



Dear Beloved Friend,

February, 2017

## Importunity

Recently I attended an unusually tame and lukewarm prayer meeting in spite of the quality and depth the intercessors had in God. I knew them. I had prayed with them before. I wondered why. At some point in the meeting, I was suddenly quickened regarding a specific theme, so I got up and broke out in prayer with desperation and unction. The atmosphere changed and people suddenly seemed to wake up out of their lethargy and got going with zeal. However, one woman very hastily walked out in the middle of my prayer. It seemed she was bothered by both my emotion and the zeal that ensued in the whole group. I found out later that she was a rather conservative non-charismatic believer. I felt stirred to find out from the Lord whether I had overdone it. I prayed until I fell asleep and in the middle of the night, I woke up with a confirming word from the Lord, reminding me that His disciples did not ask Him to show them how to preach or to teach. They asked Him to teach them how to PRAY.

They obviously had seen something so different and so remarkable in the prayer life of

Jesus that they asked Him, "Teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples." The communion Jesus had with the Father was unlike anything anyone had ever seen before because He and the Father were One. Jesus said that He did nothing unless He had first seen and heard His Father do it. Signs and wonders, wisdom, multiplication of food, open heavens, transfiguration followed Jesus' powerful communion with the Father. The disciples wanted to know how to enter into this remarkable fellowship. Later John said, "That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and our fellowship is with the Father and the Son. And these things we write to you that your joy may be made full (*like ours!*)" *1 John 1:3-4*

Immediately after Jesus instructs His disciples in what has become, the Lord's Prayer, He shares a parable which gives us a clue into the nature of His prayer life:

And he said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Don't trouble me: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give you. I say to you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needs."

*Luke 11:5-8*

The word importunity in Greek has to do with shameless persistence. My friend, there is a shameless persistence in prayer that doesn't think about the hour, the inconvenience or what anyone else thinks. This kind of prayer is not silent, reserved or by rote. It is not from the head, but from the heart. Shameless persistence was a major component in the prayer life of Jesus.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you: For every one that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened. *Mathew 7:7-8*

The emphasis in these verses is on persistence since the tense is continuous in the original text. Keep asking! Keep seeking! Keep knocking! Don't give up!

In Gethsemane we see the temptation that came against Jesus to give up in order to take an easier route to glory. In spite of overwhelming weakness, Jesus in shameless persistence sought support in prayer from His disciples. And when they ALL fell asleep, He persevered to the sweating of blood, knowing that the salvation of the world depended on His perfect submission to the will of the Father. In spite of the greatest temptation the world has ever known, Jesus was succored by the Spirit to win the greatest victory! This is a model for us all.

Whenever I am in a battle or crisis, I spend most of my time in the Psalms. I connect with David's heart. As a type of the Messiah, David was shameless in totally laying himself bare before God and crying out to Him until the victory came. He was a man after God's heart.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but you hear not; and in the night season, and am not silent. But you are holy, O you that inhabits the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in you: they trusted, and you delivered them. They cried to you, and were delivered: they trusted in you, and were not confounded. *Psalms 22:1-5*

The psalms of David invite us into this deep heart cry and shameless persistence before God.

As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me. Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice. He has delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me.  
*Psalms 55:16-18*

Michal, David's wife, disdained him for his lavish shameless display before God and man.

And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. *2 Samuel 6:14-15*

And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!" And David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, which chose me before your father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD. And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which you have spoken of, of them shall I be had in honor." *2 Samuel 6:20-23*

It is before the Lord and not man that we praise and pray shamelessly! We do not praise, pray or worship to please man but to give God the pleasure He deserves and delights in!

Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child until the day of her death.  
*2 Samuel 6:23*

Many like Michal, who followed in the footsteps of her father Saul, are man-focused, disdaining the fervent ones, who with burning hearts shamelessly display their passion before the Lord. These man-pleasers remain barren and fruitless because they seek their own glory more than the glory of God!

Jesus' entire life on planet earth was a demonstration of shameless persistence. From His teachings as a boy before the religious rulers, to His compassionate non-conformist ways of healing and delivering the sick and demon-possessed, to His loud weeping on the cross, He displayed a shameless persistence in seeking to obey and please the Father.

I want to encourage you not to fear their faces. Pray fervently! Pray ceaselessly until the answer comes! Pray like Daniel who with open window defied the King's command, staying on his knees until he got the breakthrough. Pray like Elijah who seven times labored in prayer until the rains came. Pray like Paul who travailed until Christ would be formed in His body!

Pray like the Son of Man "who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;" *Hebrews 5:7*

Pray dear friend at "midnight," knocking on the closed door with importunity until you receive all the loaves of bread you need!

May He anoint your head with oil and your cup run over as you continue to love and serve Him!

For His Glory,

***Greta Mavro***