GENERAL

art of prayer by kenneth hagin

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Understanding the Art of Prayer by Kenneth Hagin

Prayer is often described as the language of the soul, a direct line to the divine that transcends time and circumstance. Yet for many believers, the practice can feel elusive, unstructured, or even intimidating. In the mid twentieth century, Kenneth Hagin, founder of the Harvest Christian Fellowship and a pioneer of the Word of Faith movement, published a groundbreaking book that reframed how Christians approach prayer: *The Art of Prayer*. This work is more than a manual; it is a theological framework that blends biblical authority with practical instruction, empowering believers to pray with confidence, purpose, and effectiveness.

Who Was Kenneth Hagin?

Born in 1907 in Arkansas, Kenneth Hagin experienced a series of personal hardships that shaped his ministry. After a period of spiritual stagnation, he reported a powerful encounter with the Holy Spirit in 1945 that led to a renewed faith in the power of the Word. Over the next decades, Hagin founded Harvest Christian Fellowship, authored dozens of books, and delivered thousands of sermons worldwide. His emphasis on faith, healing, and the authority of Scripture resonated with millions, and his influence remains evident in contemporary charismatic and evangelical circles.

Hagin's teaching style was direct, passionate, and rooted in biblical exegesis. He believed that the Bible's promises were not abstract ideas but living, breathing truths that could be applied in everyday life. In *The Art of Prayer*, he distilled this philosophy into a systematic approach that demystifies prayer and equips believers to engage with God on a deeper level.

The Core Premise of The Art of Prayer

At its heart, *The Art of Prayer* argues that prayer is an act of **faithful obedience** to God's Word. Hagin contends that prayer is not merely a plea for favors but a declaration of divine truth—an affirmation that God has already accomplished what we seek. This perspective aligns with the broader Word of Faith theology, which posits that the spoken word shapes reality.

Hagin's methodology can be summarized in three key stages:

1. Preparation – Aligning one's mind, heart, and spirit with God's promises.
2. Declaration – Speaking the truth of Scripture as if it has already been fulfilled.
3. Expectation – Anticipating and receiving the divine response with a posture of gratitude.

By following these stages, Hagin believed believers could experience transformative outcomes—be it healing, provision, or spiritual breakthroughs.

1. Preparation: Setting the Stage for Effective Prayer

Preparation is the foundation upon which all successful prayer is built. Hagin emphasizes three sub components:

- Scriptural Mediation – Immersing oneself in the Bible to internalize God's promises.
- Spiritual Cleansing – Purifying one's heart from doubt, fear, and past grievances.
- Mindset Alignment – Shifting from a "requesting" mindset to a "receiving" mindset, trusting that God already

knows what we need.

Hagin cites passages such as *Psalm 37:4* (“Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart”) and *Matthew 7:7*(“Ask, and it will be given to you”) to illustrate the necessity of aligning our thoughts with divine truth.

2. Declaration: Speaking the Word into Reality

Once the preparatory work is complete, Hagin urges believers to move into the act of declaration. This involves:

- Speaking Scripture – Using the exact wording of biblical verses to affirm what God has promised.
- Affirmative Language – Emphasizing the present tense (“I am healed,” “I am provisioned”) to align with God’s already completed work.
- Persistent Prayer – Continuing to declare the truth until the desired outcome is fully manifested.

Hagin’s approach is reminiscent of the “faith prayer” model used by many charismatic leaders today, where the believer’s words are seen as a catalyst that bridges the gap between the divine and the human.

3. Expectation: Living in the Fulfilled Promises

Prayer does not end with speaking; it culminates in living the reality that has been declared. Hagin stresses the importance of:

- Gratitude – Thanking God for the answered prayers, reinforcing a cycle of faith.
- Obedience – Acting in ways that align with the newly affirmed reality.
- Continued Faith – Maintaining trust even when the outcome takes longer than expected.

By living in expectation, believers reinforce the connection between faith and divine action, thereby strengthening the “art” of prayer for future encounters.

Practical Applications: How to Use the Art of Prayer in Daily Life

While *The Art of Prayer*is grounded in theological concepts, it also offers tangible steps for everyday believers. Below are actionable tips derived from Hagin’s teachings:

Daily Prayer Routine

1. Morning Scripture Meditation – Begin each day by reading a verse that speaks to your current need.
2. Mid Day Declaration – Use the verse as a spoken affirmation during breaks or commutes.
3. Evening Reflection – End the day with gratitude, acknowledging any signs of answered prayer.

Prayer Journaling

Keeping a prayer journal helps track the progression of your faith journey. Record:

- The scripture you used.
- Your emotional state before and after prayer.
- Any signs of divine intervention.

