

PRAYERCONNECT

Connecting to the Heart of Christ through Prayer



LEADERS WHO PRAY

The Foundation to
Building a Praying Church

Powerful, Effective, and Imperfect | *A War Room* Response
Toothbrushes, Refugees, and Prayer

Sunday, November 6, 2016 is . . .

Prayer Force One SUNDAY

The Sunday Before We Elect Our Next President

Save The
Date!



Then
Participate!

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

II Chronicles 7:14

"Prayer Force One Sunday is not an event, but a date. We are asking every individual Christian, every home, and every church, ministry and denomination to participate in their own way. To find out how you can become involved in your own community, please visit our website listed below."

Senator Ed Moore, (OK-Ret.)
President, Prayer Force One



www.PrayerForceOne.com

PRAYERCONNECT

January–March 2016 Vol. 6, No. 1



18

Feature

- 24 Entering the Throne Room**
From Unworthiness to Confidence
By Barbara Ho

LEADERS WHO PRAY

The Foundation to Building a Praying Church, p. 9

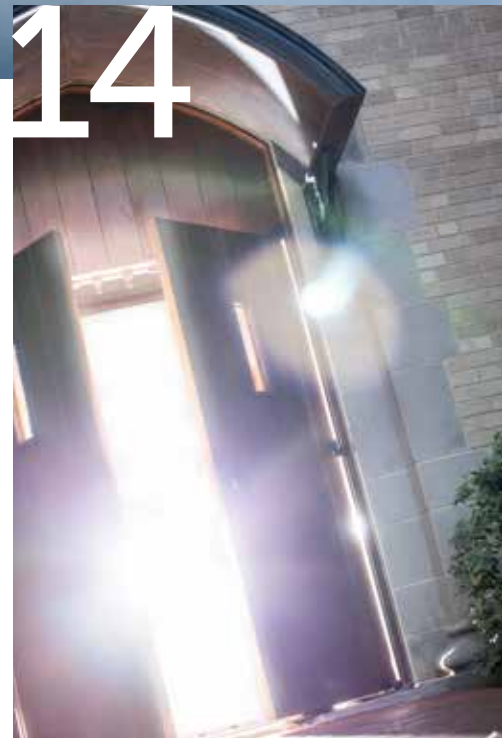
- 10 A Healthy Prayer Life**
The Common Denominator of Spiritual Leaders
By Dave Earley
Plus: Effective Spiritual Leaders Pray for Their People
- 14 Investing in Prayer Leaders**
Building a Praying Church from the Ground Up
By Fred A. Hartley III
Plus: Building Your Prayer Shield
- 18 What Leaders Need from Intercessors**
Fulfill Your Calling to Love and Pray
By Alice Smith



24

Departments

- 5 Publisher's Note**
Are Your Prayers Stinky?
- 7 News & Events**
- War Room Wins Box Office
 - Defense of Coach Who "Takes a Knee"
 - "Elders" Gather for Solemn Assembly
 - National Security Initiative Embraced by Leaders
 - Prayer Calendar
- 29 Tips & Tools**
- Refugee Crisis: Five Objects to Fuel Prayer
 - Will You Pray with Us?
- 30 Prayer Leader**
War Room: A 30-Day Boot Camp Response
- 31 Classics**
A Needed Revival





www.prayershop.org

**Visit the Largest Prayer-Only
Store on the Internet**

WE'RE EVERYTHING PRAYER!

- Corporate Prayer ■ Bible Studies/Small Groups
- Personal Prayer ■ Intercession ■ Prayer Guides
- Spiritual Warfare ■ Prayer Ministry Teams
- Church ■ Women ■ Children ■ Youth ■ Men
- Conferences ■ Prayer Evangelism and
- 24 other categories

Join the CPLN

and save 20-40% on all products

www.prayershop.org

Sponsored by



CONTACTUS

Business and Shipping Address

PRAYERCONNECT
3525 S. 3rd Pl. | Terre Haute, IN 47802
812.238.5504 | prayerconnect.net

Article Submissions

We are looking for general articles, ideas, and news stories on what God is doing as a result of prayer. We are primarily looking for newly written pieces that have not appeared in other publications. Writer's guidelines are available by emailing Carol Madison at editor@prayerconnect.net. For news stories, we recommend emailing first to see if we have an interest in reporting on the event or item you wish to write about. Send your submissions to:

Carol Madison
Prayer Connect Submissions
4300 West 98th St. | Bloomington, MN 55437
editor@prayerconnect.net

