



**30**  **MINUTES TO**

**PIZZA** **PRAYING TO GET RESULTS**

**FRANK SANTORA**

# **30 Minutes to Pizza**

*Praying to Get Results*

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# I. INTRODUCTION

*Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."*

**LUKE 11:1**

There is something deep inside us that knows this simple truth... prayer should be easy! Talking to our Father and seeing results should be as natural as breathing. Asking and receiving what we need in life should be as certain, predictable and routine as picking up the phone and ordering pizza on a Friday night.

Many times people want and need to pray but don't, simply because they don't know how! Even the disciples, who ministered with Jesus daily for more than three years, said... "Lord, teach us to pray!" They watched Him work miracles, they knew His wisdom, they served the crowds faithfully. They were not simply asking Jesus to teach them the mechanics of prayer; they were asking for something much deeper.

Certainly, these twelve men had prayed before in the Temple, as children and even as adults. They had rattled off memorized prayers that they learned in Hebrew school, at holidays and over special offerings. They must have had a complete

repertoire of prayers to pray for various occasions, as fast as they could, to fulfill their religious duties.

But inherent in the disciples' question is a desire we all have for something deeper than just... *give us another prayer that we can repeat, mindlessly, out of routine and memory.*

What the disciples desired to learn from Jesus was much more than how to look more religious. They were really asking: *Lord, teach us to pray like You pray! Because every time You pray, your prayers get results, and we want results like that! We want to know why You get results in prayer, and why we don't!*

The same basic need exists in the Church today: we want, we NEED to know how to pray and get results in our personal lives, in our Church, in our community. Whether we realize it or not, not all prayer is the same, and not all kinds of praying works. But thankfully, we have been given specific instructions in the Word of God on how to pray to get powerful, consistent results like Jesus did. These instructions can be easily remembered as the THREE PRINCIPLES OF POWERFUL PRAYER.

- **Pray based on God's promises**
- **Pray like you're waiting for pizza**
- **Pray with persistence**

Truthfully, if you will remember and use these three principles in your daily prayer life, you will receive answers to your prayers!

## II. Rain, Rain Go Away

We can see these three principles of prayer at work in the life of one of the heroes of the Bible, the prophet Elijah. He prayed two famous prayers: first, that the rain would stop falling over Israel, and then, three and a half years later, that the rain would begin again and end a three year drought. Elijah's prayers displayed the power of God to the wicked King Ahab, Queen Jezebel and the wayward nation of Israel.

But before we look deeper at this, remember how the Apostle James described Elijah for us:

*Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years!*

**JAMES 5:17 (NLT)**

That's right, Elijah was a mere man, a human being, just like you and me. That means if Elijah can get his prayers answered and see God do powerful things...so can we!

These principles of prayer will work for anyone and everyone who is in a real relationship with Jesus. God is no respecter of persons. He doesn't answer prayers because of the individual; He answers prayers because the principles contained



in His word are being practiced. If you and I practice God's principles of prayer, we can see God answer our prayers and do powerful things through them, just like Elijah... and Jesus!

### ***A Bit of History***

The account of Elijah's bold prayer is found in 1 Kings 18. God's chosen people, the nation of Israel, has been led astray by the wicked king Ahab and his even more wicked wife, Jezebel. Together they are leading the nation into sin to worship a false god called Baal. As a way of getting their attention, God instructs Elijah to call for a drought to affect the entire land.

Elijah does, and for the next three and a half years, not one drop of rain falls on Israel...all because of Elijah's powerful prayer. Elijah is therefore public enemy #1 in the A and J kingdom!

Once again, God speaks to Elijah and says, *"It's time to give my people an opportunity to come back to me."* God is like that. No matter how far we stray, God is always reaching out to us. It's never too late to come back to God!

So, with that instruction, Elijah calls for a show down on Mt. Carmel between the prophet of God, Elijah and the prophets of Baal... to prove once and for all, whose God is the true God.

The challenge is simple: the prophets of Baal will build an altar and Elijah will build an altar and the god that answers by fire is actually God. The prophets of Baal cried out, but despite all their efforts Big Daddy Baal does not respond. Not. One. Peep.

But Jehovah God Almighty does, and in a truly spectacular way! Israel immediately repents, and revival breaks out in the land as they turn back to the one true God. And then, just to seal the deal, Elijah gives the word for all the false prophets of Baal to be executed. This last act has an important lesson to teach us about becoming powerful in prayer.

### ***Creating Confidence***

The false god, Baal, can be thought of as a symbol of anything in our lives which is standing in the way of our relationship with Christ. It is any "open doors" we have opened through sin, that have allowed the enemy access to our lives, and which have blocked our relationship with Christ. Baal is a type of those issues, addictions, relationships, and circumstances that God wants to clear out of our lives.

