

## 20:20 Vision Ministries -- Devotions by Roger Browning Week 2 (January 5-11, 2014)

A sure statement I can make regarding your spiritual growth in 2014 is this: If your **prayer life** does not move forward, your spiritual condition will be stagnant; therefore, the focus for the next few weeks will be on prayer.

### **Sunday** -- January 5

*If my people, who are called by my name, will 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<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 7:14)*

This is one of the great promises in the Word of God concerning prayer. The Lord does not say that a change in government leaders or a change in pastors will produce this national revival. He has commanded His people to be the "salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13) and the "light of the world" (Matthew 5:14), so the lack of flavor and the presence of darkness in the world can be traced back to us. God's Word says, "Apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Isn't that enough to cause you to drop to your knees in humility and cry out to your Father who is anxious to hear and answer your prayer? This year can be the greatest ever if you will simply follow God's formula and receive His promise!

### **Monday** -- January 6

*Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)*

This verse has really come to life for me since I started "Praying God's Promises" (see website [2020visionministries.org](http://2020visionministries.org)). I had trouble getting the connection between **humbling** myself (yesterday's devotion) and coming **boldly**. I am not sure why it took me so long to take His Word literally and pray back to Him with confidence the things He has already promised to me and every other Christian. The key is to come before the **throne of grace!** There was a time when I felt unworthy to claim the wonderful promises He has made because I felt that they were only for "super saints." I finally realized that I am **saved by grace** and **kept by grace** (see Philippians 1:6). In your daily Bible reading, whenever you read a promise, close your eyes and claim it as your own. You will soon know what it means to come boldly before His throne of grace!

### **Tuesday** -- January 7

*I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing. (1 Timothy 2:8)*

This may seem silly and unnecessary to you, but obedience to this command to "lift up holy hands" has enhanced my personal prayer life more than anything other than "Praying God's Promises." I seldom do this in public, but I close all of my private prayers by lifting my arms up to God. By doing this, I am worshipping Him, surrendering my day and my life to him and forming a funnel into which He will pour His Spirit into me. It definitely helps in the humbling process requested in 2 Chronicles 7:14. Your hands have been **declared holy** by your relationship to Jesus Christ, not by your own accomplishments. I may never be a role model for effective praying, but I am sharing with you the things that have turned my time alone with the Father into a joyous time of worship. If you want to draw closer to Him this year, give this a try!

**Wednesday** -- January 8

*When he had said this, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. (Acts 20:36)*

Paul models another key ingredient to effective praying (kneeling). The Bible endorses many postures in praying (standing, walking, sitting, prostrate, etc), but I have found kneeling to be the most effective because it models humility. It is hard to be too proud when you are down on your knees in prayer to your Holy God who allows you to come boldly to His throne of grace. Some of you are probably not physically able to kneel, so do not think this is a legalistic requirement. It is simply a suggestion from a fellow servant who has struggled to concentrate during times of prayer. Try it! You'll like it!

**Thursday** -- January 9

*One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. (Acts 3:1)*

Another vital ingredient your personal prayer life will need is a definite **time** to pray. Personally, I like to **start my day** on my knees because it sets the stage for the entire day's activities (see Psalm 5:3), but any time that works for you will be effective. After a time of thanking Him for yesterday's blessings, I lay before Him my day as I see it and ask Him to go ahead of me to prepare the way for ministry. I have been amazed at how quickly He answers these prayers by placing me in the right place at the right time. You may not be a minister in the normal use of the word, but you are called to be a witness wherever you go (see Acts 1:8). Give Him your day in the early morning, if possible, and give Him the glory all day long.

**Friday** -- January 10

*Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. (Daniel 6:10)*

Public prayer is under attack in America like never before. There is coming a day, just like in Daniel's country, when you will be prosecuted for praying, even when you **think** you are alone. Daniel defied the new law put into effect by King Darius (Daniel 6:1-9) and continued to pray three times a day to his God. When the laws of **our** country violate the laws of God, you must defy the government and suffer the personal consequences (see Acts 5:29). While God does not **command** us to pray toward Jerusalem, I practice this in my private prayer time because it reminds me to "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Psalm 122:6). This week of devotions contains some practical Biblical suggestions that will greatly enhance your prayer life. I pray you will use them to grow closer to your Lord.

**Saturday** -- January 11

*I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone— (1 Timothy 2:1)*

I have learned to use the acronym "trip" while praying (thanksgiving, requests, intercession and prayers). It should be easy to spend some time **thanking** God for all He has done for you already at the start of your prayer. You should not give Him your **requests** for today until you have thanked Him for previous blessings. Next you should **intercede** for others on your prayer list (salvation, physical, financial, etc.). Close your alone time with general **prayers** that do not fit into any of the other three categories. This is a great time for claiming His promises as well as praising Him in worship. Have you learned anything this week that will move you closer to Him? If so, put your knowledge into practice and God will pour His Spirit into you!