Subscriptions

Prayer Connect is published five times per year, available in Print (\$24.99 per year) or Digital (\$19.99 per year) formats, and through the Church Prayer Leaders Network (CPLN) Membership (\$30 per year). Both CPLN and Print subscriptions include access to the Digital version. To subscribe, go to prayerconnect.net. We also have multiple copy discounts available for individuals or churches who want to purchase copies for a prayer team or small groups:

prayerconnect.net
Joanne Telle
800.217.5200 or 812.238.5504

Permissions

Jonathan Graf
jong@harvestprayer.com | 812.238.5504

Reprint Permissions

If you are making copies for your small group or for church use, you have blanket permission to make up to 100 copies without asking for permission (as long as the copies are not sold or in a for-sale product). Please include the phrase: "Copied from *Prayer Connect* (Issue #). Used with permission." Contact us to gain permission for all other uses, including posting articles on the Internet. We do encourage you to put links on Facebook and Twitter to articles that are open to the public at prayerconnect.net.

Advertising

If you would like information about placing an ad in *Prayer Connect*, or if you have concerns or questions about our ads, please contact:
Prayer Connect, 3525 S. 3rd Pl. Terre Haute, IN 47802
advertising@prayerconnect.net | 812.238.5504

Need a Speaker for Your Prayer Conference or Event?

There are a number of gifted speakers associated with *Prayer Connect*. Jonathan Graf regularly ministers in churches of varying sizes. Carol Madison is also available to minister in the area of prayer for revival and community transformation. Our parent organizations, Harvest Prayer Ministries and the Church Prayer Leaders Network, have many speakers associated with their ministries. You can find their contact information at the respective emails or websites.

Jonathan Graf | jong@harvestprayer.com
Carol Madison | editor@prayerconnect.net

harvestprayer.com | prayerleader.com

Sponsored by

America's National Prayer Committee
Denominational Prayer Leaders Network
International Prayer Council

Published by

Church Prayer Leaders Network
Harvest Prayer Ministries
PrayerShop Publishing

The mission of **PRAYERCONNECT** is

1. To encourage and equip believers toward a deeper walk with Jesus Christ through prayer—our experiential connection to God.
2. To resource prayer leaders and pastors with tools to help them motivate, disciple, and mobilize believers in churches to be a part of an army that seeks to pray the purposes of God for churches, communities, and the nations.
3. To be a unifying force between prayer ministries, community transformation groups, and churches.

Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

Jonathan Graf
jong@harvestprayer.com

Editor

Carol Madison
editor@prayerconnect.net

Art Director

J. Bridget Rennie

Editorial Assistants

Debbie Christensen
Joan Sherman

Contributing Writer

Kim Butts

Subscriptions/Orders

Joanne Telle

Previously in Prayer Connect

So often our prayer lives are self-focused and revolve around our needs and desires for God to intervene in some way. We don't always take the time to seek God on a more intimate level and allow Him to "invade our prayer lives" with His presence. This issue on "Embracing Intimacy" and other back issues are available at prayershop.org.



Are Your Prayers Stinky?

My favorite car of all time was a 1993 Nissan Sentra. I bought it brand new at the end of 1993, and had it until 2013. It was extremely dependable, costing me little in repairs. It had roughly 170,000 miles on it when I sold it.



I loved that car. But in its later years, I rarely used it. Since my wife and I work for the same ministry, we drove together most days—in her newer car. I took an occasional trip to town in it, but I mostly used it for trips to the airport when I had a speaking weekend. I would drive it there on Friday morning and park it, catch my flight, then drive it home on Sunday night when I returned.

As a result, I got a little careless with its cleanliness. It became a “bachelor car.” If I stopped for fast food, I tossed the leftover bag on the back floor. I kept an air freshener hanging in the car, but it was always months past good use.

One day, while driving my three-year-old granddaughter Gabrielle somewhere, she blurted out, “Grampy’s stinky car.” That became my car’s nickname for the final two years of its life.

I recall this passage in Revelation 5:8: “Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God’s people.” Scripture says our prayers are like incense rising before the throne of God. I like the smell of incense—well, some incense! But there are other incenses that stink!

So I thought, *I wonder if there are “stinky” prayers going before the throne? What does God do with those?* What stinky prayers am I referring to?

Bad motive prayers. James 4:3 tells us we can pray with bad motives. We can desire good things in our prayers, but still have bad motives. We may ask for God to bring back a wayward child, but the truth is, we are embarrassed that *our* child is rebellious.

Thoughtless, perfunctory prayers. We do them all the time. We pray, “God, please be with Sue on her trip to China.” What? If Sue is a believer, then God is already indwelling her.

Proud prayers. In Luke 18:9–14, Jesus juxtaposes a humble tax collector’s prayer against a proud Pharisee’s prayer. *We don’t pray that way*, we think. But we can get sanctimonious when we pray about the sinful lifestyle of others.

