

I. The prayer of the age is the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ, as the one new man, the prayer that exercises the authority of Christ as the ascended Lord and Head of the Body to fulfill God's economy; to enter into this kind of prayer, we need a heavenly vision to see something that is far beyond our natural concept—Eph. 1:17:

A. We need to see the meaning of the ascension of Christ:

- ① The ascension of Christ indicates that the entire work of redemption has been completely accomplished—Heb. 1:3; 10:12.
- ② The ascension of Christ indicates that the lordship of Christ has been established—Acts 2:36:a. Everything that the Lord has obtained and attained is being transmitted “to the church”—Eph. 1:19-23; 3:20-21.b. We need to see the heavenly fact that Christ has been exalted by God, established as the Lord of the universe, and made Head over all things to the church; all things are under His feet, and everything that He has obtained and attained is being transmitted to the church, which is His Body—1:22-23.

B. We need to see the church's position as the Body of Christ; because the church is the Body of Christ, the position of the church is exactly the same as that of Christ; since the Body is one with the Head, the position of the Body is exactly the same as that of the Head—1 Cor. 12:12, 27; Eph. 5:30.

C. We need to see the authority of the church as the Body of Christ:

- ① The authority of the Body is the authority of the Head exercised by the Body.
- ② As the church, the Body of Christ, we need to assume the authority of Christ—Matt. 28:18b-19a; Luke 10:19.

D. We need to see the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ:

- ① This kind of prayer is not the prayer of individual believers but the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ; physically, we may be praying in our room only by ourselves, but spiritually, we are one with the Body—cf. 1 Kings 8:48.
- ② In this kind of prayer, we do not beg the Lord to do something for us; instead, we claim what the Lord has obtained and attained:a. Christ has obtained the lordship and the headship; He is the Lord and the Head over all things to the church.b. Christ has attained the highest place in the universe; He has been raised from the dead and is seated at God's right hand in the heavenlies, far above all rule, authority, power, and lordship in the universe—Eph. 1:20-21.
- ③ When we pray according to what the Lord has obtained in ascension, we may pray, “Lord, we do not go along with the present situation; as Your Body, we take the ground of Your ascension and claim Your lordship over the present situation.”
- ④ When we pray according to what the Lord has attained in ascension, we should simply declare who we are and where we are; we are in the Body, the Body is in the Head, and the Head is transcendent; if we have the vision that we are the Body of the Head and that the Head is now transcendent, we will take the ground to claim what the Lord has attained and tell all the negative things, “Do not bother me. Go to the lake of fire! I am transcendent. You cannot touch me. You are under my feet
- ⑤ Because the Body is one with the Head in the heavens, the Body has the authority to bind and loose what has already been bound and loosed in the heavens—Matt. 16:19; 18:18.
- ⑥ The church is built upon a rock, and this rock is the ascended Christ; as a result, the gates of Hades cannot prevail against the church—16:18.

E. To fully enter into this kind of prayer and be able to exercise the authority given by the Head to the Body, there are two things that we must realize:

- ① We must realize that we are members of the Body, and we must live, act, and move in the Body; as an example, imprisonment did not isolate Paul from the Body of Christ or cut him off from the supply of the Body—Phil. 1:19.
- ② In our daily life we must always put off the old man and put on the new man by being renewed in the spirit of our mind; the new man is composed of the Head with the Body, Christ with the church—Eph.4:22-24; 2:15-16.

F. “We need to see the vision of the ascended Christ and learn to pray the prayer of authority. For two thousand years these matters have been neglected, but we believe that in these last days the Lord is going to recover them. Too often we do not take the ground of Christ's ascension and claim what He has obtained and attained. Nevertheless, we believe that the Lord will recover this lost ground. This is the highest peak, the highest mountain of the good land. In these last days the Lord will recover this highest peak, this highest mountain. We must realize the facts, take the ground, and claim what the Head has obtained and attained. This is the prevailing prayer of the church. This is the prayer of the age”—The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1963, vol. 1, p. 165.