In order to pray earnestly, boldly and confidently, like Elijah does in the prayer, we have to learn to destroy Baal.

*If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment.*

**HEBREWS 10:26-27 (NIV)**

Because we have refused to destroy or put to death these works of our flesh, Baal remains active in our lives. This kills our “earnest” praying and reduces our prayers to “timid” prayers... where we *beg* God instead of *believe* God.

It’s time to destroy all the prophets of Baal in our lives!

## III. Getting Results

*Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain." So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." So he went up and looked, and said, "There is nothing." And seven times he said, "Go again." Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, "There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!" So he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.'" Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel. Then the hand of the LORD came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.*

**1 KINGS 18:41-46**

### ONE: Pray Based on God's Promises

So what gave Elijah such confidence in God... or "God-fidence," that his prayers would be

answered by God? Simply put, Elijah had a promise from God that he based his prayers on: first, to stop the rain and second, to end the drought years later with a downpour. God spoke to Elijah and said, *“At your word the rain will stop, and at your word the rain will start again.”*

Elijah first received this word, this promise, from God, and this word became the foundation of Elijah's famous, miraculous prayers. Since God said it, and God does not lie, Elijah could boldly and confidently declare the same thing that God said:

*And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word.”*

**1 KINGS 17:1**

Understanding this point is absolutely necessary to getting our prayers answered, too!

### ***God Fulfills His Will***

What many people don't understand is that God may, but is not obligated to, fulfill our will and our wishes. He has, however, willingly obligated

Himself to perform His Word and fulfill His promises. Therefore, if we have a promise from God that we find in His Word, we can have the same “God-fidence” of Elijah, and God will answer our prayers!

*Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.*

**1 JOHN 5:14-15**

"According to His will." What does that mean, exactly? How do we know what God's will is? We find it in God's word, the Bible. If God has promised it in His word, then you can be certain it's His will.

Notice the God-fidence that we get when we ask according to a promise in His word, or according to His will...the Bible says He hears us. And not only does He hear, but He will grant what we ask. Scripture is very clear, that if God has promised it, and we have done our part in the matter, then God will bring it to pass.

## ***God Is Watching***

*Then the LORD said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over My word to perform it."*

***JEREMIAH 1:12 (NASB)***

Look at the picture this paints for us: God is watching over His word! It's almost as if there is a radar screen before God's throne and when you or I find a promise and take a stand in prayer on that promise, God locates us. Suddenly, it's as if God says, *"Hey, someone just reminded Me of My Word! Someone just found a promise in scripture that will help them overcome. Someone just got into alignment with My will for their life."*

Then God says, *"Yes! Let's bring it to pass, let's perform it, let's make sure it materializes for them."* Our prayers burst through to heaven, our prayers get noticed by God, our prayers are answered when we pray according to God's word!

## ***Our Need vs. God's Word***

Too many people pray weak, ineffective prayers like this: *"God, I need You! God, don't You see what's going on here? It's so terrible; I can't stand anymore of it! God, why don't You do something*

*to help me! How long is it going to take? God, when is my breakthrough coming? God, don't You see what the enemy is doing to me? Don't You care that I'm drowning down here, that I'm about to go under in this storm... that I really can't take much more?!"*

In contrast, when you pray **this** way, the angels of heaven arise and minister help to you in fulfillment of God's word:

- *God, You promised that You will meet all my needs according to Your riches in heaven by Christ Jesus.*
- *God, You promised that by the stripes of Jesus, I am healed.*
- *God, You said, if I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, I and my whole house will be saved.*
- *God, Your word declares that no weapon formed against me shall prosper.*
- *God, You promised that You would give Your angels charge over me.*
- *You said no evil will befall me all the days of my life.*
- *You said, that if I come boldly to the throne of grace, that I would find grace and mercy to help in time of need.*
- *God, You promised that You would work all things together for my good, if I loved You and were called according to Your purpose.*
- *You said, that when I'm weak You would be strong.*
- *You said Your grace is sufficient.*
- *You said Your mercy is new every morning. Your love is everlasting. Your forgiveness knows no bounds.*



*God, You said... God, You promised... God, Your word declares!* Something wonderful happens when we pray the promises of God! Faith arises. Doubt exits our hearts. The devil's boat begins to take on water and the radar screen of heaven starts beeping like crazy. And God says, "Look there, look right there – someone is taking a stand on My word – let's make sure it comes to pass! Because I'm not a man that I should lie. Because I have exalted My word even above My name. I've staked My Godhood on being true to My word. Because that promise was paid for by the blood of My dear Son. Because I told them, *all my promises are 'Yes and amen'*."