Manipulative prayers or prayers that teach. We often pray more for the sake of the people in the room than to God. We give instructions or point out a flaw in someone through our prayers. We also try to manipulate God’s response: “I’ll do this, God, if You would just. . . .”

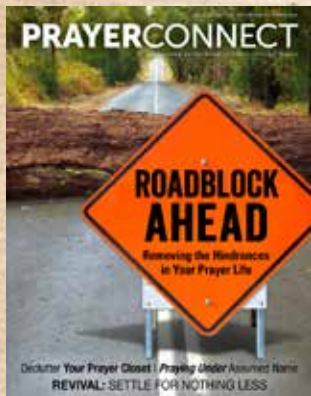
Ouch. It’s easy to get overwhelmed at the thought of our poor prayers. But here is the truth of Scripture: “We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us . . .” (Rom. 8:26). The implication is that when we pray at all, even if we are way off in what we are asking, the Holy Spirit prays what should be prayed. That is a freeing thought!

Work on praying better—yes. But remember, with the Holy Spirit’s help, we can’t really get it wrong!

—Jonathan Graf

Start with a Complete Set

GET EVERY BACK ISSUE OF PRAYER CONNECT



Issue 17

ROADBLOCK AHEAD

Removing the Hindrances in Your Prayer Life



Issue 18

FAITH AND PRAYER

Walking in Confidence and Expectation



Issue 19

AWAKENING ON CAMPUSES

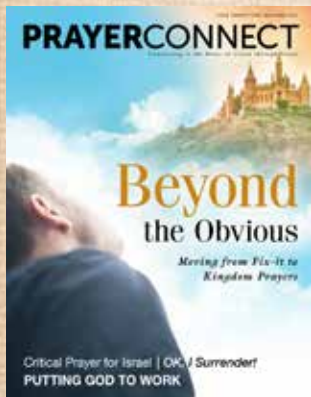
God Is Stirring Prayer



Issue 20

REDISCOVERING FASTING

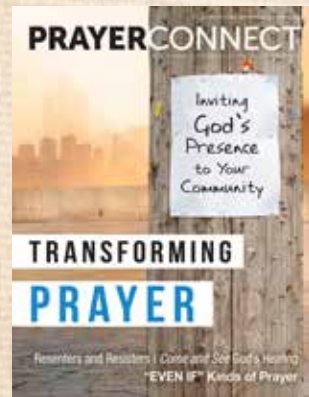
A Kingdom Key to Breakthrough



Issue 21

BEYOND THE OBVIOUS

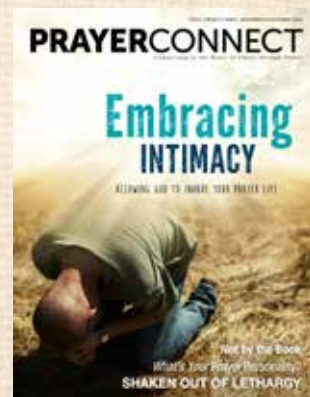
Moving from Fix-it to Kingdom Prayers



Issue 22

TRANSFORMING PRAYER

Inviting God's Presence to Your Community



Issue 23

EMBRACING INTIMACY

Allowing God to Invade Your Prayer Life

- Issue 1** Can Prayer Save America?
- Issue 2** Fresh Fire
- Issue 4** As the Waters Cover the Sea
- Issue 5** The Place Was Shaken
- Issue 6** Stand Firm & Strong
- Issue 7** Open Hearts, Open Doors
- Issue 8** The Lord is Near
- Issue 9** Releasing Children to Pray
- Issue 10** Living in the Upper Room
- Issue 11** Our Great Intercessor
- Issue 12** Hope Undaunted
- Issue 13** Ask for the Nations
- Issue 14** Help!
- Issue 15** The Power of Praise
- Issue 16** God Speaks

COVER PRICE: \$6.00 | PRAYERSHOP PRICE: \$5.00



www.prayershop.org | Click on "Prayer Connect Magazine" "Back Issues" | 812-238-5504

Prayer Connect and PrayerShop Publishing are ministries of Harvest Prayer Ministries



War Room Wins Box Office

Over the Labor Day weekend (Sept. 4-7), the faith-based family drama *War Room* exceeded expectations by earning \$12.6 million from 1,526 locations and taking the top spot of box office sales. It also opened as the #1 faith-based movie of 2015 and the highest in the genre since *Heaven Is for Real* (in April 2014).

War Room is the fifth film from Alex and Stephen Kendrick (*Courageous*, *Fireproof*, *Facing the Giants*, *Flywheel*), and has enjoyed media coverage from outlets such as *Associated Press*, *Washington Post*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Forbes*, *USA Today*, *Entertainment Tonight*, CBS, FOX News, and others.

