



## ATHENS SCHOOL *of* MINISTRY & WORSHIP ARTS

### **Prayer Ministry Philosophy**

#### **Biblical Foundation for Prayer Ministry**

According to the Apostle Paul, the natural is first and then the spiritual follows after the natural. (See 1 Cor 15: 45-47.) As we relate this truth to our emotional and physical health, we can conclude the following statements; for optimal *physical* health, one must ingest nutrient-supplying food and drink, and discard toxins and other waste products; likewise, for optimal *emotional and spiritual* health, one must ingest truth that strengthens the soul and discard toxic false beliefs. We ingest truth through meditation on the Word and *one way* to discard these toxic beliefs is through Prayer Ministry that seeks to transform the heart, mind, will, and emotions.

#### **The Believer**

In God's Word, the believer is given a description of his life-in-Christ and his inheritance. This description includes LIFE ABUNDANT (John 10:10), a life of righteousness, peace, and joy (Rom 14:17), a binding up of the broken heart, liberty, and freedom (Is 61:1). The believer's life is filled and flooded with the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22). It is true that the born again believer is perfect and complete in his *spirit* (1 Cor 5:17), but man is a three part being: spirit, soul, and body (1 Thss 5:23). The soul, consisting of the mind, will, and emotions, often contains unhealed hurts, unmet needs, and unresolved issues that require the healing touch of God. Many blame evil spirits as the cause of these issues; and it is true that the enemy is "given access" to the soul when the human soul is not in submission to God's will and purposes for his life (Eph 4:26,27). But more often, it is the unsundered soul or incorrect understanding of God and His Word that provide the greatest resistance to the refining process of the Spirit. The unsundered, unrenewed soul endeavors to protect itself from any pain and thus it faithfully squirrels away all the details of past traumas only to add arguments, reasoning, rationalization, and logic (the building of strongholds; 2 Cor 10:3-5) in order to deny what he believes he cannot change, what he does not want to change, and/or what he is afraid to try to change about himself. These strongholds prevent the Holy Spirit from entering particular areas of his heart and bringing about transformation (2 Cor 3:16-18) and freedom. These mindsets can easily cause one to misinterpret God's word and even God Himself. Scriptural truth gets twisted and contaminated when it has to filter through a mind filled with old thoughts and wrong mindsets. Therefore God's work of renewal must begin within the framework of our minds, wills, emotions, experiences and beliefs in order to begin the process of uniting our born-again spirits with our unsundered souls. FREEDOM from these destructive mindsets comes when we *know* (ginosko) the truth (John 8:32). "Knowing the truth" means to EXPERIENCE His truth and/or to experience HIM as the TRUTH, Spirit to spirit. This is where Prayer Ministry can help. Prayer Ministry is not unlike the account of the four friends who lowered their paralytic friend down from the roof to the feet of Jesus. The four friends had to go around the crowd, climb up on the roof, and remove the tiles; all this was done to present their friend before the Healer, Jesus (Luke 5:17-26). This is the role of the ASM&WA Prayer Ministers; they are to help the recipient remove any hindrances in his coming to Jesus and in his receiving God's life-giving truth.

## God's Truth

**Truth that leads to freedom and transformation** is Truth *received and accepted... in the heart*. God's Truth is *spontaneously* released through one's heart by Holy Spirit and is received through one's five senses (e.g. images, songs, etc.) and/or His Word. God's Truth is filled with life (*zoe*, the Greek word for "life" and "revival").

-**The Truth received and accepted** must be consistent with God's written Word. The logos is *the standard* for validating everything that happens in ministry.

-**The Truth received and accepted** will enable the recipient to put on the "renewed/renovated new self" and grant him everything pertaining to life and godliness. (Col 3:10, Eph 4:23,24, Rom 12:2, Heb 12:1, 2 Cor 4:16, 1Ptr 1:3, 2 Tim 3:16,17, John 8:32, John 6:63, Ps 51:5,6). The fruit of righteousness will be evident in his life and manifest effortlessly.

-**Truth received and accepted** brings freedom from fears, agitating passions, and moral conflicts (Ampl 2 Ptr 3:14), and sanctifies the whole person: spirit, soul, and body (1 Thss 5:23,24).

-**Truth received and accepted** results in sober judgment (Rom 12: 2,3) and peace in the recipient's heart so that he may know the will of God for his life (Col 3:15, Rom 12:1).

## Forgiveness

**Truth received** results in **TRUE FORGIVENESS**.

True forgiveness or *forgiveness from the HEART*, is defined by the following:

-One gives up any claim he has against the one who has offended him.

-One grants the offender a full pardon without harboring any anger or resentment toward the offender.

-One surrenders any resentment and any desire to get even.

-One rejoices when the offender is blessed and mourns when the offender experiences hardship and pain.

**TRUE forgiveness is total freedom** from responding to, reacting to, or replaying old offenses and hurts. *TRUE Forgiveness* is attained **ONLY** by the grace of God, by an impartation of the compassion of Christ in the heart of the one offended. (See this truth in Jesus' parable in Matthew 18:23-30.) The steps to attaining this heart-felt compassion include: taking an account of the offenses, acknowledging the culpability of the offender, receiving God's truth about the offense, and receive God's healing in his wounded heart. The one who was offended then *freely extends* compassion toward the offender, and *true forgiveness* is granted.

Without the cross and God's grace, forgiveness, repentance, and healing cannot happen. By His stripes we are healed. (Is 53:3, 1 John 1:7)

Important Note: Forgiveness is *not* excusing the behavior of the offender, nor is it always a one-time verbalization of "I forgive X." True forgiveness is accomplished by one's choosing to "set aside" one's present-day anger and allowing God to heal the wound. (Forgiveness does NOT necessarily mean there is *reconciliation*; reconciliation is often accomplished by the offender taking full responsibility for his actions, confessing the error of his ways, and, in penitent brokenness, seeking reconciliation from the one he has offended.)

## Repentance of Sins

The process of repentance is "mind-renewal" that enables us to agree with God about sin and turn away from it. It is an act of grace by the power of Holy Spirit that leads to wholeness (Col 3:10, 16, 2 Cor 4:16, 2 Cor 3:18). Repentance occurs when our hearts replace false beliefs with God's truths. Repentance frees us from the snare of the devil (2 Tim 2:25-26) and enables us to see God's heavenly perspective on the Truth (Heb 10:26-29); in turn, we will receive "times of refreshing that come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

### **The enemy**

Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil; the works of the devil are to steal, kill, and destroy mankind (1 John 3:8, John 10:10). Through Jesus' death and resurrection, He disarmed satan (Col 2:14,15, 1 Ptr 3:22), and rendered him powerless (Heb 2:14, Luke 10:19); satan is reduced to "roaring" and "seeking someone he *might* devour" (1 Ptr 5:8). To destroy the works of satan, the believer "resists the father of lies firm in faith" (or the Truth of God) and/or the believer arms himself with "the armor of God" (Eph 6:10-18), which consists of weapons of *Truth*. The devil will "lay down a snare" by deceiving (2 Cor 11:2-3) or by setting up a replay of the circumstances that cause neediness, doubts, or pain, but, the "knowledge of truth" will cause the believer to "escape from the snare of the devil" (2 Tim 2:25-26).