

A Secret Foundation

by K.P. Yohannan

K.P. Yohannan emphasizes the transformative power of prayer in ministry and personal life through compelling stories and biblical examples.

Scripture: Matthew 9:37

Topics: "The Power of Prayer", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

K.P. Yohannan emphasizes the transformative power of prayer in the lives of believers, sharing stories of missionaries who achieved remarkable results through their commitment to prayer. He highlights a missionary in Northeast India who, despite lacking formal education, planted five churches through fervent prayer and reliance on God. Yohannan also recounts the legacy of John Hyde and the impact of his passionate prayers on revival in India, as well as the influence of Susanna Wesley on her sons, John and Charles. The preacher encourages the congregation to cultivate a life of prayer, asserting that it is through prayer that God accomplishes His purposes on earth. He concludes with a call to action, inviting everyone to take the first steps toward becoming people of prayer.

Transcript

A few years ago, I heard the story of one missionary serving with our organization who, in a short time, had planted five churches in a difficult part of Northeast India. Curious of how this young brother did it, I called one of our senior leaders and asked him if he could tell me more about this brother's ministry. All that I knew was that he was from a tribal background and didn't have any college education, yet regardless, it seemed that God was with him in a remarkable way.

The first church he planted began with the healing of a Hindu priest who was paralyzed. Then, one after another, four more churches were born. I was more than curious to find out this brother's secret. Our senior leader said he would check into it and let me know what he found out. When he called to tell me, he said, "There is nothing unusual about him. I found nothing special except for one thing--he gets up very early each morning and spends two or three hours in prayer and then an hour or two reading the Bible.

This habit began while he was studying in one of our Bible colleges." Let me give another example. One morning I was talking to a senior leader in our work on the mission field. He was traveling throughout North India to meet with many of our leaders and appoint new workers to projects that had recently been started. In our conversation we were discussing who might be able to take a certain new position. I asked him, "What do you think about this particular brother? He seems to be a really godly man.

Why don't we think about putting him in that position?" We talked back and forth about this brother's abilities, his lack of experience and the seriousness of the challenge in this new area of work. But finally we both agreed to trust him with the particular job. There was something about him that caused us to make that decision: He spends nearly four hours in prayer each day. Our decision was not based on the fact that he had started a dozen churches or that he was able to oversee a large region of the country quite well.

Our decision was based on the fact that God was with him and that he knew how to pray. You see, prayer is God's method of carrying out His purposes upon this earth. There is a mystery to the truth that God waits to hear and answer the prayers of His people. Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 9:37-38? "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (emphasis added). There are many people all throughout Christian history who knew the power of prayer.

John Hyde was one of them. In the late 1800s, he left his home in Illinois to serve the Lord as a missionary to the people of India. There he labored, not just physically but, more important, in prayer. He was known to stay up late into the night praying, as well as rising very early each morning, crying out to God, "Give me souls, O God, or I die!" He was so gripped with passion for the lost, and he knew that the strongholds the enemy had upon the people could only be broken through prayer.

And so pray he did. In fact, he prayed so much that the position of his heart had shifted in his chest, later causing the complications that led to his death. But because of his prayers, in 1904 the northwestern states of India where he had labored for years experienced one of the greatest revivals the nation has ever known! Just like Praying Hyde, we too can learn to pray and see God accomplish great things through our prayers. But we must learn. You could read every book ever written on prayer, but that won't make you a person of prayer.

We learn to pray by doing it. In The Last Days Newsletter, Leonard Ravenhill tells about a group of tourists who were visiting a picturesque village. As they walked by an old man sitting beside a fence, one tourist, in a rather patronizing way, turned to the old man and asked, "Were any great men born in this village?" The old man simply turned and replied, "Nope, only babies." My brothers and sisters, we must grow into the life of prayer. Let us begin today, taking the first steps toward becoming people great in prayer.

As we do, we will see incredible things happen in our lifetime. "The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results" (James 5:16, NLT). I know firsthand just how effective the prayers of those who trust the Lord and continue in prayer are. For three and one-half years my mother fasted and prayed for the Lord to call one of her six sons into full-time ministry. One after the other, each of my brothers started their careers, with only me, the youngest and shyest, left as my mother's last hope.

But when I was 16, the Lord answered my mother's prayers and called me to the ministry. The call on my life is a direct result of her prayers. As John Wesley once said, "God will do nothing but in answer to prayer."¹ I believe John Wesley first learned the importance of prayer and how to pray through the example he saw in his mother, Susanna Wesley. This woman of God and mother of 19 children was known for her devoted prayer life. In the midst of her busy household and numerous duties, she consistently made time to pray by pulling her apron over her head to find solitude with God.

It was out of her prayers that two of her sons--John and Charles Wesley--became key leaders in the Church in the 1700s. "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you

do not know" (Jeremiah 33:3). Let us receive His invitation and begin to walk this road of learning to pray.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/kp-yohannan/a-secret-foundation/>

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