

# Prayer, Power, and Proclamation Group Facilitators' Guide

## Introduction

I have produced this guide to help you facilitate a series of meetings on the topics of Prayer, Power, and Proclamation. In most cases, these sessions will take place weekly over an extended period, and so I have structured the guide accordingly. I recommend that, if you intend to use the material in a normal small group setting, you spread it out over 24 weeks. However, if you are prepared to forego some of the other elements of a normal fellowship meeting, then you could spread it over 12 weeks.

## P3 small groups

The notes which follow are to help those who want to use the book or the videos) as a basis for instructing others in prayer, power, and proclamation. However, **we need to go further. We need to encourage each other to PRACTISE the concepts presented in the book.** During the study, and afterwards, we need to encourage each other and share testimonies of how we are living out the P3 directive.

You will find all the resources you need at: <http://www.truthistheword.com/prayer-power-proclamation/> and under the Books TAB on the truthistheword.com homepage

## Logistics

There are five videos in the P3 set. Video 1 contains two sessions of introductory material (Sessions 1 and 2). Video 2 contains the material on Prayer (Session 3). Videos 3 and 4 cover the subject of Power (Sessions 4 and 5). Video 5 contains Session 6 on Proclamation and a final concluding session 7.

If you do not have access to the videos, then simply present directly from Part I and II of the book. You can use the Powerpoint presentations under the Books TAB o the truthistheword.com homepage.

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Most of the sessions are between 20 and 35 minutes long. Session 4 Part 2 is only 13 minutes long, but you should combine it with Session 5 Part 1, which is 19 minutes long. There are therefore 12 parts to the full series.

If you intend using the material within a normal small group environment, each part should be split in two (For instance, Session 3 Part 1a and b) thus forming a series of 24 parts. Each of these parts should consist of about 15 minutes of input from the video, or your presentation, and a further 30 minutes of led discussion. In this format, there will still be about 45 minutes for worship, prayer, sharing, and ministry.

If you opt for a 12-week series, each meeting will consist of about 30 minutes of input from the video, or your presentation, and a further 45 minutes of led discussion. The remaining 15 minutes would be for prayer.

## Video 1 Session 1

### Introduction

27 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 35 minutes.

- (a) Discuss Barna's research (Page 7) and ask in what way is it applicable to the South African situation.
- (b) Emphasise the cautions described in the book.
- (c) Discuss 'We are born with inverted contact lenses. We don't know we have them, and we have no idea that the world we see is actually upside-down.' Obviously, this is an analogy which refers to the spiritual, not the physical, environment.
- (d) Ask 'What sort of problems occur when we still live as if the world is the right way up; as though it were the same as the Kingdom of God?'
- (e) Ask for examples of the statement that 'In order to break open the fortress of our materialistic mindsets we need to ask big questions and to seek persistently for answers until enlightenment occurs'.

## Video 1 Session 2

### Sons and daughters of God

35 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 45 minutes.

This is the underlying foundation of all of P3. If you have to, take additional time on these meetings and catch up time later in the series. It is very important that the group members understand, believe, and start to live as sons and daughters of the Most High God.

Ask each group member to complete the short quiz. Tell them that you will not be asking them to hand them in or discuss the results. The exercise is to help each person to determine their spiritual status for himself or herself. Explain that this is a black or white quiz with no shades of grey. They need to answer each question as either one thing or the other.

I have reproduced the questions below so that you can make copies for each person in the group.

- (a) Ask 'What does the following statement mean to you - Sonship defines who we are, and servanthood defines what we do'. Probe the understanding of this and ask for examples of how this plays out in life.
- (b) Read out John 13:3-5 as an example of a serving son.
- (c) Read out Galatians 3:26-4:7
- (d) Discuss the validity of the statement that 'The real underlying reason we are generally so passionless and powerless is that we have failed to realise that we are children of the living God'.
- (e) Ask the question, 'As children of God, how then should we use our resources of time, talent, and treasures?'
- (f) Discuss the implications of sonship.

1. I regard God primarily as my Lord and Master OR primarily as my heavenly Father.
2. I hold God responsible for most things that happen in my life OR I am responsible for most things in my life.
3. In church life, I am motivated by fear of consequences OR by love for God and his people.
4. I am performance-driven in terms of my Christian life OR I am relationship drawn.
5. I have an arms-length relationship with Jesus OR I have an intimate relationship with him.
6. My spiritual life is oriented towards getting OR towards giving.
7. In church life, I tend to do the minimum OR I invest the maximum.
8. I believe that God needs me to do things for him OR that he loves me to be who I am.
9. God predetermines human destiny OR he gives discretion to his children.

