

# Beyond the Academics of Prayer

TIPS&TOOLS  
Ideas to Stimulate Prayer



Entering my classroom at Taylor University one day, I anticipated a session like any other with my students: presentations, assignments, and activities. However, this class turned out much differently.

One of the students assigned to present that day (I'll call him Mark) chose to inform us of an awakening unfolding every Thursday night for several years on our campus. Mark invited other members of the Thursday night prayer group to visit class that day. After a presentation on prayer and communication, he invited the guests to come to the front of the classroom to demonstrate how they pray.

Asking for a volunteer from the student audience, Mark called upon a young woman who knew nothing about the prayer movement. With a simple and direct prayer, Mark asked God to give them a revelation of truth concerning the volunteer student.

Silence followed.

After a few moments one of the group members spoke up. "I feel like the Lord is speaking to me in a mental image of you hitting a golf ball as hard as you can, and trying to be as accurate as possible as to where it lands," he said. "I feel like God wants you to know He sees your efforts and will make sure you hit the mark in your efforts."

Interesting. Total silence.

Another student spoke up, "I feel like you have a passion for children. God wants you to walk in your passion and not worry about the future."

Again, total silence.

Mark then closed with a simple prayer, thanking God for speaking truth to them. Eyes migrated to the volunteer student, and we awaited a response.

"Well," she said, "I don't know if I have a passion for kids. I don't even know if I like them. But I have been struggling with knowing what God's will is for my life and what I should do. For the past two summers I have been working with the elderly who suffer with dementia, who are childlike in mind, and I love working with them. I need to continue to study and pursue a career in health care for these people."

Pausing to think, she added, "I don't play golf, but I am a perfectionist always worried about hitting the mark with assignments and life. God is asking me to let it go and trust Him with the outcome. All I have to do is my best." Mark then simply closed with a short prayer, thanking God for His word of truth and knowledge to them. Class resumed as normal. But things were not normal for me. As I returned to my office, I reflected on what just happened. Still feeling the "wind" of the Holy Spirit brushing over me, I gazed out my office window. The wisdom gifted to me that day transcended my academic experience.

Many of us spend a lifetime studying theories, historical facts, and proven methodologies. I glanced over at my jammed bookshelves, representing proven evidence and recorded conclusions. Yet, in that moment, the brilliance these books offered faded away.

What flooded my soul was a new awareness of the contrast

between earthly wisdom and direct communication with the King of kings. What I had just witnessed broke the parameters of my prayer teachings, professional studies, and training. I was the student and they were the teachers. I was much richer and blessed, having learned from them.

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