

Praying For Impact

Introduction: Today, we are coming to the end of a 21-day prayer and fasting as a church. I believe that we will see the impact of this time. However, the enemy would like us to believe that we can't pray with impact or that all this praying was in vain. Let us look to the Word today to see what God says:

Opening text: Isaiah 45:18-19

*For thus says the Lord, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it **in vain**, Who formed it to be inhabited: "I am the Lord, and there is no other. ¹⁹ I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth; **I did not say to the seed of Jacob, 'seek Me in vain'**"; I, the Lord, speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.*

1. Not in vain

What this passage says is that the same way God didn't create the world in vain, it is also not in vain that we seek the Lord!

In vain means,

- *with no effect,*
- *with no result,*
- *without real significance,*
- *unsuccessful or useless.*

God is saying the opposite about seeking the Lord: **it is NOT in vain!**

God didn't create the universe in vain, and our prayers are never in vain. There is impact, consequence, results, for seeking the Lord.

James 5:16^b (AMPC) - ... *"The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working]"*.

I did not say to the seed of Jacob, 'seek Me in vain'

Isaiah 65:23-24 - *They shall not labour **in vain** nor bring forth children for trouble; For they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. ²⁴ "It shall come to pass that before they call, **I will answer**; and while they are still speaking, **I will hear**.*

This passage says that all our labour in fasting and prayer is not in vain, God hears and God answers – even before we call.

Isaiah 49:4 - *Then I said, 'I have **laboured in vain**. I have spent my strength for nothing and in **vain**; yet surely my just reward is with the Lord, and my work with my God.'"*

1 Corinthians 15:58 - *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your Labor is **not in vain** in the Lord.*

God wants us to know that whatever we do for Him, whether in service or in prayer is never in vain – never without impact, never without reward, never pointless or fruitless.

No. Fruit will always come if we don't lose heart!

Galatians 6:9 *And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*

When we have laboured in prayer, we will reap if we don't give up.

Hosea 10:12 - *sow for yourselves righteousness; reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, For **it is time to seek the Lord, till He comes and rains righteousness on you.***

Just like in the natural there is sowing and reaping, something always happens when you seek the Lord! That is why God said in Isaiah 45: *I did not say to the seed of Jacob, **'seek Me in vain'**.*

2 Thessalonians 3:13 and Galatians 6:9 both state that we need to make sure we do not grow weary, tired or discouraged while doing good or even praying good!

Whatever we do and whatever we pray is never in vain!

2. Not without reward

Hebrews 11:6 says that God is a *rewarder of those who diligently seek Him!*

I know that **when we don't see results it is hard to see rewards.**

God knows that too. However, that is precisely why He is telling us that we should never get tired of doing good and praying good.

2 Chronicles 15:7 - *But you, be strong and do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded!"*

Matthew 6:6 - *But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will **reward** you openly.*

Verse 18 - *so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will **reward** you openly.*

Our work and our prayers are not in vain, they will be rewarded and we will reap, if we do not faint.

3. Do not lose heart

Luke 18:1-8 - *Then He spoke a parable to them, that **men always ought to pray and not lose heart**, ² saying: “There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. ³ Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’ ⁴ And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God nor regard man, ⁵ yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.’” ⁶ Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said. ⁷ And **shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?** ⁸ I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?*

Men always ought to pray and not lose heart – always!

Ephesians 6:18 - *praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints*

1 Thessalonians 5:17 - *Pray without ceasing.*

There are some things that the Bible clearly says are in vain:

a) The obsessive pursuit of wealth outside God’s purposes

Psalms 39:6 - *Surely every man walks about like a shadow; surely they busy themselves **in vain**; he heaps up riches, and does not know who will gather them.*

b) Efforts made outside of a life of obedience to God

Leviticus 26:19-20 - *I will break the pride of your power; I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze. ²⁰ And your strength shall be spent **in vain**; for your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit.*

c) Worship wrapped in man’s religion

Mark 7:7 - *And **in vain** they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’*

There are some things that the Bible clearly says are in vain, but prayer is not one of them.

As **Isaiah 45:19** says, *I did not say to the seed of Jacob, ‘**seek Me in vain**’*

This is what Jesus said:

Luke 11:9-10 - *“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who **seeks** finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.*

Every teaching of Jesus about prayer always reinforced the idea that prayer is impactful and seeking God is never in vain!

In **Daniel 10** we read about Daniel's time of prayer and fasting. For 21 days he sought the Lord. On the 24th day an angel appeared to him and gave him a little 'behind the scenes' understanding of what had happened while he prayed: there was a delay in the answer to his prayer not because of God but because of demonic opposition. However, his persistence broke the resistance. Eventually his answer came. His prayer had not been in vain, just delayed.

Delay is not God's denial.

Conclusion: Your Prayers Are Working

- God did not say, "Seek Me in vain."
- Your prayers matter.
- Your fasting mattered.
- Your labour will be rewarded.

You do not seek the Lord in vain. Your prayers are working.