## Video 2 Session 3 Part 1

### Prayer

19 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 25 minutes.

- (a) Read the quotes by Murray, Bounds, and Wesley. Mention the teachings by Munro and Sheets. Also read out the quotes taken from *Unleashing the Power of Prayer* (Pages 32 and 33). Ask for comments and then read the quote from Billheimer on page 33. *Be prepared for some sensitivity here. Some of the members of your group might have been brought up in the Word of Faith movement, while others might be very traditional. Stress that I am not criticising the church men in particular, and that it could be that their statements need to be read in a wider context. However, stress that Murray, Bounds, Wesley, Munroe and Schultz all appear to be making more of 'prayer' than is biblically reasonable. Explain that this is probably due to a confusion between prayer, power, and proclamation.*
- (b) Ask the group to pray the 'Lord's Prayer' out loud with you, and then point out how the prayer is like that of a child to a father.
- (c) Ask for comment on the statement that, 'There is no power in prayer. Prayer precedes power but in itself, prayer is simply intimate communion with God'. *This statement is likely to raise some objections because the power of prayer concept has been so widely taught. Explain that prayer is communication and not a vehicle for the release of power. Note that the second 'p' in P3 is all about power, and that things will become clearer then.*
- (d) Copy the section of the book below and ask your group members to read them before they attend the next meeting.
- (e) **You should use the last 20 minutes of the session to facilitate group prayer. Encourage each member to pray and to try to apply in their prayers some of what this session teaches.**

#### Copy of **What then is prayer?**

There is no power in prayer. Prayer precedes power, but in itself, prayer is simply intimate communion with God. Prayer is the communication component of our relationship with God. More broadly speaking, prayer is bi-directional and includes both our communications with God and his communications with us. I have defined it this way because communication is essentially an exchange of feelings and information. A one-directional data-flow falls short of true communication and does not constitute 'communion'. Strictly speaking, the word 'prayer' describes only our end of the communication process, but I have included God's communications to us within the subject of prayer to allow for the immediacy of much of the intimate communication between God and us. God is not limited by temporal time, and sometimes his responses to our communications occur 'later' on our timeline. He also initiates communication, and prophecy, visions, dreams, angelic appearances, and even preaching, are all ways in which God communicates with us.

Communion is intimate and involves the heart as well as the intellect. Prayer makes known the innermost thoughts and emotions. When we pray, we express to our Father God that which is 'inside' of us. However, prayer also includes listening, because God also is prepared to share his heart and mind with us.

We commune with God verbally through spoken and 'thought' language, and through tongues. My understanding of tongues is that they are ostensibly unintelligible utterances from a believer to God (1 Corinthians 14:2). Tongues express what we cannot express with our normal mental

faculties; tongues communicate the deeper things of the spirit. We also communicate with God nonverbally through such things as dance, art, and sacraments. It is for this reason that tongues spoken within a congregation need interpretation so that others can understand the prayer and thus be able to concur and say “amen” to it.

Within the context of the immediacy of prayer, God communicates with us through the bible, through the inner witness of our spirit, through visions, and even through the agency of other believers.

Corporate prayer, like personal prayer, starts with one-way communication. However, if we believe that God is immediately accessible to us, should we not expect him to respond immediately, in some form? Yet many of the prayer meetings I have attended reflect the expectation that God is not likely to respond immediately. We pray in tongues. We pray aloud simultaneously. We pray sequentially, adding to each other’s prayers. We pray silently. We break up into groups and pray. Yet seldom do we pause and wait expectantly for God to respond. However, if we understand prayer as our part in bi-directional communication, then we should be expecting, and providing an opportunity for a response.

How should we expect God to respond immediately to our corporate prayers? Perhaps he will manifest himself in power as he did when the first disciples prayed and the place they were in was shaken (Acts 4:31). Perhaps he will speak a word through one of the people present (prophecy). Perhaps he will inspire someone to speak out a word of knowledge or wisdom. Perhaps he will place a vivid picture into someone’s mind. Perhaps he will bring to mind a scripture. Whichever way he chooses to communicate, we should be expectant, and we should, therefore, encourage each other to provide opportunities when we come together to pray.

