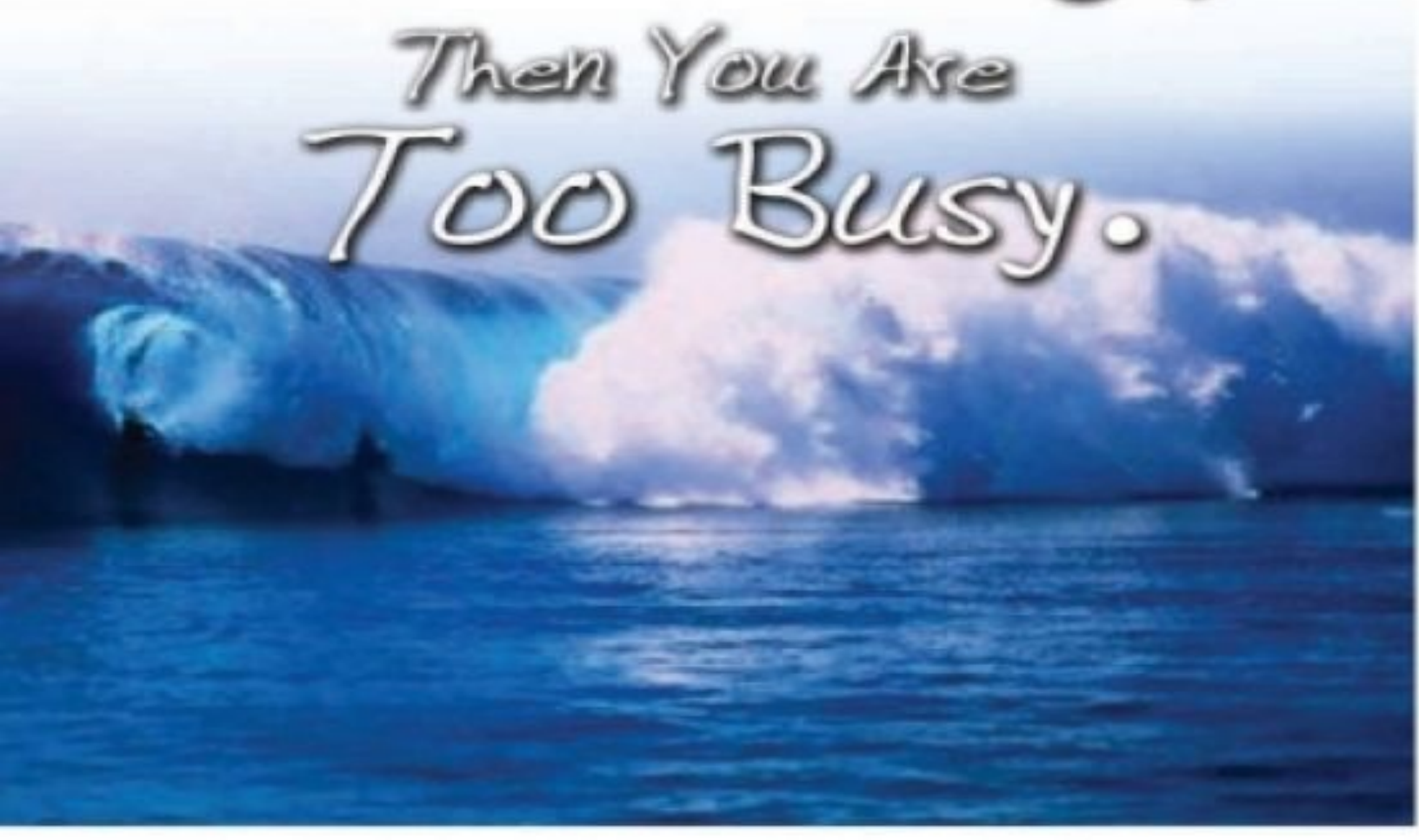


# Dag Heward-Mills

*If You Are*

*Too Busy  
to Pray,*

*Then You Are  
Too Busy.*



**If You Are Too Busy To Pray, Then You Are Too Busy by Dag  
Heward-Mills \* \* \* \* \***

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# Chapter 1

## **Don't Lose Your Only Chance for a Personal Relationship with God**

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Matthew 7:21-23

One of the least understood statements of Jesus is, "I never knew you."