Angels of heaven...send the help they need!"

Child of God, the centurion said to Jesus just say the word and my servant shall be healed, but God is saying to us just pray the word and watch Me perform My promises.

It's like the old song says:

*Standing on the promises of Christ my King,  
Through eternal ages let His praises ring,  
Glory in the highest,  
I will shout and sing,  
Standing on the promises of God.*

*Standing, standing,  
Standing on the promises of God my Savior;  
Standing, standing,  
I'm standing on the promises of God.*

*Standing on the promises that cannot fail,  
When the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,  
By the living Word of God I shall prevail,  
Standing on the promises of God.*

*Standing on the promises I now can see,  
Perfect, present cleansing in the blood for me;  
Standing in the liberty where Christ makes free,  
Standing on the promises of God.*

*Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord,  
Bound to Him eternally by love's strong cord,  
Overcoming daily with the Spirit's sword,  
Standing on the promises of God.*

*Standing on the promises I cannot fall,  
List'ning every moment to the Spirit's call,  
Resting in my Savior as my all in all,  
Standing on the promises of God.*

Standing on the Promises of Christ My King  
Russell Kelso Carter, p.1886

### ***Take a Stand Against the Odds***

Like any war, to win your spiritual battles you must take a stand...and many times you'll be standing up against terrible odds. Just like John Paul Jones said during the Revolutionary War as his ship was going down. He was asked to surrender, and he said, "Surrender! I have not yet begun to fight!" Like Gandalf stood and said on the bridge in Lord of the Rings, "You shall not pass!" And like Ben Franklin said, "We either hang

together or we will be hanged separately,” as he banded the colonies together to sign the Declaration of Independence.

A stand must be taken and often times against all odds: against the odds of cancer, we must take a stand on “By His stripes we are healed;” against the odds of financial ruin, we must take a stand on “My God shall supply all my need...” Against the odds of separation and divorce, we must take a stand on, “What God has joined together...” Against the odds of social rebellion, we must take a stand on, “Train up a child in the way...” Against the odds of depression, we must take a stand on “The joy of the Lord is our strength.” And against the odds of evil winning the battle, we must take a stand on “No weapon formed against us shall prosper!”

When it comes to the war we wage for victory in our prayer closet, we must take our stand on the promises that cannot fail! And if you don’t know where to find a promise for your situation from God’s word, for goodness sakes...Google it!

## **TWO: Pray Like You're Waiting for Pizza**

*And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel;  
then he bowed down on the ground, and  
put his face between his knees, and said*

to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea."

**1 KINGS 18:42-43**

Now, how can "pizza" be a key to getting prayers answered?

Well, back in the day a certain clever pizza company made a mint off a simple marketing hook: they promised to deliver your pizza within thirty minutes of ordering it, or it was free. So we would call, order a pepperoni pizza, and the pizza man would say, "*It's now 5:37 pm. Your pizza will be there in 30 minutes or less!*"

And then what would we do? First, we'd give the kids the thirty-minute warning: *Dinner in thirty minutes!*

Then we'd set the table. We'd set out the paper plates and plastic forks. We'd put out the drink cups and put the soda on the table. We'd set out a pile of napkins. We'd dig through the cabinets for the garlic powder and the red pepper flakes. And then, time after time, go over to the door and look out the window for the pizza delivery boy.

Think about it though. In complete faith, we took this stranger, the pizza man, at his word!

Our actions showed that we fully expected to be eating our pepperoni pizza by 6:07 pm. We took the pizza company employees at their word... without any personal relationship, never having

met the CEO or the franchise owner, and having no knowledge of the reliability of the delivery boy trying to earn a few bucks.

And even without any relationship with a single person involved in the order and delivery, we acted in such a way that we fully expected to be eating our pizza in thirty minutes or less.

But look at this! Scripture says:

*Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.*

**MARK 11:24**

When you pray, believe that you receive. When you pray believe that you receive! Not *after you see*, believe that you receive. Not *after your prayer is answered*, believe that you receive. But when you pray, when you “place the order,” believe that your pepperoni pizza is on the way!

### ***Is God More Trustworthy?***

Is God more reliable than a pizza cook or a franchise owner? Is God more trustworthy than a high school senior trying to make a few bucks? Yes!