Taking into account all I have written so far, why do we pray? We pray to communicate with God. Why? To express our dependence on him and to know his will. Jesus said, concerning himself, “*I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does.*” (John 5:19-20) This must also apply to us. Our purpose for living is to know Jesus, to become like him, and to help others to be and do likewise. We pray, in this context, to determine God’s will, and he responds because he loves us and is committed to our development and maturity.

I have mentioned words of prophecy, visions and so on, but the way God usually responds is through the bible. This occurs at several levels. Firstly, if we study the bible, and if we have read all of it, we will have a good idea of his general will. The Holy Spirit will help us to retrieve the biblical information we need from our memory banks. Jesus said, “*All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.*” (John 16:15) At another level, the Holy Spirit might lead us to a particular passage while we are praying. The words of the text might fill our consciousness, or he might make us aware of just the text reference, that we then look up. He might even illuminate a passage of scripture as we are reading it during or after a time of prayer.

Perhaps I need to give some concrete examples. Is it God’s general will that a sick person should receive healing? Yes. He instructed his disciples to heal the sick, and there are many New Testament injunctions to minister to the infirm. Therefore, the default position should be positive, and we should only refrain from ministering healing if convicted that, in that particular case or period, God has another purpose for the afflicted person. I have had this experience several times. I remember very clearly wanting to minister healing to a cancer sufferer when I felt the Holy Spirit

prompting me to prepare the man for heaven. I sat with him and read him passages from the book of Revelation. His face lit up and he was at peace. Just days later he died and went to be with Jesus.

On many occasions, I have received text references in answer to prayer. The one I remember most vividly was the first time this happened. I was preparing to deliver my very first sermon, and I was nervous and apprehensive. I was asking myself “what if I mislead the people? What if I fail to meet their spiritual need?” As I was praying about this, the text reference Numbers 21:16 came into my mind. I looked it up; it read, “*Gather the people together and I will give them water.*” I was so encouraged! I understood immediately that God was telling me that my job as a preacher was to bring his people to the place where they could receive living water from him, but that it was his prerogative, not mine, to give them that ‘water’.

Many years ago my wife, Pat, became very ill. The doctors could not diagnose the problem, but she felt as though she was slowly dying. At her lowest moment, as she was reading the bible and praying, the actual printed text started to glow as though the ink were made of gold. The verse read, “*I am your God and will take care of you until you are old and your hair is grey. I made you and will care for you; I will give you help and rescue you.*” (Isaiah 46:4) Just a day or so later the final blood tests came back from the lab and the doctor was able to diagnose her condition.

Prayer, as communication, has more than one facet; it consists of intermingled verbal and nonverbal speech both to and from God. It functions within a multidimensional model of reality.

## Video2 Session 3 Part 2

### 7D model of reality

19 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 25 minutes.

*You might encounter some objections to this part of session 3. You might need to explain that the analogy of the stargate is simply to place the concepts into a modern framework. The bigger problem for some people will be that this, and the next part of session 3 deals with meditation and visualisation. New Age religions and philosophies include strong elements of meditation and visualisation. Point out that they have simply borrowed these from the bible and from Jesus' method of instruction – refer them to his many analogies, stories, parables, and word pictures.*

- (a) Compare the Hebrew 3D model of reality with the 7D model presented in the video (and on pg. 40) by asking the group to point out the differences. [I have also provided these diagrams at <http://www.truthistheword.com/prayer-power-proclamation/>]
- (b) Ask 'Where is 0D located?' Draw out the point that it is more within than out there, and yet it concerns a spiritual dimension and not a special location.
- (c) Reinforce the idea that whilst prayer is communication it also serves to assist us in approaching the point of interface (0D) between the physical and the spiritual realms.
- (d) Ask 'What are the 3 basic principles of prayer?' You want to arrive at See - wait - hear.
- (e) Continue the exercise of 'putting yourself into' the Luke 9 passage. However, this time ask the group members to see (and smell, touch, taste, and hear) the scene back in the camp both while Jesus was up the mountain and when he returned. Take time over this and don't lead the group too strongly. Ask people to share what they experience.
- (f) Take the exercise a step further by asking if anyone experienced Jesus communicating with them through the experience.**



## Video 2 Session 3 Part 3

### Visualisation and meditation

29 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 35 minutes.

This segment continues the concepts introduced in the previous segment.

