm they seem by comparison. How truly might God say to many of us, "You do not really want what you pray for." Let us try to amend this fault. Let us knock loudly at the door of grace, like Mercy in Pilgrim's Progress, as if we must perish unless heard. Let us settle it in our minds, that cold prayers are a sacrifice without fire. Let us remember the story of Demosthenes the great orator, when one came to him, & wanted to plead his cause. He heard him without attention, while he told his story without earnestness. The man saw this, & cried out with anxiety that it was all true. "Ah," said Demosthenes, "I believe you now."

1) Read Daniel's prayer: **Dan. 9**; 2) Read Hannah's prayer: **1 Sam. 1**; 3) Ezra: fasted, wept, on his knees/hands out

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3. Let's Consider Some Common Obstacles That Hinder Our Prayer Life

Wayne Stiles: 1) It could be you're not a child of God: **1 Pet. 3:12:** For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, & his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.

2) It could be your motives or actions are not pleasing to God: Notice Heb. 5:7 says Jesus was heard because of His reverence! Jesus feared God perfectly & obeyed God perfectly! But we don't always fear God & obey God:

- **Jas. 4:3:** You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

- **Ps. 66:18:** If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

- **Mic. 3:4:** Then they will cry to the LORD, but he will not answer them; he will hide his face from them at that time, because they have made their deeds evil.

1 Pet. 3:7: Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

3) It could be your misunderstanding of God's priorities: **1 Jn. 5:14-15:** this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

4) It could be that it's just not time yet: **Wayne Stiles:** So let's say we are living for Christ in our attitude & actions & praying according to His will. What do we do when all systems are go, but the answer still hasn't come? You keep praying. Luke 18:1: the persistent widow & the unjust judge: "He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart". You don't lose heart. Here's why:

- It may be that circumstances require changing before you can accept the answer.

- It may be that the answer depends on someone else responding to God too (remember God's order of priorities).

- It may be that the delay is to see how seriously you are willing to pray.

5) It could be God wants to give you more than you're asking for: **Eph. 3:20-21:** Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. [Main thing: more like Jesus!]

Pastor: God will either give us what we ask for in prayer or give us what we would have asked for if we knew everything he knows.

6) It could be that you are not praying with vigor & passion: **J. C. Ryle:** Alas, how unlike is this to many of our supplications! How tame & lukewarm they seem by comparison. How truly might God say to many of us, "You do not really want what you pray for." Let us try to amend this fault. Let us knock loudly at the door of grace, like Mercy in Pilgrim's Progress, as if we must perish unless heard. Let us settle it in our minds, that cold prayers are a sacrifice without fire. Let us remember the story of Demosthenes the great orator, when one came to him, & wanted to plead his cause. He heard him without attention, while he told his story without earnestness. The man saw this, & cried out with anxiety that it was all true. "Ah," said Demosthenes, "I believe you now."

Be encouraged! Spurgeon: Ps. 66:20: "Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer." In looking back upon the character of our prayers, if we do it honestly, we shall be filled with wonder that God has ever answered them. There may be some who think their prayers worthy of acceptance—as the Pharisee did; but the true Christian, in a more enlightened retrospect, weeps over his prayers, & if he could retrace his steps he would desire to pray more earnestly. Remember, Christian, how cold thy prayers have been. When in thy closet thou shouldst have wrestled as Jacob did; but instead thereof, thy petitions have been faint & few—far removed from that humble, believing, persevering faith, which cries, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." Yet, wonderful to say, God has heard these cold prayers of thine, & not only heard, but answered them. Reflect also, how infrequent have been thy prayers, unless thou hast been in trouble, & then thou hast gone often to the mercy-seat: but when deliverance has come, where has been thy constant supplication? Yet, notwithstanding thou hast ceased to pray as once thou didst, God has not ceased to bless. When thou hast neglected the mercy-seat, God has not deserted it, but the bright light of the Shekinah has always been visible between the wings of the cherubim. Oh! it is marvelous that the Lord should regard those intermittent spasms of importunity which come & go with our necessities. What a God is he thus to hear the prayers of those who come to him when they have pressing wants, but neglect him when they have received a mercy; who approach him when they are forced to come, but who almost forget to address him when mercies are plentiful & sorrows are few. Let his gracious kindness in hearing such prayers touch our hearts, so that we may henceforth be found "Praying always with all prayer & supplication in the Spirit."

Let's look unto Jesus! 1) It could be you're not a child of God: Jesus!; 2) It could be your motives or actions are not pleasing to God: Jesus!; 3) It could be your misunderstanding of God's priorities: Jesus!; 4) It could be that it's just not time yet: Jesus!; 5) It could be God wants to give you more than you're asking for: Jesus!; 6) It could be that you are not praying with vigor & passion: Jesus: **Heb 5:7:** In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers & supplications, with loud cries & tears, to him who was able to save him from death, & he was heard because of his reverence.

Christ Jesus Prayed With Loud Supplication
Through Cries And Tears Like Blood Consternation
Heard For His Reverence Such Pure Consecration
To Save Him From Death, But "No's" Our Salvation
"Your Will Be Done" Is His Final Oblation
He Bore All God's Wrath In Full Humiliation
And Died For Our Sins Bearing Every Damnation
Then Rose From The Dead For Our Justification
Empowers Our Prayer With Passion Prostration
In Jesus' Name He's Our Prayer Motivation
So Pray With New Vigor For His Glorification!

May God move in us & grant us to pray with more passion, more loud cries, & more tears for His glory!