

How to Pray Resources

By Sandra Hamer Smith

I have been learning how to pray since I was a child reared in rural Hardeman County in a town called Grand Junction, Tennessee. I learned early on how to pray listening to my grandmother Cora Hamer. Many times I got to experience early on as an usher when one of my grandmother's children or grandchildren went home to be with the Lord. Fanning her and hearing her cry out to God in a time of need, I knew that He would listen to me if I called on Him. I remember at least 3 occasions where I had to be an usher in our household. There were other times too when close relatives or friends of her past.

Other early on experiences came from listening to my Uncle Willie Lee Patterson who was a deacon at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Saulsberry, Tennessee. I used to think Uncle Willie Lee could really pray. He and Mr. Carter were deacons in the church and always prayed. I always felt that he was sincere because he seemed really emotional afterward.

Later on, I got on the mourner's bench. I think I was around 12. It was Pastor Simon Hunt's son Junior and I. I believed in Jesus and was told not to come off that mourner's bench until I heard the wind. Well, I didn't hear the wind, but Junior was coming off and I definitely wasn't going to stay on by myself. I came off too. My grandmother asked me if I heard the

wind. I said, "Yes, Ma'am." I later had to ask for forgiveness for lying, but I did confess Jesus as my Savior and believe in Him. I knew that I was supposed to remember the day that I came off, Monday; in case you had to tell someone who asked. The following week, we got baptized in a small pond.

Later on in life through various churches where I have belonged, I have learned better how to pray and that you must also repent before praying so that your prayers can be heard. Most of the ministers who I have been under agree that the Lord's Prayer is the example (Matthew 6:9-13). I have followed many television ministers for a season and some have given specific examples on how to pray. Most agree that you are supposed to approach God in a humble position. If you are at home, most people bow down on their knees. Usually, at church, you are standing or whatever is most suitable. Some ministers say they lay straight out on the floor when seeking God. I have used that method before and found it to be most effective. Most times, I am on my knees. If it has been a late night, I might just be in bed and pray quietly before going to sleep.

Watching people in church or in ministry provide good examples on how to pray. Most ministers say you should find scriptures in the Bible pertaining to your need and take those to God in prayer. That is why it is important to have a Bible Concordance. This will allow you to look up various scriptures and take them with you to prayer. You can find scriptures

for healing, faith, marriage, finances, etc. Here are some links to online Bible

Concordances: <http://www.onlinebiblepassages.com>

<http://www.biblestudytools.com/concordances/strongs-exhaustive-concordance/>

www.biblegateway.com

Also, you need to have the Holy Ghost. This is the best way to pray. The Holy Ghost knows how to get to the root cause of any situation and what you really need to ask God. It also prevents the enemy from understanding what is being said so that he won't get in the way. You need to have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior. Then, get baptized. If you ask God for the Holy Ghost, He will show up soon. You do need to be living a life that is pleasing to God. We all miss the mark. I know that I have. I just repent and keep on trucking.

Most times for me to pray in the Holy Ghost, I need to have read a lot of the Word and do this on a regular basis. I try to treat my Christian walk as I would a career. In order to get better, you must have professional development. You have to develop spiritually and God requires more commitment from those who He has called. That's why it seems like some people can get away with everything and you can get away with nothing. God holds some to a higher standard because they know better and have been at this longer than most.