- (a) Stress the difference between emptying the mind (bad) and filling the mind with the things of God (good).
- (b) Stress the need to test all things against the Word of God.
- (c) Ask to what extent the following statement is true; Seeing with the eyes of the heart is as real as seeing with the eyes in the head. Conclude the discussion by quoting Matthew 5:28 "*anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*".
- (d) Ask the group to articulate the four aids to sustained focus. You need to draw out the matters of noise reduction, collapsing the dimensions, breathing, and music. *Controlled breathing is an essential part of Yoga but the Indian Gurus did not invent it. Breathing is natural to us, and slowed breathing directly affects our heart rate and brain waves.*
- (e) Ask if anyone has any problems with the techniques given for approaching the zero point of prayer. Stress that techniques are neutral in themselves.
- (f) Ask for the three main benefits of persistent prayer. You want to draw out the fact that it changes us, it allows us to hear God better, and it allows for *Kairos* and not just *Chronos* time interventions.
- (g) Take Acts 4:23-31 as the basis for a corporate prayer exercise. Select a real prayer need, and then lead the group in a corporate prayer experience incorporating the elements drawn from the Acts passage.
- (h) Ask the group members to put into practice, during the week, the things learned in this session and to be prepared to give feed-back at the next session.**

## Video 3 Session 4 Part 1

### Power 1

24 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 30 minutes.

The first three minutes of this video contain a recap of videos 1 and 2, so this would be a good time to ask the group if they have any questions. Try and get others in the group to answer any questions and simply moderate the process.

- (a) **Ask people to share testimonies of how they have been praying and the effect of this on their lives and ministries.**
- (b) Ask the group to describe the differences between the person of the Holy Spirit and the power of the Holy Spirit. Read out Luke 4:1
- (c) Probe the issue of different strengths of anointing. How is it that one can be able to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit at one time but not at another? Cite Jesus as an example. Draw out the need to ask and receive regularly, the issue of sin, and the issue of faith.
- (d) Stress the need for anointing in order to minister. Ask what the differences are between an anointed person ministering and someone who is not filled with Holy Spirit power ministering.
- (e) Pick up on the need to be led by the Holy Spirit in ministry. Cite the examples of Jesus and John.
- (f) Refer to the Ephesians 1 passage, and ask 'do you think this applies to YOU?' If not, why not. Mention that you will give an opportunity for people to receive ministry in the segment entitled 'Power 2' (the meeting after next)

## Video3 Session 4 Part 2

### Models of anointing

13 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 20 minutes.

- (a) Stress that models are imperfect aids to understanding and that there is truth in all four models. Briefly review the four models.
- (b) Ask which of the four models fits best with the concept that we are sons, not slaves. Discuss the statements, 'We are children of God, and as such we are also stewards of his resources. We are entrusted with responsibility, possessions, talents, and .... Power'; and 'God has chosen to empower his children to minister so that we can grow up to be like Jesus! He expects us to give whatever we have'.
- (c) Discuss the statement 'Our commission is not to pray for the sick, or to ask God to heal them, but to heal them ourselves. How could we be expected to fulfil this mandate if we are not charged with power from on high?' Draw out the differences between praying for someone and ministering healing to someone.
- (d) Discuss the following statement; 'We cannot escape the fact that we are, in the final analysis, dependent on God the Holy Spirit. There is no evidence in scripture that we generate spiritual power. It is the Holy Spirit who imparts his power to us'.
- (e) **Spend the last 20 minutes of the session encouraging members to minister to each other. Take the lead by ministering to someone in front of the group and then ask them to pair off to minister to one another.**

## Video 4 Session 5 Part 1

### Power 2

19 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 25 minutes.