In the immortal words of that great preacher, S.M. Lockridge:

*He's the miracle of the age. He's the superlative of everything good that you choose to call Him. He's the only one able to supply all of our needs simultaneously. He supplies strength for the weak. He's available for the tempted and the tried. He sympathizes and He saves. He's gives and He guides. He heals the sick. He cleanses the lepers. He forgives sinners. He discharged debtors. He delivers the captives. He defends the feeble. He blesses the young. He serves the unfortunate. He regards the aged. He rewards the diligent and He beautifies the meek. You can trust Him!*

*He is the key of knowledge. He's the wellspring of wisdom. He's the doorway of deliverance. He's the pathway of peace. He's the roadway of righteousness. He's the highway of holiness. He's the gateway of glory. He's the master of the mighty. He's the captain of the conquerors. He's the head of the heroes. He's the leader of the legislatures. He's the overseer of the overcomers. He's the governor of governors. He's the prince of princes. He's the King of kings and He's the Lord of lords. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah... YOU CAN TRUST HIM!*

## ***Those Who Trusted Him***

Noah trusted Him, and He kept his family safe and dry in the ark. Abraham trusted Him, and at nearly 100 years of age, he fathered a child. Joseph trusted Him, and he was raised from the pit to the palace. Moses trusted Him, and He parted the Red Sea. Daniel trusted Him, and He kept him safe from harm in the lion's den. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego trusted Him, and He walked beside them in the fiery furnace. David trusted Him and he defeated the giant warrior, Goliath. Joshua trusted Him and the walls of Jericho fell to Israel. Nehemiah trusted Him, and He rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. Gideon trusted Him and He delivered Israel from the Midianites. Samson trusted Him and He defeated the Philistines. Rahab trusted Him and her life was spared. Ruth trusted Him and she was placed in the lineage of Jesus Christ. Mary trusted Him, and she bore the Messiah. Peter trusted Him, and he walked on water. Paul and Silas trusted Him and the jail house doors were shaken open.

Just like our actions show that I trust that my pizza is on the way, if we are going to get our prayers answered, our actions are going to have to evidence that we trust God that our answered prayer is on the way.

## ***"What If" of Worry vs. "When It" of Prayer***

Instead of letting the enemy fill us with the "what ifs" of worry, let's let the Holy Spirit fill us with the "when its" of answered prayer! Declare to your family, "When it's here, it will be a testimony." Tell your pastor, "When it's turned around, I'll let God use me to encourage others." Shout to the devil, "When it's come to pass, God and I will have the last laugh!"

So, my pizza is on the way! I'm so excited, I can almost taste the cheese. I can feel my tongue getting burned. I can hear the sound of the crust crunching as I bite into it. I can see the grease from the pepperoni on my fingertips as I lick them clean.

The same principle applies while waiting on God for answered prayer. Expect it! See it happening! Feel the joy of the answered prayer. Practice your testimony. When you pray, *believe* that you receive. Have confidence that He is faithful who has promised. Expect your miracle to manifest. Expect a breakthrough to occur. Expect a sudden change for the better!



## THREE: Pray with Persistence

*And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea. So he went up and looked, and said, "There is nothing." And seven times he said, "Go again."*

**1 KINGS 18:42-43**

Elijah has his promise from Almighty God – it's going to rain. Elijah is standing in "pizza-ready faith", expecting it to happen any moment, so much so, he says to his servant "Go and look for some rain clouds in the sky over the sea where the storm is going to come from."

And of course, his servant is a little hyped. He's greatly influenced by Elijah's expectation. After all this is Elijah, the one who gets his prayers answered; the one who called down fire from heaven. If Elijah said God will do it, then He will!

He goes and he looks eagerly, and he comes back and says, "Sorry Boss – nothing." But Elijah is standing in faith and replies, "Go look again!" ...sorry Boss, nothing. Go look again! Sorry Boss, nothing!"

Six times the servant goes and looks. Six times Elijah has a pizza-ready faith. Six times he takes his

stand on the promise of Almighty God, and six times he hears the words, "There is nothing."

### ***When There is Nothing***

Who has heard those words "there is nothing," more than once?

- There is no money
- There is no hope
- There is no way
- There is no love
- There is no chance
- There is no change
- There is nothing left
- There is nothing we can do

These are the three little words that are sent into our lives in order to signify the end of faith, to cause us to quit on God, quit on His promise and quit on our destiny. Translation: you can quit praying now, quit confessing now, quit believing now, quit hoping now, quit dreaming, quit looking, quit praising, quit marching.

And herein lies perhaps the most difficult part of every prayer battle. It's what the Bible calls the fight of faith, and it requires our persistence. But there are no victories without persistence! The promises of God are inherited through faith and patience, or better translated, faith and

endurance. The race, my friends, is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but rather to the persistent.

