



It's Crunch Time! Part II

Everybody loves that part of the game when the outcome is up for grabs and will probably be decided on the last possession. It's a time of pressure, physicality, grit and will power. "Money" players step up and want the ball and have the self-confidence that they can get it done for the team. Why?

Because they've put in long hours of practicing off the court, in the gym and in the weight room and even in meditation or prayer in order to stay calm and able to perform under pressure.

Likewise, for the people of God, it's **crunch time** because the bible says: "This know also that in the last days, (or in the end, just before Christ returns), perilous times shall come...II Timothy 3:1 and "...but he that endures until the end, the same shall be saved" Matt. 10:22. There will be in our time, according to the bible a period of unparalleled trouble, distress, turmoil, suffering and pain. In part I, I suggested we need to be consistently praying, praising and proclaiming in this our crunch time. Let's focus on praying in this second installment.

Let's look at the six parts to the "Lord's Prayer" given by the Lord to His disciples:

1. v. 9 "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name." When you come to prayer you want to begin by expressing your love and devotion to God. I start by saying to Him, "Lord, I want to focus on You!"
2. The next part of the Lord's prayer says, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This is an acknowledgment that God is God and I am not. He is in control and we want His kingdom of righteous rule and reign to come to this sin filled earth. Pray that His will be done in your life, your family, on your team, with your friends, family and even in your church.
3. What needs do I pray about? **Absolutely every one of them.** "...give us this day our daily bread..." There is nothing too great for God's power to take care of and there's nothing too insignificant for His concern. So all my needs I'm to pray about.
4. The next part of the Lord's prayer says, "Forgive us our debts or trespasses." Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal sin in your life, confess it and by faith believe that you're been forgiven!
5. The Lord's prayer says, "As we have forgiven our debtors." 1 Timothy 2:1 "Pray much for others; plead for God's mercy upon them, give thanks for all he is going to do for them." (Living Bible).
6. v. 13 "And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one." We, as believers, face a spiritual battle every day and Satan wants to defeat us through temptation and fear. If I start every day without praying for God's protection I'm walking into battle unprotected. I'm walking into battle without the spiritual armor we're supposed to put on according to Ephesians 6 11-18.

In game situations when a player comes through for his team at **crunch time** and makes the big block/shot or free throw etc., fans, team mates, the media all congratulate and celebrate the player. Well, when we come through for Christ in these last days of **crunch time**, we won't have people celebrating us but we will have a heavenly reward, a "crown of righteousness," a "crown of glory", and a "crown of life" to live forever with Christ our Lord and savior!