II. Praise is the highest work carried out by God's children:

A. The highest expression of a saint's spiritual life is his praise to God.

B. God's throne is the highest point in the universe, yet He sits “enthroned / Upon the praises of Israel”—Psa. 22:3.

C. God's name and even God Himself are exalted through praise:

- ① David praised God seven times a day; the Christian life soars through praises; to praise is to transcend everything to touch the Lord—119:164.
- ② David appointed Levites to play instruments to commemorate, thank, and praise God before the Ark of the Covenant of God—1 Chron. 16:4-6.
- ③ When Solomon completed the building of Jehovah's temple, the priests brought the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah into the Holy of Holies; when the priests came out of the Holy Place, the Levites stood beside the altar, sounded the trumpets, and sang with cymbals, harps, and lyres; together they sounded praise to God, and at that moment the glory of Jehovah filled His house—2 Chron. 5:7, 12-14.

- ④ We should praise the Lord all our life; we should sing praises to our God—Psa. 146:2; Hymns, #717, #124, #166.
 ⑤ When we, the many sons of God, meet as the church and praise the Father, the firstborn Son sings hymns of praise to the Father in our singing—Heb. 2:12.

D. “Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name”—13:15:

- ① The book of Psalms is, in fact, a book of praise in the Old Testament; however, the Psalms contain chapters not only of praises but also of sufferings; God wants His people to know that the praising ones are the very ones who have been led through trying situations and whose feelings have been wounded, yet God perfected praises out of these ones—8:1-2; 84:4-6; 42:7, 11; 45:1-2.
 ② The loudest praise comes very often from the ones who are passing through hardships, adverse environments, and downtrodden feelings; this kind of praise is most pleasing to God and is blessed by Him—cf. 23:4.
 ③ The nature of praise is an offering, a sacrifice; in other words, praise comes from pain, suffering, and loss; God desires His children to praise Him through everything and in every situation—Heb. 13:15.

E. Praise is the way to display Christ’s victory and overcome spiritual attacks:

- ① The ultimate goal of Satan is to stop all praises to God; prayer signifies spiritual warfare, but praise signifies spiritual victory; whenever we praise, Satan flees.
 ② “About midnight Paul and Silas, while praying, sang hymns of praise to God; and the prisoners were listening to them”—Acts 16:25: **a.** Paul and Silas offered the sacrifice of praise in the jail; the wounds on their bodies were not yet healed, their pain was not soothed, their feet were in the stocks, and they were shut in an inner jail of the Roman Empire. **b.** What was there to be joyful about? What was there to sing about? But there were two persons with transcendent spirits, who had surpassed everything; when they praised in such a way, the doors of the jail opened, the chains fell off, and even the jailer and his whole family were saved in a joyful way—vv. 19-34. **c.** Whenever you run out of strength to pray and you find your spirit heavily oppressed, wounded, or sagging, praise Him; if you cannot pray, try to praise. **d.** When you encounter unusual circumstances and problems and are bewildered and feel like collapsing, just remember one thing: “Why not praise?”; if you offer your praise at that moment, God’s Spirit will operate in you, open all the doors, and break all the chains.
 ③ “They rose up early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa. And as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood up and said, Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in Jehovah your God, and you will be established; believe in His prophets, and you will succeed. And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed them to sing to Jehovah and give thanks in holy array as they went out before the army and say, Give thanks to Jehovah, for His lovingkindness endures forever. And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming out against Judah; and they were struck”—2 Chron. 20:20-22: **a.** Please note the words when they began; this means that at the very moment when everyone was singing praises to Jehovah, He rose up to smite the Ammonites, Moabites, and the people of Mount Seir; nothing moves the Lord’s hand as quickly as praise. **b.** Every time you encounter a problem, you should pray for mercy that you would stop manipulating and plotting and that you would learn the lesson of praising instead; much warfare can be won by praise. **c.** Praise will last for eternity; it will never cease—Rev. 5:8-14; 7:9-12; 14:1-3; 15:2-4; 19:1-8; cf. 21:6; 22:20. **d.** A person who praises God transcends everything; he overcomes continually by his praise; this is a principle, and this is also a fact. **e.** To praise is to glorify God; God is worthy of all glory; may God gain abundant praises from His children.

Experience①: Realize that you are the members of the Body of Christ, put on the new man in school life

Since the Body shares the authority of the Head, the Lord told His disciples that whatever they bound on earth would have been bound in heaven, and whatever they loosed on earth would have been loosed in heaven (Matt. 16:19; 18:18). When we pray with the authority of the Body, anything that we loose on the earth will be something that has already been loosed in the heavens, and anything that we bind on the earth will be something that has already been bound in the heavens. Because the Body is one with the Head in the heavens, the Body has the authority to bind or loose what has already been bound or loosed in the heavens.