Actor/writer/director Alex Kendrick and his brother, producer/co-writer Stephen Kendrick, did exactly what one

would expect devout Christians to do when it came to their latest film: they prayed for it to succeed.

"We didn't wake up one day wanting to make a movie about a 75-year-old woman's prayer closet," Stephen explains. "We asked God to order our steps, and the ideas came. As filmmakers, we're laying tracks before a moving train."

"People have plans for everything in life: careers, finances, health. But what about a strategy for prayer to affect our lives, our spouses, and our children?" Alex asks. "We want to inspire, challenge, and motivate families to not just react but to plan through the right kind of battles—and to use the best resources possible."

Adds Stephen: "We're after something here to radically improve our culture, and we want moviegoers to experience



it in an inspiring and emotional story. Prayer outstrips anything people realize. Growing up with a praying mom and dad, we saw prayer prompt answers in relevant, powerful ways. As teenagers, too, we saw the Lord at work. And slowly, slowly we began to build and go into our own prayer closets."

And this habit, this commitment, the Kendricks say, is the secret to their film's remarkable impact.

War Room is distributed by Sony's TriStar Pictures with marketing by Provident Films and AFFIRM Films (warroommovie.com).

Defense of Coach Who "Takes a Knee"

A football coach, suspended for leading silent, short, on-field prayers after football games, has gained the support of several government leaders. Joe Kennedy, assistant high-school football coach in Bremerton, WA, had traditionally knelt in prayer in the middle of the football field after each game, taking a moment to pray and thank God. At times, players voluntarily joined him.

But the Bremerton School District officials suggested that he continue his seven-year tradition in a private place. When he refused to comply, they relieved him of his coaching duties in October 2015.

Senator James Lankford, co-chair of the Congressional Prayer Caucus, defended Coach Kennedy's actions from the U.S. Senate floor and lamented that the Bremerton School District has



wrongfully attempted to create a "faith-free zone."

Lea Carawan, executive director, Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation, notes that several Congressional leaders are paying attention. She explains, "We could just count this as another disappointing loss, feel powerless over the growing tide of anti-faith actions around the country, and simply move on with our lives; or we can decide that it's time to band together, focus on proactive solutions, and promote truth

and honorable action. Remaining silent, or on the sidelines, only sends the message that the Christian community is unconcerned about what's taking place."

She reports that members of the Congressional Prayer Caucus have led a determined effort to garner support for Coach Kennedy. They sent a strong letter, signed by 47 members of Congress, to the superintendent and principal of the school.

"This is not a time to merely play the role of spectators, but to pray and follow the lead of our national leaders," adds Carawan.

The Congressional Prayer Caucus, an official caucus of the United States Congress, has 100 members, and the Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation has a network of thousands of praying legislators and citizens (cpcfoundation.com).



“Elders” Gather for Solemn Assembly

Some 300 of America’s most influential spiritual leaders will gather in Atlanta, GA, for a 24-hour solemn assembly, January 6-7, 2016, hosted by the Awakening American Alliance and a steering committee of more than 50 national leaders. Based on Joel 1:14, it is a time to “gather the elders . . . and cry out to the Lord.”

The Executive Cabinet of Awakening America Alliance (awakeningamerica.us) views this as a time for prevailing prayer: “As 2016 will usher in the 240th anniversary of the founding of our nation, the Executive Cabinet would like to begin

the new year with a focused time of humble brokenness before the Lord.”

Organizers hope that “God will use this spiritual gathering of concentrated prayer to serve as a catalyst for the next great move of God that will accelerate the fulfillment of the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.”

Pastor Ronnie Floyd, president of the Southern Baptist Convention and one of the conveners, states, “In this significant and unprecedented moment in



Pastor Ronnie Floyd

our nation, there is a compelling conviction to gather the key spiritual leaders in the same room for 24 hours. We are convinced all of us must come together, calling out to God for His power to ignite our lives and churches.”

There is also a call for a nationwide 21-day fast called “Praying with Jesus: Reset Our Generation” from January 10–31, that includes nightly prayer calls with national leaders (americapray.net).

National Security Initiative Embraced by Leaders

Prayer leaders from across the country met in October 2015 to pray and discuss partnership in a National Security Initiative focused on prayer for the nation. Three recently retired generals, a former Homeland Security Department official, and a converted Muslim jihadist warned the group about the incursion of the Muslim Brotherhood into many spheres within the government and society. They described the goal over time to neutralize or destroy Christianity, and subvert the U.S. Constitution, eventually replacing it with Sharia (Muslim law).

The group of 150 leaders also discussed internal threats, such as the existence of Muslim terror cells within the country who might resort to a dirty bomb with nuclear materials, and external threats, such as cyber attacks, Electro Magnetic Pulse (EMP) destroying the power grid with one nuke set off above the nation, as well as possible direct nuclear attack by Russians, Chinese, or North Koreans. In such situations of potential national peril, it is not enough to rely on

the military, the group concluded.

