



PLUGGED IN

by Vincent M. Newfield

Prayer is powerful! Its effects are electrifying. God's Word says in James 5:16 that *...the earnest (heartfelt, **continued**) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working].*

As Joyce has shared, prayer is simply talking to God and listening as He talks to us. It is not a once a year, once a month or once a week event. **Prayer is a lifestyle** of ongoing, *unbroken* communication and fellowship with our heavenly Father. We can, and should, pray anywhere, anytime, about anything. This is what Paul means when he says to *pray without ceasing*.¹ He is instructing us to stay **plugged in** to the power source of life itself.

Are You Wired Up? I like to envision prayer like a long electrical extension cord. Now, I don't mean just any extension cord. I'm talking about one of those thick, heavy-duty orange extension cords people use to power up big machines and rugged equipment. The thicker the gauge of the cord, the more power it can carry. And the more power the cord can carry, the greater the job the equipment can accomplish.

To a great degree, that's how our prayers work—like a heavy-duty extension cord that reaches from us to the Father. Through our prayers we stay *plugged in* to the all-powerful, all-knowing and ever-present Almighty God. In other words, we experience an uninterrupted flow of fellowship with Him—we are in **accord**, or agreement, with Him, and the current of His power flows freely to us. All that He *is* and all that He *has* is ours in Christ.² The closer and more intimate our relationship is with Him, the greater power-carrying capacity our prayers have.

What Pulls Your Plug? There are a number of things that cause us to be “unplugged” from fellowship with the Father. Harboring unconfessed, known sin is one, and holding on to unforgiveness is another. But there is something else that the enemy often uses against us that pulls the plug on our prayer life just as fast. It's called condemnation.

If there is anything that will pull the plug on our flow of fellowship (our prayer life), it's guilt and condemnation. Think about it. When you do something wrong and you don't deal with it the way God wants you to, how do you feel? That's right . . . guilty and condemned. Sometimes we *have* dealt with our sin properly and we *still* feel condemned. And when we feel guilty and condemned, we often retreat and separate ourselves from the Father. We feel like we don't deserve to talk with Him or enter His presence in prayer, so we hide from Him, ignoring His promptings or trying to behave better in order to earn the right to fellowship with Him again.

How Do We Get Rid of Guilt and Condemnation When We Sin? There's only one way and that is to repent. First John 1:9 says *...if we admit our sins—make a clean breast of them—[God] won't let us down; he'll be true to himself. He'll forgive our sins and purge us of all wrongdoing* (The Message). When we repent, we get *plugged in* again—the flow of fellowship with the Father is fully restored. Make no mistake: As believers we are *in Christ*, and nothing can separate us from His love.³ However, our sins, if not dealt with, can separate us from full fellowship with God.⁴ That's why His gift of repentance is such a blessing. It's the gift that keeps on giving—one we must use every day.

Remember, *there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit* (Romans 8:1 KJV). Our privilege to pray—to be **plugged in** and have unbroken fellowship with the Father—is not based on what we do. It's based on what Jesus *did*. The closer your relationship is with the Father, the freer you will feel to share *everything* with Him—your fears and tears, your hopes and dreams, as well as your sins that need to be washed away. The deeper your relationship, the deeper and more meaningful your prayer life will be. So get plugged in and **stay** plugged in!

(1) 1 Thessalonians 5:17 KJV (2) Ephesians 1:3 (3) Romans 8:35, 38,39 (4) Isaiah 59:1-3.