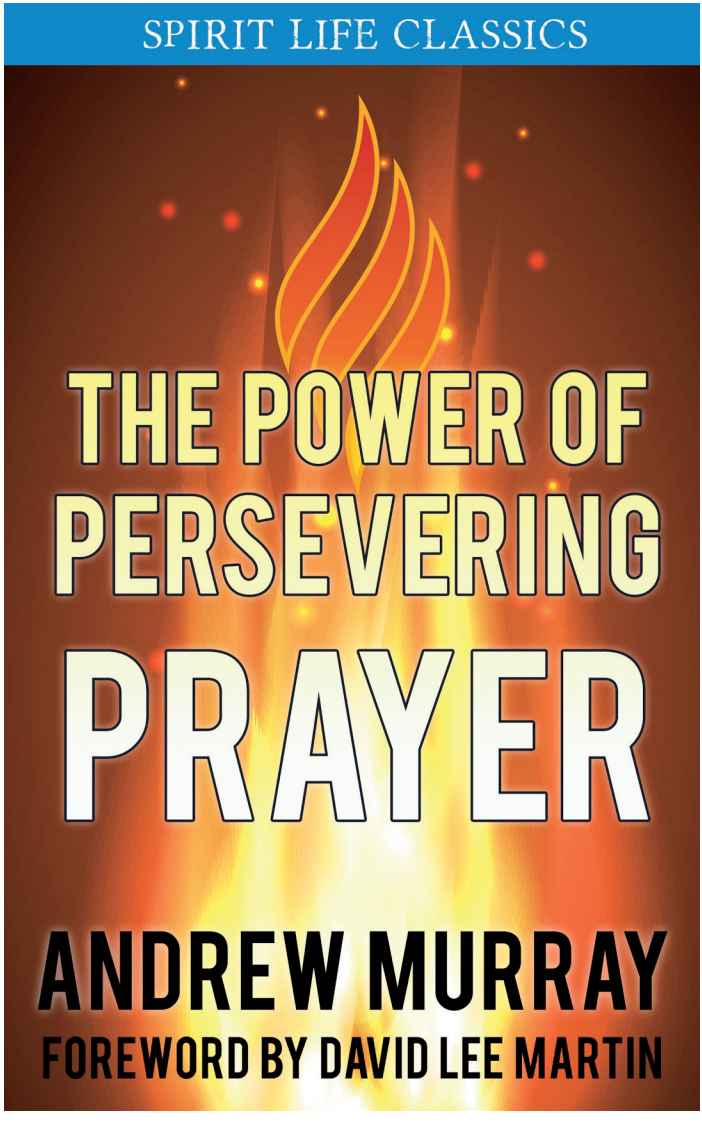
SPIRIT LIFE CLASSICS



THE POWER OF PERSEVERING PRAYER



ANDREW MURRAY
DAVID LEE MARTIN



Spirit Life Bible School/PureRead Ltd

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If My People...



"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

— 2 CHRONICLES 7:14

Introduction



BY DAVID LEE MARTIN

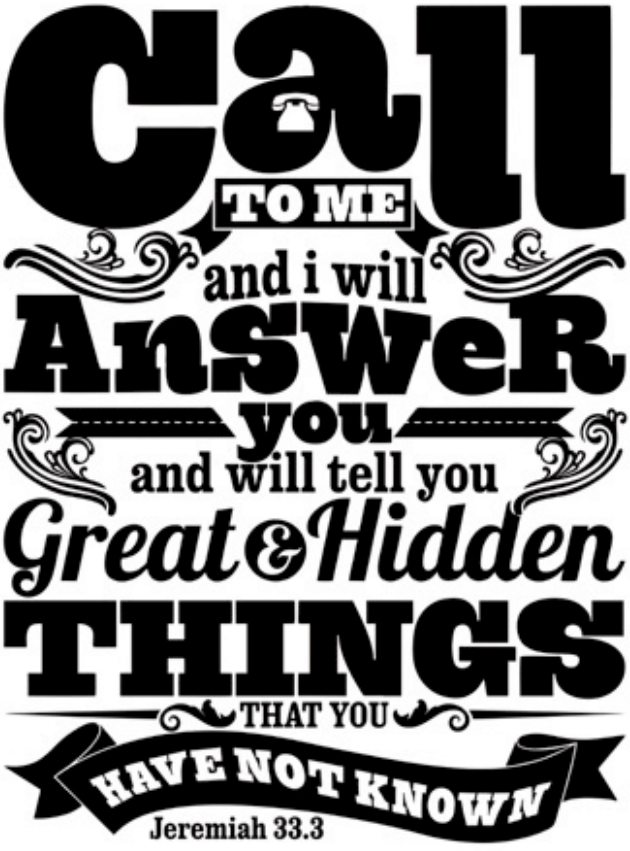
A prolific writer, and one whose words have spoken generation to generation, Andrew Murray continues to call men and women to a deeper and more abiding walk with Christ.