These people were prophesying in His name. They were doing many wonderful works in His name but Jesus said, "I never knew you." I have always wondered how it is possible to do the work of God without knowing God. Dear friend, you had better believe what Jesus said.

It is possible to be a member of a church and to do great things for God but not know God. A daily quiet time will make you have a personal relationship with the Lord. Nothing else can make you have a personal relationship with the Lord. Attending church a thousand times is different from having a personal, one to one interaction with the Lord. It is this personal interaction with the Lord which most Christians lack.

It seems that God is more interested in the personal relationship than the great public works that we do in His name.

A quiet time will make you have that personal knowledge of God. A daily quiet time will prevent you from going to Hell. A quiet time will save you from the delusion that working for God is the same as knowing Him. There are people who work for me but don't know me personally. I have

employees who hardly know me. They may recognize me when I come around, but they do not have a personal relationship with me.

I have many shepherds and pastors who work in the church with me. But I do not have a personal relationship with all of them. Definitely, there is a difference between those who just work for me and those who have a personal relationship with me.

How come I have a personal relationship with some of my pastors and shepherds? The answer is simple. Some of these pastors and shepherds make the effort to be close to me and to interact with me personally. Now I know them personally and can even call them friends. There are people in my church who do wonderful works in the name of the church or on my behalf. But the reality is that I don't know them personally.

Earlier on, when someone would ask me how they could do better in the ministry, I would give them twenty-five principles for church growth and then I would show them eighteen strategies for effective evangelism. I might show them seven steps to an excellent ministry. But now, if you ask me that same question I would say, "Just draw closer to God and know Him personally." You see, there is no point in running around on His behalf when you do not know Him personally.

It is time to know Him personally. It is said that pastors worldwide pray an average of seven minutes a day. If the pastors are spending less than ten minutes with their Heavenly Father, then perhaps the ordinary members are spending a few seconds every week with their Lord. It is no wonder the Church is the way it is.

It is time to know God personally. The only way is to have a regular daily quiet time. Do you expect God to come to you to develop a relationship with you?

Certainly not! It is up to you and I to draw near to Him on a daily basis.

**Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you...**

**James 4:8**

In this regard, a daily quiet time may actually be your passport to Heaven.

When you meet someone in public and shake his hand you can hardly say you know him. In my home, I have a picture which my mother-in-law took with President Clinton, former president of the USA.

When she showed it to us, we said, “Wow, when did you meet him? How did you get to know him?”

She smiled and told us about how she had a brief interaction with him at a conference, and managed to take a picture with him. The picture gives an impression that he knows her. But the reality is that he doesn't know her at all, and she doesn't know him either.

Meeting someone in public does not mean that you know him at all.

Knowing about someone is different from knowing the person.

There are many people who know about me but do not know me. Some people who see me from afar may have the impression that I am proud. Some people may hear me speak and think that I am a difficult person. May God forgive me for my sins. However, some people who know me personally may have a different impression.

Knowing God from afar is very different from knowing Him personally. Your impressions from afar will only change when you get closer to Him.

The way you can develop that personal relationship with God is not in public at the church service.

You do not develop a personal relationship with God by attending conventions and crusades. You cannot develop a personal relationship with anyone by interacting in public. There has to be communication at a personal level. There has to be a personal interaction! There has to be a quiet time. You can know God personally by spending time with Him during your quiet time.

# Chapter 2

## Insist on a Daily Prayer Time

Quiet time is not only a time of Bible reading and study but also a time of daily prayer. No matter how important you are, you need to communicate daily with the Lord.

There are some Christians who only pray but do not study the Word. Such people cannot develop a wholesome relationship with God.