### ***Pounding on the Devil***

Persistence has nothing to do with getting God to move, but has everything to do with making Satan lose his grip. Remember Jesus' parable of the persistent widow:

*Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'"*

**LUKE 18:1-5**

This is not a parable about how you and I are supposed to relate to God; after all it would be a really bad example for Jesus to posture the Father as an unjust judge! Rather, this is a parable to

teach us how we are supposed to defeat the unjust spiritual forces of darkness that stand in the way of what God has promised. And the way to defeat them is to be persistent:

- Keep asking
- Keep seeking
- Keep knocking
- Keep praying
- Keep looking

Eventually you will wear the devil out, or better said, weaken his stronghold on your situation. Then you'll see the manifestation of the promise of Almighty God!

Elijah said, "Go look" again... again... again... again...again... again...

Like a battering ram against the forces of darkness, our persistence pries the enemy's fingers off of God's promises for us!

But six times, the servant saw nothing. This is significant, because when we are standing in faith waiting for a breakthrough, the thing that wearies us most and makes us want to give up... is time.

The longer it takes, the less persistent we tend to become. Time is often our worst enemy. But I want to encourage you to resist the temptation to quit. Don't stop when you've come so far! Don't give up when you are on the brink of your miracle

and the doorstep of your breakthrough. Don't stop pushing. Your miracle is about to start to crown. Life is about to emerge. Victory is on your horizon... The devil is losing his grip!

Imagine, what if Joshua and Israel's army only marched around that wall six times? Or what if Peter after fishing all night and catching nothing, never cast out his net again? What if the widow accepted the first "no" from the unjust judge? What if Elisha never said to his servant... go and look a seventh time!

Child of God...

- Go look again – God is faithful
- Go look again – God is watching over His Word, waiting to perform it
- Go look again – God's promises are 'Yes and amen'
- Go look again – God is not a man that He should lie
- Go look again – heaven is on your side
- Go look again – greater is he that's in you than he that's in the world
- Go look again – if we pray according to His will, He hears us, and if we know He hears us, we know we have the petitions that we've asked of Him

## ***Hitch Your Hope to Something!***

*Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, "There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!" So he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.'"*

**1 KINGS 18:44**

A cloud the size of a man's hand...

You've got to wonder whether the servant just tossed that in there to give Elijah a little something, 'cause he didn't want to tell him a seventh time "there is nothing!"

Regardless, it became the "thing" that Elijah hitched his hope to that energized his faith.

*Faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen.*

**HEBREWS 11:1**

This tells us that in order for faith to stay strong, we've got to hitch our hope to some encouragement along the way.

Think about this... what does the devil do to fan the flames of doubt? He causes discouraging things to happen along the way, in the hope that we will focus on them... such as the doctor's

report that there is no change or that the condition has gotten worse. Or the other stuff that happens that we would normally just chalk up to life happening... like the dishwasher starts to leak, the car engine light goes off, a co-worker says something mean, you break your big toe, or an unexpected bill comes in the mail.

But when we are in the middle of a fight of faith and these things happen, the devil comes along and gets us thinking:

- We are just snake bit
- We are just cursed
- It's not meant to be

And our doubt gets stronger and stronger.

So what do you do to get back into faith? You start looking for the good in the middle of the mess. You grab hold of that word of encouragement that comes your way. You grab hold of that tiny coincidence that happened today that let you know that God was still with you. You start counting your blessings, down to the smallest things, like the old gospel song says:

“He woke me up this morning and started me on my way.”

You grab hold of any little thing that encourages your faith, and you anchor your hope to it, just like Elijah did:

*Then it came to pass the seventh time,  
that he said, "There is a cloud, as small  
as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!"*

**1 KINGS 18:44**

That's it! God is moving... God is on our side!  
Victory is imminent, and we will win! You have a  
Holy Ghost praise party about your "cloud the size  
of a man's hand" and you drive the devil crazy!



## FINAL THOUGHTS

Through our study of Elijah's prayer for rain, we have learned the most important lessons about powerful prayer. It's really quite simple. When you pray based on God's promises with a "pizza ready" expectation--a faith that God will in fact do what He's promised—and you can't be shaken from your expectation of receiving what He's promised...

Then God WILL send the rain... the pizza WILL be delivered on time! And it applies to everything we need and pray for in life.

God will send... [insert prayer request here]!

- healing for your body
- joy in your heart
- financial provision in your lack
- divine relationships
- marital restoration
- wisdom for decisions
- strength to overcome sin
- power for ministry
- open doors of opportunity
- favor and blessing

Do you need a breakthrough? Have you been stuck in your prayer life? Has a situation refused to move? Are you asking God for rain? Pray according to these God given principles and you too will receive answers, like Jesus and Elijah!