The church is built upon a rock, and this rock is the ascended Christ. As a result, the gates of Hades cannot prevail against the church (16:18). We have the ground over Hades. Thus, we must learn to pray, exercising the authority that has been assigned to the Body by the Head.

To fully enter into this kind of prayer, there are two additional things that we must realize. First, we must realize that we are members of the Body, and we must live, act, and move in the Body. Second, in our daily life we must always put on the new man (Eph. 4:24). The new man is composed of the Head with the Body, Christ with the church (2:15-16). On the negative side, we need to put off the old man, and on the positive side, we need to put on the new man. By living in the Body and putting on the new man, we will be able to exercise the authority given to the Body by the Head.

For Junior/Senior High School Students

Matt.18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven. **19** Again, truly I say to you that if two of you are in harmony on earth concerning any matter for which they ask, it will be done for them from My Father who is in the heavens. **20** For where there are two or three gathered into My name, there am I in their midst.

The church is the body of resurrected and ascended Christ. Christ is the Head of the church. The Head can claim the things that have been obtained and attained. As a junior/Senior High School Student, learn to pray in two or three people in the principle of the Body.

Prayer of being released from bondage of smartphone games: For example, you are addicted to smartphone games and losing the time to study and the time of the church life. You have tried to limit yourself to the games many times, but it did not work. In such a case, please pray with the authority by gathering in two or three with your spiritual partners and the leading brothers and sisters. “Lord Jesus, I have made up my mind to limit the time of game but it did not work. It is the time to concentrate on my study. It will be a miserable situation if I remain like this. Oh Lord, please release me from the devils that bind me. I will pray with the authority by gathering in two or three with one heart in the principle of the Body. Please release me from every bondage. I pray in the Body by the name of the Lord. Amen. Hallelujah!”

Prayer of being released from school bullying: Also, there are classmates who are not getting along with you well and always make you annoyed. In such a case, you can pray the prayer of authority in two or three people. “Oh Lord Jesus, I am fighting against the evil forces attacking behind the fallen feelings aroused by the classmates. Even though I am still a junior/senior high school student, I am a member of the Body of Christ. That is why Satan attacks on me. At such times, I will never become weak and go into Satan’s trap. Strengthen me in the Lord. In the Body of Christ, I will stand as a corporate warrior against Satan and his army. For the wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness. Praise the Lord’s victory. At the same time, I should put off the old man and put on the new man in the school life. Paying too much attention on the classmates’ words is my old man. Hope I can set the mind on the spirit, put off the old man and put on the new man. In such an environment that harms my feelings, hope I can experience putting off the old man in a practical way. Amen!”

If it did not work by praying in two or three people, fellowship with the responsible person of the district of the church and pray together: If it did not work by praying in two or three people, you can fellowship with the responsible person of the district of the church and pray together. In this way, you are not in personal but in the principle of the Body of Christ. You are able to exercise the prayer of the authority by praying in two or three and telling the church. The prayer of authority is not a prayer to ask for something. It is a prayer that claims the victory that Christ has obtained and attained. Since you are the member of the Body of Christ, you have the ground to be able to claim. Under such realization, you can pray like this, “Devil Satan, it is false to say that you are dominant. You are already destroyed on the cross. That is the place you should be. Satan, why are you here? Go back to the Cross!” From the time of junior/senior high school, not only fellowship and pray to the Lord, but also learn to exercise the prayer of authority in the Body in a practical way.

Experience ②: Praise the Lord for His victory and repudiate Satan

Praising is the way to overcome spiritual attacks. Many people say that Satan is afraid of the prayers of God’s children; he flees whenever God’s children kneel down to pray. This is why he often attacks God’s children and frustrates them from praying. This is a common attack. But we will point out another fact: Satan’s greatest attacks are not aimed at prayers; his greatest attacks are aimed at praise. This does not mean that Satan does not attack prayers. The moment a Christian prays, Satan begins to attack. It is very easy to talk to people, but the moment one prays, Satan comes with problems. He will make one feel that it is hard to pray. This is a fact. But Satan does not attack just prayer; he also attacks the praise of God’s children. The ultimate goal of Satan is to stop all praises to God. Prayer is a warfare, but praise is a victory. Whenever we praise, Satan flees. Therefore, Satan hates our praising the most. He will use all his strength to stop our praising