It is a combination of the Word and prayer that builds up a daily prayer time. Here are good reasons why you must pray every day.

### **1. Prayer is very important.**

Someone once said that it is more important to know how to pray than to have a degree from the university.

There are many things that are important in this life. A good education is important. Money is important. A good marriage is important. But, a good prayer life is most important!

Let this enter your spirit - In all your getting, get prayer! In all your activities, make room for prayer!

### **2. Great men like Daniel prayed during their quiet time.**

**Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.**

**Daniel 6:10**

You will notice from this Scripture that Daniel prayed three times a day. An important phrase used in this verse is "as he did aforetime". That means that Daniel had been praying these prayers on a regular basis. Daniel was not just praying because he was in trouble; he had a habit of prayer. Many times when people become prosperous they stop going for prayer meetings and eventually backslide. Not so with Daniel!

He was the Prime Minister of his country, second in authority only to the king. He was a successful man who had risen from slavery to the high office of Prime Minister. He was one of the most respected and feared men in the nation. He was a major politician of the day. He was a civil servant. Yet, he prayed three times a day, everyday!

### **3. No one is ever too busy, too blessed or too successful to pray.**

You may have a busy lifestyle and you may be a very important person. However, I do not think that you are busier than Daniel was. Daniel was a Prime Minister, a leader in the nation. Many people think that Heads of State and Ministers of government have a relaxed and enjoyable life, flying all over the world. That is not true!

I am the head of a large organization myself, and I know that people in high positions do not have an easy life. The higher you go, the greater the responsibility you have. There is so much hard work involved in staying on the cutting edge of life and ministry. Did you know that successful executives like Daniel are so stressed out that they are prone to diseases like stomach ulcers and heart attacks? These conditions are more common with very busy people because of the hard work that they do.

Daniel was one such person. He was a Prime Minister, yet he felt that he was not too busy to pray three times a day. **If you think you are too busy to pray, then you are deceiving yourself.**

If you do not pray, it is because you do not want to pray. It is because you do not think that prayer is important now! Daniel was successful, yet he prayed. Why was he able to pray three times a day?

I have watched people in the church rise out of poverty into mega blessings. When they were poor, they had a lot of time to attend prayer meetings. But when they became blessed, they felt everything was all right. No! Everything is not all right! Your state of blessing is not the signal to stop praying!

### **4. Daily prayer is our source of power and protection.**

You must realize that it is prayer that releases the power of God on our behalf. Jesus knew the power of prayer. That is why He spent long hours in prayer.

Maybe you are a successful businessman, and you do not think that you need any of this spiritual "stuff". Perhaps you are a politician and you



think your protection must come from fetish or occult powers. Let me tell you right now, there is power in prayer. We do not need any other power when we have the power of prayer. There is protection for us when we pray. The last part of the armour of God is prayer (Ephesians 6:18). In other words, prayer is an important part of your spiritual defence.

In Ghana, many people become afraid when they prosper. They feel that somebody may use supernatural powers to try to kill them. You have nothing to fear when you are a prayerful person like Daniel. Many people wanted to kill Daniel.

These people did not just think about killing Daniel, they actually plotted to eliminate him. Through the power of prayer, Daniel was protected from the lions. I see all the lions in your life scattering away in fear! I see your prayer power rising! I see you going forward because of a newly found prayer life!

**...that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,**

**Luke 3:21**

I see the heavens opening over your life! Never forget this! The heavens opened when Jesus prayed. Both physical and spiritual blessings rain upon you when you are a prayerful person.

### **5. Daily prayer is important to acquire and sustain the blessings of God.**

Do you have anything that you are proud of? Have you achieved anything in this life? Let me tell you that it is by the grace of God. By the power of prayer, you will achieve many great things. It is by prayer that you will sustain what God has placed in your hands.

I know of people who were given thousands of dollars as gifts. Today, that money has disappeared into thin air. God may give you something but it also takes His grace to sustain that blessing. Are you the pastor of a great ministry? Let me tell you, it takes prayer to sustain you in the ministry. Why do you think Jesus kept running away to pray?

