

# IN JESUS NAME AMEN

## “TELL”EGRAM VS “ECHO”GRAM

*Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness; come before His presence with singing. Know that the Lord, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations. - Psalm 100*

It's not likely that you've ever had the need to send a telegram. But in the days before the telephone, email and text messaging, the best way to send an urgent message to someone was by telegram. So many times we approach prayer like we're sending a telegram. We quickly shoot off a bulleted list of our needs, wants and requests to God and then go about the business of our day.

For many of us, our prayer life doesn't consist of much more than telling God about our problems, needs and situations. It's like we're sending Him a “tell”egram describing our prayer needs in detail and lamenting about what needs to happen to make it right. We may even give Him a timeline that it needs to be completed by for all to be right with the world, or so we think, and that's part of the problem. This often leads to frustration; not only in whatever situation we're facing, but also in our prayer life because we feel God isn't hearing us or has given up on us for some reason.

Rather than approaching prayer like it's a “tell”egram, we should try and view it more like an “echo”gram. Have you ever seen a picture of the Swiss Alps? Range upon range of beautiful snow-capped mountains towering majestically into the sky. It's a place where you can walk outside your home, cup your hands around your mouth, shout words and hear them echoed back to you. That's exactly how our prayer life should look —our prayers should be echoes of what God teaches us through His Word and through the leading of the Holy Spirit. God's Word states that we are to “enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise” (Psalm 100:4). When we pray, we should

begin our prayer with praise, because out of a heart of worship and gratitude, words of life will begin flowing.

Start by telling God what He means to you, sing His praises, and soon you'll find that your dire situation becomes much smaller in the presence of your powerful God. In Acts, Paul and Silas were more focused on praising God than crying out to be freed from prison. And as a result, "there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed" (Acts 16:26). Paul and Silas knew the power that lies within praise, and the echoes of their praise produced a move of God!

When you pray, your words should also echo the words and teachings of the Scriptures. Your prayers of praise might sound a lot like Psalm 96: "For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods." Reciting a psalm word for word is a wonderful place to start when you feel like you have nothing to praise Him for. The Psalms are simply a collection of prayers and songs of praise and worship to God, and it's good to consult them when you need a reminder of how you can thank Him. Eventually, as you do this more and more, those psalms will naturally come to your mind when you pray and become echoes of God's words to you back to Him.

When you continually enter through His gates and into the throne room of grace, your heart will begin to echo the heart of the Father. The more time you spend in His presence and in His Word, the more like Him you'll become and the more often you'll experience His loving nature. His presence overtakes any need that you may bring into your prayer time and that need soon pales in comparison to the One who loves you. When you learn to stop focusing on "tell"egram prayers and zone in on "echo"gram prayers—praying God's Word and heart—your prayers and your life will be transformed!

Walking with God down the avenue of prayer, we acquire something of His likeness; and unconsciously we become witnesses to others of His beauty and His grace.

~ E.M. Bounds

### *Prayer*

Father, I want to exchange my life for Yours. Show me how to lay down any plan or agenda I may have and receive Yours. Teach me to know when I have prayed all You have asked of me and when I need to continue. Let my heart be an echo of Yours. In Jesus' name, Amen.

### ***Activation***

- You can only echo something you've heard before. Get into God's Word and listen to His voice.
- One way for this exchange to take place is to pray scriptures out loud and put your name in them. For example, "For God has not given a spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).
- Sing, dance, be still and say nothing, read the Word, journal thanks to God for answered prayer.
- Follow your heart and ask God to give you creative ways to show your love for Him. Try beginning and ending your day listing three things you're grateful for.

### ***For Further Study***

Genesis 1:27

Matthew 6:33

Mark 10:35–45

Philippians 2:1–11

### ***Memory Verse***

"If two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

**Matthew 18:19–20 (NKJ)**