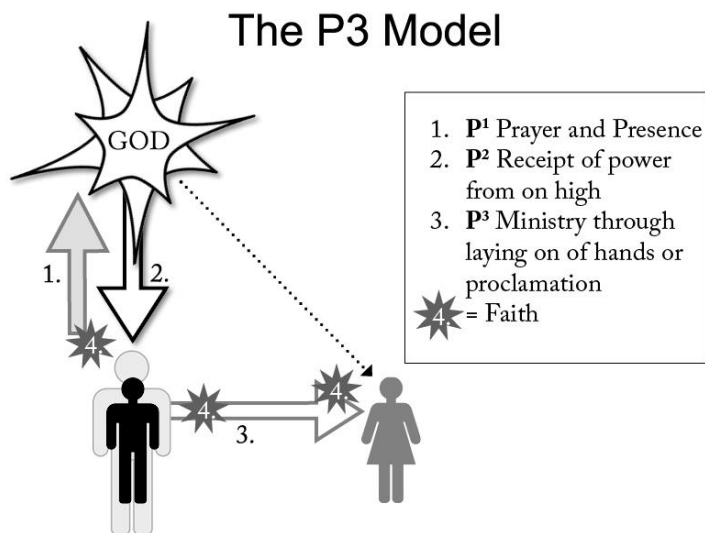
- (a) Ask for testimonies about how the group members have asked for and received power from on high and what effect this has had on their ministry to others.
- (b) Ask if everyone understands the 'priming the pump' concept. The issue here is that the little we can give often is enough to open the recipient to a far greater anointing directly from the Holy Spirit.
- (c) Ask if anyone has any difficulty with the claim that there is more to the anointing than just receiving an initial 'baptised in the Spirit' experience. The subject of tongues might come up here. If it does, explain that tongues are a form of praise (1 Corinthians 14:2), and that it is quite normal for this to occur when we are filled with the Spirit. Stress, however, that tongues are neither an exclusive evidence of being filled nor a badge identifying one as a 'spirit-filled' Christian.
- (d) Stress the obligations of being sons and daughters who have the prerogative of empowerment. Namely, responsibility to minister (1 Peter 4:10-11), the need for holy living, and the benefit of gathering together (corporate anointing)
- (e) Stress the need to be outwardly focused – we are given so that we may give.
- (f) Ask what it is one has to be and do in order to be 'anointed' (filled with power from on high). **Enquire if anyone in the group would like to be ministered to in this regard, and then pray and minister to them.**

## Video 4 Session 5 Part 2

### The role of faith

20 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 30 minutes.

- (a) Discuss the statement: 'Faith is best understood as a mental attitude of certainty which acts as the catalyst for receiving, and imparting spiritual things'. Compare faith, in this sense, with the gift of faith listed in 1 Corinthians 12.
- (b) Explain that faith, as defined in Hebrews 11:1 cannot be a force and that the teaching that it is, confuses faith with anointing.
- (c) Stress the sequence of faith preceding words, and words most often preceding deeds.
- (d) There might be some in the group who contend that faith can be developed.
- (e) Discuss the concept that emotion (passion and compassion) is the force which moves the faith 'switch'.
- (f) This is a good time to review the bigger picture, so I have reproduced the full model below.
- (g) Ask the group if they have any questions from any of the presentations so far.



## Video 4 Session 5 Part 3

### Human reactions

27 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 35 minutes.

This segment deals with three separate issues, the first of which is human reactions to spiritual power. The second is anointed objects and places, and the third is small actions having large results. I have addressed the first two issues because they are often raised in Christian circles. However, please do not put emphasis on these things. I deal with human reactions in the body of the book. I do not deal with either anointed objects or places there, but you will find discussion in Part II – Digging Deeper...

- (a) Stress the fact that falling, laughing, crying and so on. are neither direct works of the Holy Spirit nor evidences of his work. They are natural human reactions to the power of God.
- (b) Point out that we should not scorn or judge those who believe in anointed objects or places. The biblical evidence indicates that there could well be truth in this idea. However, we need to refrain from making rituals, doctrines, and stylised practices out of these things.
- (c) The point of focus in this segment should be that whatever we do, little though it may seem, in the name of Jesus and in the anointing of the Holy Spirit can have major results. Encourage the group members to share their personal experiences of this.
- (d) **It would be good to devote quite a bit of time in this segment to prayer rather than discussion.**

## Video 5 Session 6 Part 1 Proclamation

20 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 30 minutes.

- (a) Stress the fact that we need to approach this subject with humility and integrity. The passages about moving mountains and cursing a fig tree are not easy to understand, let alone apply.
- (b) I give three possible ways of understanding the mountain, tree, and storm passages. Explain each of the three to the group, and then ask two questions; (i) Are there any other ways of understanding the passages? (ii) Which of the available options would they go with, and why?
- (c) The story of Ananias and Sapphira points us to two major issues; (a) The fact that the bible tells it as it is and contains both positive and negative models and examples. It is a mistake to believe that God intended Peter to strike disciples dead (b) The power and authority which God gives us. We can choose to use this for good or for bad. Ask for examples where men or women of God have used their authority and anointing for ill rather than for good. General examples would be the many destructive things church leaders sometimes do because they believe it is 'right'. The acid test is always, 'Would Jesus say or do that?'
- (d) Ask the group to spend some time reflecting on what they say and do, ostensibly in the name of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Break them into pairs to do this.**

## Video 5 Session 6 Part 2

### **The power of words**

24 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 35 minutes.