The depth of this firebrand minister's dedication to God's call, and his unwavering loyalty to the Savior, drip eloquently from every word he penned.

I trust that this new edition of an old classic will stir your heart in the same way it has stirred the hearts of so many before you.

In Christ's love,

David Lee Martin


Call
TO ME
and i will
AnsweR
you
and will tell you
Great & Hidden
THINGS
THAT YOU
HAVE NOT KNOWN
Jeremiah 33.3

The Power of Persevering Prayer

And the Lord said, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint...

There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:1-8)

Of all the mysteries of the prayer world the need of persevering prayer is one of the greatest. That the Lord, who is so loving and longing to bless, should have to be asked, time after time, sometimes year after year, before the answer comes, we cannot easily understand. It is also one of the greatest practical difficulties in the exercise of believing prayer. When, after persevering pleading, our prayer remains unanswered, it is often easiest for our lazy flesh, and it has all the appearance of pious submission, to think that we must now cease praying, because God may have His secret reason for withholding His answer to our request.It is by faith alone that the difficulty is overcome. When once faith has taken its stand on God's word and the Name of Jesus, and has yielded itself to the leading of the Spirit to seek God's will and honor alone in its prayer, it need not be discouraged by delay. It knows from Scripture that the power of believing prayer is simply irresistible; real faith can never be disappointed. It knows that just as water, to exercise the irresistible power it can have, must be gathered up and accumulated until the stream can come down in full force, so there must often be a heaping up of prayer until God sees that the measure is full, when the answer comes. It knows that just as the peasant farmer has to take his ten thousand steps to sow his tens of thousands seeds,

each one a part of the preparation for the final harvest, so there is a need for often repeated persevering prayer, all working out some desired blessing. It knows for certain that not a single believing prayer can fail of its effect in heaven, but has its influence, and is treasured up to work out an answer in due time to him who perseveres to the end. It knows that it has to do, not with human thoughts or possibilities, but with the word of the living God. And so, even as Abraham through so many years "who against hope believed in hope" (Romans 4:18), and then "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." (Hebrews 6:12)

To enable us, when the answer to our prayer does not come at once, to combine quiet patience and joyful confidence in our persevering prayer, we must especially try to understand the words in which our Lord sets forth the character and conduct, not of the unjust judge, but of our God and Father, toward those whom He allows to cry day and night to Him: "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily." (Luke 18:8)

He will avenge them quickly, the Master says. The blessing is all prepared; He is not only willing, but most anxious, to give them what they ask; everlasting love burns with the longing desire to reveal itself fully to its beloved and to satisfy their needs. God will not

delay one moment longer than is absolutely necessary; He will do all in His power to expedite and rush the answer.

But why, if this is true and His power is infinite, does it often take so long for the answer to prayer to come? And why must God's own elect so often, in the middle of suffering and conflict, cry day and night? He is waiting patiently while He listens to them. "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain." (James 5:7) The farmer does, indeed, long for his harvest, but knows that it must have its full amount of sunshine and rain, and he has long patience. A child so often wants to pick the half-ripe fruit; the farmer knows how to wait until the proper time. Man, in his spiritual nature too, is under the law of gradual growth that reigns in all created life. It is only in the path of development that he can reach his divine destiny. And it is the Father, in whose hand are the times and seasons, who knows the moment when the soul or the Church is ripened to that fullness of faith in which it can really take and keep the blessing. Like a father who longs to have his only child home from school, and yet waits patiently until the time of training is completed, so it is with God and His children: He is the patient One, and answers quickly.