There is a law of degeneration at work in the world. Everything is decaying. Your business is decaying. Your church is decaying. Your very life is decaying. It takes the power of God, through prayer, to preserve everything that God has given to you.

## **6. Daily quiet time prayer is the most effective because it is habitual.**

A man called Dostoyevsky said, **“The second half of a man’s life is made up of the habits he acquired in the first half.”**

Pascal said, **“The strength of a man’s virtues is made up of his habitual acts.”**

*If you are going to be a great person in this life, you need to have good habits. An action becomes a habit when it is repeated many times; sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously. It becomes your custom! Habits can be either good or bad. Remember that good habits are repeated as easily as bad habits.*

A good habit will lead to consistent breakthroughs even without intending to. Bad habits will also lead to consistent failure. If you decide to develop a habit of prayer, you are developing a habit for success.

Jesus went to church on the Sabbath because it was his habit. The Bible tells us that Jesus had customs or habits.

**...as his custom [habit] was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day...**

**Luke 4:16**

Daniel had a custom of praying three times a day.

**...he [Daniel] kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed...**

**Daniel 6:10**

Life in the secular world is not designed to include a prayer time. Work starts early in the morning and continues late into the night. Weeks may pass before you even think of prayer. For many people, it is only an impossible situation that reminds them of the need for prayer. Dear friend, it is important for you to include prayer in your life.

God is not a spare tyre! A spare tyre is something that is never used except in emergencies. God is no fool. Whatsoever a man sows, he will reap. If you have time for God on a regular basis, He will have time to bless you on a regular basis. Only the mercy of God makes Him listen to some of our prayers. Develop your prayer life until it happens spontaneously. Develop your prayer life until you pray habitually without even thinking of what you are doing.

## **I Made Time to Pray**

When I was a medical student, I was very busy with my coursework. There was no time to pray at all. But because I had made prayer a part of my Christian life, there was no way I could do it! I had to somehow include it in my schedule. I decided to pray late at night. I was usually so sleepy that I had to walk about just to stay awake. Prayer was so important to me that I could not leave it out of my life.

One night, as I headed for my room after one of such prayer times, I actually fell asleep whilst walking! It was only when I bumped into the wall of the Spanish Department building of the university that I awoke from my sleep! I believe that God saw my earnest desire to keep praying in spite of an impossible medical school schedule.

# Chapter 3

## Five Powerful Reasons for Daily Prayer

### 1. Quiet time prayer will sustain you in troubled times.

Why do we wait for trouble before we pray? Would you take someone as a serious friend if he only called you when he was in serious trouble? In times of peace, he had no time for you. God is looking for someone who will fellowship with Him in both good and bad times.

The more I preach, the better I become at preaching. The more you pray, the better you will become at prayer.

In times of crises, you will find yourself rising up to the occasion and delivering powerful prayers that bring results.

### 2. Quiet time prayer is needed for national leaders.

There is no doubt that the world is ruled by wicked spirits in high places. The earth is covered with human beings at war with each other on a daily basis. Famine, wars, epidemics and disasters abound! You just have to keep your eyes on the international news and you will hear about another major disaster.

Dictators of all kinds abound in many nations. Like snakes, which shed their skin, many dictators of yesteryear have a new “democratic look” but are still tyrants and despots at heart.

Many national leaders are actually under the influence of evil spirits, and that makes them do the things they do. They cling to power instead of honourably allowing others to have a chance at leadership. Like vampires, they drink the blood of the nation’s wealth and stack it away in secret places. Charismatic leaders like Hitler lead entire nations into initial prosperity, and then into eventual destruction through war.

I always remember how things changed in South Africa after President De Klerk replaced President Botha. A new leader led to the release of Nelson Mandela and the end of apartheid. It is important for us to pray for these leaders so that our nations prosper. The right person at the helm of

affairs will make a lot of difference to our nations. I believe that the presence of a prayerful person like Daniel made a lot of difference to that nation.

