

Prayer powers the Life of a Christian

Is there a correlation between lack of prayer and the lack of productivity in a believer's life? What about the lack of positive witness for the Christian church?

Have you ever run out of gas on a trip? It doesn't matter how big your engine is, how well decked out the interior of the car is, or what a beautiful paint job it has. If there is no fuel, there is no power. A car cannot go anywhere without fuel.

In January 2010, an inaugural Interior Design Show symposium held in Toronto, Canada featured "Conversations in Design, A World without Oil." Designers from around the world were encouraged to introduce design ideas that would work in a world no longer dependent upon oil. This has been a concern for years. In the 1950s, Dr. M. King Hubbert developed a theory that oil, as a finite resource, would someday reach its peak. Building on that theory, Dr. C. J. Campbell conducted a study using data from Petroconsultants of Geneva. The Petroconsultants database is the largest database on oil outside the continental U.S. and is used by all international oil companies. As a result of his study, a graph was developed indicating that oil production did peak in 1999 and as of 2011, we are on the downhill side of oil production.

Snowstorms, thunderstorms and heavy rain can create massive power outages resulting in life-threatening problems. Utility companies often race to restore power to homes totally dependent upon their services. The upheaval in the Middle East has sparked debate about oil prices and availability. Countries with limited power sources already have mandatory blackouts which is becoming more common even in the U.S.

What does all this have to do with prayer? The power behind a believer's life comes from God. Prayer fuels the Christian's life. A person can be a true Christian, but be spiritually ineffective. Unless he fuels up, he has no power. He "just runs out of gas."

The source of a believer's power is God. His power will never run out. It is a resource we can count on for eternity. To live a productive life, however, believers need to stay close to the source of His power.

In order to have fuel in your vehicle, you must first go to a supply source, typically a gas station. You must use the nozzle and fill the car with fuel. It is a similar process to use the power in your home. The electricity may be installed throughout the house, but if the switch is not turned on, the power source is not tapped. I don't have to know all there is to know about fuel production to be able to put gas in my car. Neither do I have to be an

electrician to turn on the lights in my house or run my washing machine. In a sense, I just have to do what is required to ask for it.

It is like that with prayer. Jesus said, *“Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask and you will receive, that your joy may be full* (John 16:24). What honors Him is to ask Him for power to do His will. Stephen was said to be *full of faith and power* (Acts 6:8). Stephen had power because of his faith. His faith was in the God of power. *Jesus said, “I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven”* (Mark 14:62). Power is a gift from God. *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind* (2 Timothy 1:7). It is all of God. *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us* (2 Corinthians 4:7). Quotations are from the New King James Version.

This brings us to the relationship between power and prayer. James 5:16 is a familiar verse and many can quote from the KJV, *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*. However, in over half of twenty translations of the Bible, the word “power” or “powerful” is used. For example:

- *The intense prayer of the righteous is very powerful* (HCSB).
- *The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective* (NIV).
- *The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with* (The Message).
- *The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results* (NLT).

Although it does not use the word “power,” I also love how the New Century Version puts this verse:

When a believing person prays, great things happen.

Great things do happen in the life of the praying person and the lives of others when prayer taps into God's power.