“It is therefore imperative that we as intercessors help to build a wall of spiritual protection as the Lord told Ezekiel (Ez. 22:30). Intercessors are the last line of defense for a nation that is ripe for His judgment and destruction. Please continue to pray for the nation’s security and protection, and for the military and intelligence services to be strong and vigilant in spite of the policies of the current administration that deeply threaten their readiness,” says John Robb of the International Prayer Council.

Prayer leaders also shared their various initiatives and strategies, such as a nationwide effort to prayer walk every community and street in the U.S., and the goal to gather one million young people on the Mall in Washington, D.C., on July 16, 2016, for Together—a cry for a “reset” of America (reset2016.com). Leaders believe the Holy Spirit is raising up such efforts, and therefore they have hope that God intends to deliver the nation through united prayers in the

midst of a storm of difficult circumstances.

Pierre Bynum, of the Family Research Council and one of the speakers and facilitators of the gathering, observes that “leaders in the national prayer movement agree that repentance and revival in our churches and a biblical awakening are the only hope for America, and they are believing for both.”

Prayer Calendar

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting
January 10–31, 2016
americapray.net

Seek God for the City
February 10–March 20, 2016
waymakers.org

Collegiate Day of Prayer
February 25, 2016
collegiatedayofprayer.org

THE FOUNDATION TO BUILDING A PRAYING CHURCH

I SAT IN A COFFEE SHOP with a cup of dark roast in my hand and a stack of resumes on the table. As a member of the pastoral search committee in my church, I faced a meticulous task. I knew I would be spending the next several hours reading through the qualifications of more than 100 candidates for our senior pastor position.

I wondered how I could possibly discern God's direction with such a seemingly insurmountable stack. I took another sip of coffee, prayed for the Spirit's guidance, and started reading.

I was looking for something specific—a pastor who recognized the importance of prayer as the foundation of all ministry. I read through more than half of the stack—and found no indication from any of the pastors that they valued the priority of prayer. They listed leadership skills, church growth experience, and philosophy of ministry—but nothing about prayer. I'm sure all of these pastors prayed on some level, but none of them acknowledged that their ministry flowed first and foremost out of their prayer relationship with the Lord.

Suddenly I felt a surge of hope with one resume. I began reading the testimony

of a pastor who was transformed by reading the book *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire* by Jim Cymbala—and how, as a result, he began seeking the Lord as the number-one priority in his ministry. I had to put the resume down for a bit and sip more coffee. My eyes were too filled with tears to keep reading.

I felt an instant heart-connection with this man. Eventually the members of the search committee agreed. During a later interviewing process, I had a chance to pray with him and his wife, and got to appreciate him on an even deeper level. He was the real deal—a praying pastor. Out of all the resumes, *he was the only one who listed prayer as a priority.*

As it turned out, another candidate came to the table late in the search—with strong preaching skills and a larger ministry background. I felt disheartened that the praying pastor faded to second choice in the decision process for the rest of the committee.

LEADERS ARE KEY

Jesus made it clear that churches are to be “praying churches” (Matt. 21:13). The pastor and other spiritual leaders play critical roles in establishing their

churches as houses of prayer.

In this issue, Dave Earley writes that he researched 75 high-impact spiritual leaders and discovered their common denominator was an “extra-ordinary” prayer life. Fred Hartley challenges pastors to develop a strong prayer team of people who have influence with God, and those who have influence with people. A pastor with a dedicated prayer team that comes alongside him or her is foundational to building a praying church. Alice Smith has spent years building bridges between intercessors and pastors—and she explains how an intercessor can become a valuable asset to a spiritual leader.

God knew the longtime desire of my heart was to be in a church led by a praying pastor. In His timing, He eventually placed me in a church with a senior pastor who is a leader in the national and international prayer movement. Perhaps one day this will be true of all churches—just as Jesus said.

CAROL MADISON is editor of *Prayer Connect*.

A HEALTHY PRAYER

The Common Denominator

LIFE

WHEN I WAS NEARLY 17 YEARS OLD, I gave my life to God. Almost immediately, I began leading a tiny Bible study group of teens at our public high school. I knew very little about God, the Bible, or leadership. I felt totally insufficient and utterly desperate for all the help I could get.

So I prayed.

Eventually, that group multiplied to more than 100 students. Our high school experienced a revival. Ever since then, I have been keenly aware of the link between prayer and impact in ministry.

Prayer is the indisputable common denominator of spiritual difference-makers in every generation. Prayer is certainly not the only act of leadership, but I doubt you will find an effective spiritual leader in the Bible or in history who was not a person of prayer. This is the reality today as much as it was 2,000 years ago.