The insight into this truth leads the believer to cultivate the corresponding dispositions: patience and faith, waiting and anticipating, are the secret of his perseverance. By faith in the promise of God, we know that we have the petitions we have asked of Him. Faith takes and holds the answer in the promise as an unseen spiritual possession, rejoices in it, and praises for it. But there is a difference between the faith that thus holds the word and knows that it has the answer and the clearer, fuller, riper faith that obtains the promise as a present experience. It is in persevering, not unbelieving, but confident and praising prayer, that the soul grows up into that full union with its Lord in which it can enter upon the possession of the blessing in Him. There may be in these around us, there may be in that great system of being of which we are part, there may be in God's government, things that have to be put right through our prayer before the answer can fully come: the faith that has, according to the command, believed that it has received, can allow God to take His time; it knows it has prevailed and must prevail. In quiet, persistent, and determined perseverance it continues in prayer and thanksgiving until the blessing comes. And so we see combined what at first sight appears contradictory--the faith that rejoices in the answer of the unseen God as a

present possession and the patience that cries day and night until it be revealed. The quickness of God's patience is met by the triumphant but patient faith of His waiting child.

Our great danger, in this school of the answer delayed, is the temptation to think that, after all, it may not be God's will to give us what we ask. If our prayer be according to God's word, and under the leading of the Spirit, let us not give way to these fears. Let us learn to give God time. God needs time with us. If only we give Him time, that is, time in the daily fellowship with Himself, for Him to exercise the full influence of His presence on us, and time, day by day, in the course of our being kept waiting, for faith to prove its reality and to fill our whole being, He Himself will lead us from faith to vision; we shall see the glory of God. Let no delay shake our faith. Of faith it holds good: first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. Each believing prayer brings a step nearer the final victory. Each believing prayer helps to ripen the fruit and bring us nearer to it; it fills up the measure of prayer and faith known to God alone; it conquers the hindrances in the unseen world; it hastens the end. Child of God, give the Father time. He is patiently listening to you. He wants the blessing to be rich, and full, and sure; give Him time, while you cry day and night. Only

remember the word: "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily." (Luke 18:8)

The blessing of such persevering prayer is unspeakable. There is nothing so heart-searching as the prayer of faith. It teaches you to discover and confess, and to give up everything that hinders the coming of the blessing, everything there may not be in accordance with the Father's will. It leads to closer fellowship with Him who alone can teach us to pray, to a more entire surrender to draw near under no covering but that of the blood and the Spirit. It calls for a closer and more simple abiding in Christ alone. Christian, give God time. He will perfect that which concerns you.

Let it be thus whether you pray for yourself or for others. All labor, bodily or mental, needs time and effort: we must give up ourselves up to it. Nature discovers her secrets and yields her treasures only to diligent and thoughtful labor. However little we can understand it, in the spiritual farming it is the same: the seed we sow in the soil of heaven, the efforts we put forth, and the influence we seek to exert in the world above, need our whole being: we must give ourselves to prayer. But let us hold firm the great confidence that in due season we will reap if we don't give up.

And let us especially learn the lesson as we pray for the Christ's Church. She is, indeed, like the poor widow, in the absence of her Lord, apparently at the mercy of her adversary, helpless to obtain restitution. Let us, when we pray for His Church or any portion of it, under the power of the world, asking Him to visit her with the mighty workings of His Spirit and to prepare her for His coming-- let us pray in the assured faith: prayer does help, praying always and not stopping will bring the answer. Only give God time. And then keep crying out day and night. "And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them?" (Luke 18:6-7)



About Andrew Murray



Andrew Murray (9 May 1828 – 18 January 1917) was a South African writer, teacher and Christian pastor. Murray considered missions to be "the chief end of the church". Murray pastored churches in Bloemfontein, Worcester, Cape Town and Wellington, all in South Africa. He was a champion of the South African Revival of 1860. Through his writings, Murray was also a key Higher Life or Keswick leader, and his theology of faith healing and belief in the continuation of the apostolic gifts made him a significant forerunner of the Pentecostal movement.