

Target Prayers

Four Core Principles of Intercession for Believers

By Carol Madison

A few years ago, my brother took me to a rural spot in the middle of South Dakota to teach me to shoot a pistol. I think he believed it was his brotherly duty to usher me into the next level of adult responsibility.

I had never used a firearm before, so he first made sure I handled it carefully. Then he set up four water bottles on a fence a reasonable distance away.

I aimed, pulled the trigger, and nailed a water bottle with my first shot.

“Wow, you hit it!” he exclaimed with obvious shock. I think in that moment he was as proud of his younger sister as he had ever been.

“Yeah,” I replied. “But that wasn’t the bottle I was aiming for.”

On Target

I don’t think I knocked off any more water bottles that day. We all know it takes patience, intentionality, and practice to hit the right target.

Sometimes our prayer lives can seem random, aimless, and off target. So we need a consistent strategy that addresses the most crucial areas of prayer—those that will bring transformation to our families, churches, nation, and world. James 5:16 tells us that righteous people—and all believers

are righteous in Christ—have the great advantage of praying prayers that are “powerful and effective.” In other words, right on target. If we desire to grow and mature as intercessors—and take perfect aim with strategic prayer—some core principles can better equip us.

The *Prayer Connect* staff prayed and debated about the four most important prayer principles that we, as believers, can add to our “prayer arsenal.”

Although our prayer lives can take many different directions, we narrowed our focus to these core elements:

1. The salvation of others
2. The revival of the Church
3. The spiritual awakening of a nation
4. The spread of the gospel in the world.

If every believer and every church incorporated these target prayers into their habitual, consistent repertoire, we believe we would witness the swift advancement of the Kingdom of God and the quickening of the coming of Christ.

In this Issue

We asked four writers with expertise in each of these areas to share their best prayer practices. Ebony Small is vice president in an evangelistic organization directed toward reaching the next generation. She writes about scriptural ways she prays for the salvation of others. Jamie Morgan is a pastor whose podcast *Fire Starter* is designed to ignite passion for revival. She describes a beleaguered bride of Christ that is not ready for His return—and needs reviving.

Bob Bakke has done extensive research and writing on Great Awakenings in our nation. He casts a vision for the spiritual awakening of the lost. And Solomon Lujan is passionate about

praying for Scripture to be translated into every language so the gospel can reach the one-third of our world's population who have no knowledge of Jesus.

My brother has not taken me target-shooting a second time. I might have made him a little nervous. But I know he is greatly encouraged that God has honed my prayer skills over the years—and that's a target he prefers I hit every time!

CAROL MADISON is editor of *Prayer Connect* magazine and author of *Prayer That's Caught and Taught: Mentoring the Next Generation*.