Listen to the voices of renowned authorities in the realm of spiritual leadership:

- Henry Blackaby: “More than any other single thing leaders do, it is their prayer life that will determine their effectiveness.”
- Peter Wagner: “Great leaders pray!”
- Charles Swindoll: “Prayer, I repeat, is absolutely essential in the life of a leader.”
- Wesley Duewel: “. . . as a leader, your usefulness is dependent upon your prayer,” and “the effectiveness of your ministry depends on your spiritual life.”



of Spiritual Leaders

By Dave
EARLEY

In addition, prayer leaders known for their classic works were adamant about the critical nature of prayer. Nineteenth century Christian leader Andrew Murray said that prayer in the life of the leader should be regarded “as the highest part of the work entrusted to us, the root and strength of all other work . . . there is nothing we need to study and practice as the art of praying alright.”

J.C. Ryle, another 19th century Christian leader, writes, “I have read the lives of many eminent Christians who have been on earth since Bible days. Some of them, I see, were rich, and some poor. Some were learned, some unlearned . . . some were Calvinists, and some were Arminians. . . . But one thing, I see, they all had in common. They all had been men of prayer.”¹

E.M. Bounds, who spent the last 17 years of his life locked away, studying, writing, and practicing prayer, writes, “Great praying is the sign of God’s great leaders.” He also states, “Old Testament history is filled with accounts of praying saints. The leaders of Israel in those early days were noted for their praying habits. Prayer is the one thing which stands out prominently in their lives. . . . They were essentially men of prayer.”

I wanted to see if Ryle and Bounds were right. So I did a detailed study of the lives of 75 high-impact spiritual leaders. I studied Moses, Samuel, David, Daniel, Jesus, the apostles, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, Charles Spurgeon, Dawson Trotman, Bill Bright, Henrietta Mears, and Bill Hybels, among others. Their gifts, talents, personalities,

backgrounds, educational levels, and social status varied. But they all had one common denominator—they were people of prayer. They all had what most of us would call an “extra-ordinary” prayer life.

I agree with J.O. Sanders, who concluded, “The eminence of great leaders in the Bible is attributable to the fact that they were great in their praying.”

NOT ENOUGH PRAYER

I have trained pastors, missionaries, church staffs, and small group leaders all over the nation and in many parts of the world. When we discuss prayer, they nod their heads and agree that prayer is important. Yet, too often North American Christian leaders are guilty of doing nearly everything else but pray. One survey said the average pastor prays only

EFFECTIVE SPIRITUAL LEADERS PRAY FOR THEIR PEOPLE

Too many Christian leaders pray too little—and too many Christian leaders pray too little for others. This must change. Intercessory prayer is a primary tool used by effective spiritual leaders.

Missionary leader Wesley Duewel writes in *Mighty Prevailing Prayer*, “You have no greater ministry or no leadership more influential than intercession.” It was E.M. Bounds who said, “Talking to men for God is a great thing. But talking to God for men is greater still.” S.D. Gordon wrote, “True prayer never stops in petition for one’s self. It reaches out for others. Intercession is the climax of prayer.”

Intercession was a major part of the leadership ministry of Moses. Again and again in Exodus and Numbers, we hear Moses effectively crying out to God on behalf of his followers (Ex. 17:4; Num. 11:2; 14:13–19).

Samuel, the great leader and prophet, believed it was sinful to fail to pray for his people. He said, “As for me, far be it from

me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you” (1 Sam. 12:23).

The Apostle Paul was a major league difference-maker. Note that his letters are washed in mention of his intercessory prayers for his followers.

- “God . . . is my witness how constantly I remember you in my prayers at all times” (Rom. 1:9–10).
- “I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers” (Eph. 1:16).
- “I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy” (Phil. 1:3–4).
- “Since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you” (Col. 1:9).
- “We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers” (1 Thess. 1:2).
- “With this in mind, we constantly pray for you” (2 Thess. 1:11).

- “Night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers” (2 Tim. 1:3).

Jesus lived out intercession. His entire ministry identified with us, standing in our stead, and going to God the Father on our behalf. As a leader, He prayed for His followers. In speaking of His 12 disciples, He said, “I pray for them” (John 17:9). In speaking of His future followers (including us), He said, “I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message” (John 17:20). Even now in His exalted home in heaven, Jesus is the One “who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us” (Rom. 8:34, NKJV), and “He always lives to make intercession” for us (Heb. 7:25, NKJV).

If we want to lead like Moses, Samuel, Paul, and Jesus, we need to pray like Moses, Samuel, Paul, and Jesus. Like them, we must pray for our followers.