God’s children are foolish if they stop praising when they suffer under adverse environments and downtrodden feelings. But as they come to know God more, they will find that even a Philippian jail can become a place of songs (Acts 16:25). Paul and Silas were praising God inside the jail cell. Their praise broke loose all the jail doors....and the chains broke. The jailer believed in the Lord on that day, and his whole family was saved in a joyful way (16:19-34). Paul and Silas offered the sacrifice of praise in the jail. The wounds on their bodies were not yet healed; their pain was not soothed. Their feet were in the stocks, and they were shut in an inner jail of the Roman Empire. What was there to be joyful about? What was there to sing about? But there were two persons with transcendent spirits, who had surpassed everything. They saw that God was still sitting in the heavens; He had not changed at all. They themselves might have changed, their environment might have changed, their feelings might have changed, and their bodies might have been suffering, but God was still sitting on the throne. He was still worthy of their blessings. Our brothers, Paul and Silas, were praying, singing, and praising God. This kind of praise, which arises out of pain and loss, is a sacrifice of praise. This kind of praise is a victory.

New believers should not think that they have to pass through many years before they can learn the lesson of praise. They should realize that they can start praising immediately. Every time you encounter a problem, you should pray for mercy that you would stop manipulating and plotting and that you would learn the lesson of praising instead. Much warfare can be won by praise. Many battles are lost because of the lack of praise. If you believe in God, you can tell the Lord in the midst of your problems, “I praise Your name. You are higher than everything. You are stronger than everything. Your lovingkindness endures forever!” A person who praises God transcends everything. He overcomes continually by his praise. This is a principle, and this is also a fact.

For Working Young Saints

Chr. 20:1 Then after this the children of Moab and the children of Ammon and with them some of the Meunim came against Jehoshaphat for battle. **2** And some came and told Jehoshaphat, saying, A great multitude has come upon you from beyond the sea, from Syria; and they are now in Hazazon-tamar (this is En-gedi).

12 O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no strength before this great multitude that is coming against us, and we do not know what to do; but our eyes are upon You.

14 Then the Spirit of Jehovah came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly;

15 And he said, Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat. Thus says Jehovah to you, Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's.

20 And they rose up early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa. And as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood up and said, Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in Jehovah your God, and you will be established; believe in His prophets, and you will succeed. 21 And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed them to sing to Jehovah and give thanks in holy array as they went out before the army and say, Give thanks to Jehovah, for His lovingkindness endures forever. 22 And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming out against Judah; and they were struck. 23 And the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to absolutely destroy and demolish them; and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every man helped to destroy his neighbor.

As a business person, there is the need for you to overcome the Japanese tradition of extremely inefficient working environment (e.g. too much overtime). Satan's work is behind this working environment and it is binding the workers in Japan, and preventing them from believing in the Lord and carrying out the church life. You should never think that "since you are not a president or director, it will be outrageously impossible to overcome the inefficient working environment". The Lord has already won victory over Satan. The church takes part in the Lord's victory by growing into Christ, the head. King Jehoshaphat defeated the enemy by praising the Lord when they could not deal with such attack from a large army. Humanly speaking, it is impossible to overcome inefficient working environment caused by the Japanese culture. But for you to carry out this fight with practice of a normal church life, and with praise for the testimony of the Lord in the world around us, you can definitely win. **Important matters are: i) believe the Lord in His victory; ii) praise the Lord for His victory; and iii) fight with brothers and sisters for the building of the church.**

109 主を賛美する — 彼の勝利 (英124)

1. 賛美 賛美 キリスト, すでに勝利得る!
あがない成就した, ふるいひとは死ぬ!
十字架のしょう利で サタンはほろびる!
2. 賛美 賛美 キリスト, すでに復かつす!
死は飲み尽くされ, いのちへみちびく!
よみのやみ, やぶり, たい能あらかわす!
3. 賛美 賛美 キリスト, すでに昇天する!
万ぶつを超えつし, たかき御名を得る!
すべての権威おび, てき投げ落とす!
4. ハレルヤ, キリスト, すでに勝利得る!
ハレルヤ, キリスト, すでにふっかつす!
ハレルヤ, キリスト, すでに昇天する!