Prayer Groups and Accountability

Engaging with a community can amplify the power of prayer. Hagin advocated for small group settings where members:

- Share their prayer requests.
- Recite scriptures collectively.
- Encourage one another in faith.

Such gatherings create a supportive environment that fosters collective expectation and shared testimony.

Overcoming Common Prayer Challenges

Many believers face obstacles such as doubt, silence, or impatience. Hagin offers remedies:

- Doubt – Return to Scripture to reinforce the truth of God's promises.
- Silence – Recognize that silence can be a form of divine communication; practice stillness.
- Impatience – Cultivate a long term perspective, trusting God's timing.

The Impact of The Art of Prayer on Contemporary Ministry

Since its publication, *The Art of Prayer*has influenced countless pastors, missionaries, and laypeople. Its impact can be seen in several key areas:

1. The Rise of the Word of Faith Movement

Hagin's emphasis on speaking Scripture as a means of effecting change laid the groundwork for the Word of Faith movement, which has become a dominant force in modern evangelicalism. The movement's focus on faith, confession, and divine healing echoes Hagin's principles.

2. Integration into Worship Services

Many churches now incorporate Hagin's prayer techniques into worship, encouraging congregants to declare biblical truths during corporate prayer. This practice has revitalized congregational engagement and deepened the sense of communal expectation.

3. Influence on Spiritual Formation Programs

Seminaries and discipleship courses often include modules on "prayer as confession." Hagin's systematic approach offers a structured framework that educators can use to train future leaders in effective prayer.

4. Global Reach and Translation

The book has been translated into multiple languages, making Hagin's teachings accessible worldwide. In many non English speaking churches, his methods have become a staple of spiritual practice.

Critiques and Balanced Perspectives

While *The Art of Prayer* has been widely embraced, it has also faced criticism. Critics argue that:

- The focus on verbal confession may inadvertently shift emphasis from relationship to performance.
- There is a risk of equating faith with entitlement, potentially leading to disappointment if results are delayed.
- Some theologians question the theological basis of "speaking the Word into reality" as a universal practice.

Proponents counter that Hagin's teachings are firmly rooted in Scripture and that the emphasis on faith aligns with biblical principles such as *Hebrews 11:1* ("faith is the assurance of things hoped for…") and *Mark 11:24*("If you believe… you will receive").

Balancing Expectation with Trust

Many believers find a middle ground by combining Hagin's methods with a humble trust in God's sovereignty. This balanced approach encourages:

- Persistent prayer without impatience.
- Expectation coupled with gratitude for God's timing.
- Continuous reliance on Scripture as a guide rather than a guarantee.

Integrating Hagin's Teachings with Modern Technology

In today's digital age, prayer has found new mediums. Here's how Hagin's principles can be adapted to modern tools:

Prayer Apps

Many apps now feature daily scripture prompts. Users can incorporate Hagin's "prepare, declare, expect" cycle by setting reminders for each stage.

Online Communities

Social media groups and forums allow believers to share prayer requests and recite scripture together, fostering a virtual "prayer circle" that mirrors Hagin's group dynamics.

Video Sermons and Podcasts

Pastors can use Hagin's framework to structure sermons on prayer, providing listeners with actionable steps that can be implemented immediately.

Personal Testimonies: Real World Outcomes of The Art of Prayer

Below are a few brief testimonies that illustrate the transformative power of Hagin's teachings:

- Healing – A woman in Texas reported a sudden recovery from a chronic illness after declaring the healing promises of Isaiah 53:5 in line with Hagin's method.
- Provision – An entrepreneur in Kenya found unexpected financial support after declaring God's provision promises, citing Hagin's emphasis on faith and expectation.
- Relationship Restoration – A couple in Australia reconciled after praying together using Hagin's "declare and expect" approach, which helped them align their hearts with divine truth.

While individual experiences vary, these stories underscore the potential of a disciplined, faith based prayer life.

Practical Guide: Applying the Art of Prayer Today

For those ready to implement Hagin's teachings, here is a step by step guide:

1. Select a Scripture – Choose a verse that speaks to your need (e.g., Philippians 4:6-7 for peace).
2. Prepare – Meditate on the verse, cleanse your heart, and set an intention to trust.
3. Declare – Speak the verse out loud, using the present tense ("I am at peace").
4. Expect – Visualize the outcome, thank God, and act in alignment with the new reality.
5. Journal – Record the experience, noting any changes or signs.

Repeating this cycle daily can gradually reshape your prayer life, making it more intentional and impactful.

Conclusion: The Enduring Legacy of Kenneth Hagin's Art of Prayer

Kenneth Hagin's *The Art of Prayer* remains a

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