— DAVE EARLEY

seven minutes a day!² Another said that 80 percent of pastors surveyed spend less than 15 minutes a day in prayer.³

The most generous survey said that pastors pray all of 37 minutes a day. But it also showed that only 16 percent of Protestant ministers across the country are very satisfied with their personal prayer life. This survey stated that a disheartening 21 percent typically spend 15 minutes or less per day in prayer.⁴

I am not sure which survey is most accurate, but they all tell us the same thing. Most pastors pray too little. No wonder so many pastors feel discouraged. No wonder so many will burn out or quit.

MOST IMPORTANT TASK OF THE SPIRITUAL LEADER

Effective leaders need to accomplish many important tasks, including planning, vision-casting, team-building, communicating, and policy-making. But Christian leadership is *spiritual* work. *Spiritual* work depends upon *spiritual* tools. No spiritual tool is as significant or powerful as prayer. As Andrew Murray reminds us, “In spiritual work, everything depends upon prayer.”

The importance of prayer in effective spiritual leadership shows up on every level of Christian leadership. For example, a survey of small group leaders revealed an interesting correlation between time spent in prayer and small group multiplication. It revealed that leaders who spent 90 minutes or more in daily devotions multiplied their groups *twice as often* as those who spent less than half an hour.⁵

The responsibilities of spiritual leaders have deep eternal ramifications. The burden for eternal souls is often complex and confusing, immense and exhausting. Henry and Richard Blackaby get to the heart of this matter when they write, “There will be times when leaders will come to the end of their own resources. In those times, they will understand there is nothing more they can do for their people. Giving speeches will not fix the problem. Issuing memos will change nothing.

Calling in consultants will be futile. There are simply some things that can only be achieved through prayer.”⁶

PRAYER IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL ACTIVITY A LEADER CAN DO

When I look at the massive responsibility of trying to influence people for God, I am stunned by my own insufficiency. Who am I? When it comes to worldly influence, I am a “nobody and a nothing.” I can’t do it. But I know someone who can—God. He can do more in seconds than I can accomplish in years. He can do it better, bigger, and more long-lastingly than I can even imagine.

So the question becomes, how can I work with God to be more influential in the lives of the people I am responsible for? The answer, of course, is prayer.

R.A. Torrey made an astounding observation when he wrote, “Prayer is the key that unlocks all the storehouses of God’s infinite grace and power. All that God is and all that God does is at the disposal of prayer. But we must use the key. Prayer can do anything God can do, and as God can do anything, prayer is omnipotent.”⁷

Hudson Taylor was an English missionary to China. He founded the China Inland Mission, which became miraculously influential for God in China. At his death, the mission included 205 mission stations with more than 800 missionaries and 125,000 Chinese Christians. How did he do it? He said, “It is possible to move men through God by prayer alone.”⁸


ALL GOD DOES THROUGH PRAYER

David Jeremiah leads a large megachurch in southern California and has a radio ministry. Regarding the essential role of prayer in ministry, he writes, “I scoured the New Testament some time ago, looking for things God does in ministry that are not prompted by prayer. Do you know what I found? Nothing.

“I don’t mean I had trouble finding an item or two: I mean I found nothing. Everything God does in the work

of ministry, He does through prayer. Consider:

- Prayer is the way you defeat the devil (James 4:7).
- Prayer is the way you get the lost saved (Luke 18:13).
- Prayer is the way you acquire wisdom (James 1:5).
- Prayer is the way a backslider gets restored (James 5:16–20).
- Prayer is how saints get strengthened (Jude 20, Matt. 26:41).
- Prayer is the way to get laborers out to the mission field (Matt. 9:38).
- Prayer is how we cure the sick (James 5:13–15).
- Prayer is how we accomplish the impossible (Mark 11:23–24).”

Jeremiah summarizes by saying, “Everything God wants to do in your life He has subjugated to one thing: prayer.”⁸ 

¹ J.C. Ryle, *A Call to Prayer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1976), pp. 14-15.

² William Brehm, *Why Should We Pray? Be Ready!* <http://www.be-ready.org/whypray.html>.

³ “Statistics About Pastors,” <http://www.maranathalife.com/lifeline/stats.htm>.

⁴ “Study shows only 16% of Protestant ministers are very satisfied with their personal prayer lives,” Ellison Research, ellisonresearch.com/ERPS%2011/release_16_prayer.htm.

⁵ Joel Comiskey, *Home Group Cell Explosion* (Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 1998), p. 34.

⁶ Henry and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2001), p. 151.

⁷ R.A. Torrey, *The Power of Prayer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1924), p. 17.

⁸ David Jeremiah, *Prayer: The Great Adventure* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 1997), pp. 40-41.



DAVE EARLEY is lead pastor of Grace City Church, Las Vegas, NV (gracecityvegas.com), and associate professor of pastoral leaders and evangelism at Liberty University’s School of Divinity. This article is adapted from his book, *Prayer: Timeless Secret of High-Impact Leaders* (AMG, 2008).