### **3. Quiet time prayer will help you to develop the ability to pray for long hours.**

Years ago, the only prayers I knew about were those that the priests read out to us in church. The longest I could pray was thirty to forty seconds and that was when I recited the Lord's Prayer. There were three prayers I knew how to pray: The Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary and a Prayer to the Angel of God! However, as I grew in the Lord I learnt how to pray for myself. I can now pray for several hours at a time. I always remember the first time I prayed for three hours.

I was a student in Achimota School (Prince of Wales College) in Ghana. I was in the midst of a crisis and I needed the intervention of the Lord. I can also remember the first time I prayed for seven hours. I was a sixth former in the same Achimota School. I prayed from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. I enjoy praying for long hours.

Praying for thirty minutes is almost like no prayer to me. Do not misunderstand me; I am not saying that God does not hear short prayers. I am saying that I have developed the art of praying for long hours like Jesus did. Jesus prayed for three hours in the garden of Gethsemane.

**And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed...And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, WHAT, COULD YE NOT WATCH WITH ME ONE HOUR? He went away again the second time, and prayed...And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.**

**Matthew 26:39,40,42-44**

In this Scripture, Jesus was surprised that the disciples could not pray for one hour.

**And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?**

**Matthew 26:40**

Jesus prayed all night before He chose His disciples.

**And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain**

**to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;**

**Luke 6:12,13**

Long prayer may not be an explicit instruction in the Bible, but it is implicit throughout the Word.

#### **4. Quiet time prayer will help you to develop a very personal relationship with God.**

Many Christians can only pray when they are in a group. They cannot stay in a room on their own and pray for one hour. That is a great handicap.

There is a difference between praying alone and praying with a group of people. Both types of prayer are important.

If you can pray for three hours on your own, then you can pray for six hours with other people. It is easier to pray in a group.

Each time you expand your ability to pray alone, you are expanding your ability to chalk great achievements in prayer.

#### **5. Quiet time prayer will help you to imitate the prayer life of Jesus.**

There are four important times to pray: morning, afternoon, evening and all the time. Jesus prayed in the morning and so do I.

**And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.**

**Mark 1:35**

*What is so important about morning prayer?* Prayer in the morning is very good because you meet God before you meet the devil. You meet God before you meet the circumstances of life. God anoints you to overcome every mountain that you will encounter in your life.

*Prayer in the afternoon* signifies prayer in the midst of activities. When you pray in the afternoon, it signifies that in the heat of the day and in the thick of the battle, you recognize God as the most important force in your life. God will bless you for afternoon prayer. I see you praying in the afternoon!

**And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.**

**Mark 6:46**

You can take a little time off your lunch break and pray. That prayer will do you more good than a plate of rice will!

*It is also important to pray in the evenings.*

When the Bible says “watch and pray”, it does not mean keep your eyes open when you pray. What it actually means is, stay awake and pray.

**And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.**

**Luke 6:12**

There is something about praying in the night that is different from praying during the day. It is a very different experience. I have heard stories that witches are very active around 2 a.m. in the night. Perhaps when you pray in the night you are tackling the forces of darkness in a different way. After all, they are called the forces of darkness (night).

*The fourth important time to pray is all the time.*

**Pray without ceasing.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:17**

Prayer is intended to be a never-ending stream of communication with your heavenly Father. He has given us the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of speaking in tongues. I pray all the time. My wife tells me that sometimes I pray in my sleep!

**Pray without ceasing.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:17**

You can pray on the bus and on your way to work. You can pray softly undertone when you are in the office. You can pray when you are in the shower.

God is happy when His children are constantly in touch with Him.

I have a friend whose wife calls him on his mobile phone at least seven times a day. I have been in meetings with him when he had received not less than four calls from his wife. Nothing important, she was just keeping in touch! I think it is a nice thing. She phones without ceasing! I see you praying without ceasing!

I see you praying in the morning and in the evening! God is changing

your life because of your newly found prayer life! Your marriage, business and ministry will never be the same by the time you finish reading this book!

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