- (a) Ask for testimonies about how group members have proclaimed what they believe is God's will in various circumstances. Discuss how these testimonies reflect faith and anointing.
- (b) Discuss the statement that, 'words are not power capsules'. Instead, they contain meaning and they convey intent and authority. In this way, they focus the release of spiritual energy and act as a sort of 'targeting mechanism.' Take the group through Acts 13:11.
- (c) Discuss the question, 'When do I pray and when do I proclaim?' Ask for examples and accounts of real experiences.
- (d) Take the group through the three cautions. In the video, I do not deal specifically with the first caution, that of presumption.



## Video 5 Session 7

### Conclusion

15 min. video presentation. A facilitator's personal presentation would take about 25 minutes.

- (a) After you have viewed this segment please hand out Chapter Six of the book [I have reproduced it on the following pages so that you can copy it]. Ask them to read it in their own time, but use this last P3 meeting to work through each of the following statements.

*Much of Christendom operates on religiously modified principles which are not much different from those of the world system.*

*'Others' orientation is one of the key tenets of authentic Christianity.*

*The motto of our age is, 'if at first you don't succeed, try something else.'*

*If we are to increase our spiritual capacity, then we are going to have to take the biblical call to holiness a lot more seriously.*

*We will need to learn how to see the not yet visible and to see it with such clarity that we feel passionately about it.*

*In order to minister as Jesus did we all need to make many changes to the ways we think, speak, and act.*

- (b) Use the last part of this final session to encourage members to minister to one another using the principles set out in these presentations. Have people come up front, or stand where they are, and encourage others to minister to them.**
- (c) Hand out the copy of chapter Six and ask them to work through it prayerfully over the next week or two, determining what and how they each need to do things differently.**

Conclude with how you can keep on encouraging one another to apply the P3 principles and practices.

### Copy of Chapter Six -

#### What then should we do differently?

Matthew 7:24-27 reads, "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

This is where the rubber hits the road, as they say. If we believe that Jesus' life is a real and viable model for our lives, and if we believe what he said, then we need to respond with word and deed. So, let's consider some alternatives:

1. *Jesus did not do and say the things recorded in the bible. The bible is in error and is therefore an unreliable record of Jesus' life and teaching.* I have written this book on the understanding that the bible is a reliable record of what Jesus said and did. I have tried to comprehend what it records, in a logical and reasoned manner, yet the persuasive power of my arguments stem from biblical authority more than logic. If the New Testament is not an accurate record of what Jesus and his early followers said and did, then P3 is not worthy of applying.
2. *Jesus did not intend modern people to take literally what he said to his first disciples.* To hold this view is to rob the master's teachings and examples of most of their current relevance. If we believe that what Jesus modelled and taught regarding prayer, power, and proclamation applied only to the unusual early church times, then we will not seek to emulate his example. If we believe that he meant us to understand his words in a purely symbolic fashion, then we will not obey his instructions. Once again, P3 will not be applicable.
3. *Jesus meant all of his disciples, in every age, to take him at his word, and to apply what he taught and modelled.* If you find options 1 and 2 unacceptable, then you are compelled to choose this third option. Have I missed an option or two? If not, then you are compelled by your own sense of integrity to take seriously, and to seek to apply, what Jesus said and did concerning P3.

I have titled this chapter 'What then should we do differently?' The answer is 'almost everything!' The world in which we live operates on diametrically different principles to those proposed in this book. Much of Christendom operates on religiously modified principles that are not much different from those of the world system. Materialism is the most dominant philosophy in both secular society and the church. Inward orientation (self-centredness) is hardly less predominant in the church than in the world. Instant gratification is not just a secular phenomenon. Pragmatism rules in both domains. If we take P3 seriously, then we will have to challenge these worldly traits.

Here are some areas where I believe we will need to think and act very differently.

*Outward orientation.* The teaching of scripture is clear – we should be outwardly focused and not inwardly self-serving. This 'others' orientation is one of the key tenets of authentic Christianity. The world, on the other hand, encourages us to look after number one and to serve others only after we have served ourselves.

Sadly, a large part of the modern church teaches the same thing. Name and claim what you want, and once you have more than enough, then give to others. A variation on this theme is that we should give generously to the church that teaches us this way of living, and then, in reward, God will give us what we want! Most of us need to learn how to be outwardly oriented. We need constant challenge and encouragement to change the orientation of our lives away from our own needs and wants.

*Sustained focus.* Society has convinced us that we all deserve instant gratification. The motto of our age is, 'if at first you don't succeed, try something else.' Producers gear television shows to those with a concentration span of less than ten minutes. Advertising continually sells us the concept that we should have whatever we desire ... now! Executives design electronic communications and banking systems to facilitate our insatiable desire for instant gratification. We will have to learn how to focus our thoughts, prayers, and endeavours for prolonged periods. This is not going to be too easy for most of us.

At the church I am part of, we have a prayer room and we sometimes encourage people to commit to one-hour slots there. At one time, a leader suggested that we reduce the time commitment to

fifteen minutes because people were complaining that they could not see themselves being able to pray, read the bible, and meditate for a whole hour!

*Spiritual capacity.* Most of us live impure lives to one degree or another. Our thoughts, words, and actions are tainted. Our spiritual 'batteries' are clogged up with sin sediment. If we are to increase our spiritual capacity, then we are going to have to take the biblical call to holiness a lot more seriously.

*Faith.* Most of the modern teaching on faith presents it as a force that can be increased and manipulated. However, if it is a 'switch' that is either on or off, then we either have it or we do not. We will have to unlearn what we have learned about faith, and then we will need to learn how to activate it. Visualising something with clarity and empowering that vision with emotion is not going to be easy for most of us. We will need to learn how to see the not yet visible and to see it with such clarity that we feel passionately about it. We will need to learn to *think* differently.

*Expectation.* We need to raise the bar of our expectation. Should we not expect results if we come together with one heart and mind, confirm the Father's will for the particular situation, ask the Holy Spirit for power from on high, and then proclaim in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ?

A word of caution here. We must not think that we can obtain results independently of God as if we are 'creators' or 'little gods'. God is central in all three of the processes that I have articulated. In prayer, we seek to know his specific will in any given situation. We do not generate power but receive it from God. Faith is the switch that allows us to receive; but if the Holy Spirit does not choose to pour out spiritual power upon us, there will be nothing to receive. In proclamation we speak, not on our own authority, but in the 'name' of Jesus.

*Making space in our structures.* Perhaps the prayer meetings at your church already contain the elements of prayer, power, and proclamation. If they don't, then they need to change. A corporate prayer meeting should have a time when the believers speak to Almighty God. It should also include a time of listening. By 'listening', I mean an expectant contemplation where the folk present can read from scripture, speak out a prophetic word, or relate the content of a vision or an intuition. Once there is a sense of what God is communicating, then there needs to be a corporate request for empowerment. Here it would be appropriate to lay hands upon those whom the Holy Spirit identifies. After that, there needs to be bold declarations of God's will concerning the things for which we have been praying. The Holy Spirit might also instruct that we do certain additional things, like visiting the person concerned to anoint with oil.

*Ministering.* We need to change the way we minister to people. Instead of just praying for them, we should seek immediate guidance and prompting from the Holy Spirit, lay hands on them and proclaim what we believe to be God's will in the particular circumstance. We should ask the Holy Spirit for the manifestation of discernment, so that we can boldly cast out any demon that might be present. We should also ask for the manifestations of knowledge and wisdom.

*Teaching and Training.* If you are a teacher or preacher within the local church, you will need to instruct the people of God on how to minister in accordance with P3 principles. You will need to explain the key elements of faith, perseverance, and outward orientation.

*Perseverance.* We need to encourage each other to persevere. In order to minister as Jesus did, we all need to make many changes to the ways we think, speak, and act. This will take time. At first, we are not likely to be very successful, and our ministry will not immediately reflect the levels evidenced by the early church.

*Incorporation.* We need to incorporate the practice of P3 into all aspects of our Christian lives, both personal and corporate. Prayer, Power, and Proclamation should not be reserved for ‘prayer’ meetings, and neither should they be regarded as three elements that always need to be exercised in the same time frame. Rather, P3 represents a cycle of practices, as illustrated in the following diagram.