INVESTING IN PRAYER

Building a Praying

LEADER

THE SIZE OF YOUR MINISTRY IS determined by the size of your prayer life. The size of your prayer life is revealed by the size of your answers to prayer.

When Jesus built His Church, He built a praying Church. What kind of church are you building? When Jesus made disciples, He made praying disciples. What kind of disciples are you making?

Standing in front of a large sanctuary full of preachers, Charles H. Spurgeon pointed his finger and declared, “Your work, brethren, is to set your church on fire.” He was right.

The starting point for setting a church on fire is to learn to pray.

SADDLE UP

The best way to learn to pray is to pray with people in your church family who know how to pray. Let me encourage you: right now there are people in your church who are waiting for you to invite them into an entry-level prayer partnership.

When God first put me in the vice grip of prayer with a desire to learn to pray and to bring people with me, I didn’t know exactly where to start. But I figured I could not go wrong by inviting three people whom I knew had strong prayer lives to pray with me: Don,



Church from the Ground Up

S

By Fred A.
HARTLEY III

Leslie, and Daniel. Don works for FedEx, Leslie is a massage therapist par excellence, and Daniel works for Home Depot. Our backgrounds could not have been more diverse, but that didn't matter. Our hearts were together—we each loved Jesus and wanted Him to teach us to pray.

I have grown tremendously from my mentors—Armin Gesswein, David Bryant, Henry Blackaby, and Victor Hashweh—but these relationships have been long distance. I've been profoundly impacted by Jim Cymbala, Richard Foster, Alice Smith, and other prayer leaders, but that has been primarily through casual friendships and books.

But without question I have learned more about prayer and advancing Christ's

Kingdom from kneeling with my three trusted prayer partners than from anyone else on earth. I saddled up with them as in a posse 15 years ago, and we've been riding together ever since. The Urban Dictionary defines posse as “your crew, your homies, a group of friends, people who have your back.” We might define it as “your entry-level core prayer partners.”

BUILD YOUR PRAYER TEAM

You don't need to be a pastor to gather a core of praying people. Everyone wants to have a huge prayer gathering like Pastor Jim Cymbala's at the Brooklyn Tabernacle in Brooklyn, NY, but why not start small? Give God time to lay a solid foundation with a core group. Gather

your core prayer friends now and perhaps you will have opportunity later to launch a church-wide, God-encountering prayer gathering with the full support and blessing of your lead pastor.

Start by asking the Lord, “Father, who would You have me invite into an entry-level prayer partnership?” He will tell you. Write down your initial prospect list. It's time for you to form your posse and saddle up. Set a date and time to launch your God-encountering prayer gathering for your core praying friends.

Jesus spent three years making upper-room disciples. We know that He practiced a life of prayer, as recorded in Mark 1:35: “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.” He also modeled a lifestyle of prayer for His disciples. Even in the middle of heavy days of non-stop ministry to needy people, Jesus called time-out: “Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed” (Luke 5:16). His example of relevant, life-giving prayer was so winsome to His disciples that one day, after Jesus finished praying, “. . . one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples’” (Luke 11:1).

YOU'RE NOT ALONE

When Christ sets off our spiritual appetite alarm, we immediately and instinctively want to pray with others. Many of us were raised in the generation that was taught solo prayer—to pray in private. Many grew up in a church in which the corporate prayer meeting was dry, irrelevant, and boring. I must admit that I have suffered through plenty of boring—painfully boring—prayer meetings. They were torturous for only one reason: they lacked fire, the fire of God's manifest presence.

Once God has stirred a passion in you to pray and to receive the fire of His manifest presence, it is an indication that He has also stirred a similar passion in others around you. I have found this is virtually a universal principle—it's just a matter of discovering who these people

BUILDING YOUR PRAYER SHIELD

Whether you are a pastor or a business person, retired or a student, God wants you to have a prayer shield—a team of prayer partners who are called and committed to pray consistently, and in most cases daily, for you and for the work of Christ to be accomplished through you. It is good for you to communicate your specific needs, challenges, and assignments to this group at least once a month. Please read the next statement slowly, carefully, and prayerfully:

If you do not currently have a prayer shield, it is probably because you don't think you need one or because you don't think your assignment is important enough to require one. In either case, you are wrong.

You may be thinking, *Well, I don't need a prayer team. I don't have a high calling like a pastor or a missionary does; they need prayer covering, but I don't.* Not so fast. If you are in Christ, you have a call of God on your life. Don't ever feel inferior or substandard. Every call of God on our lives is a high calling

and a supernatural one. For this reason we all need a prayer shield.

The Apostle Paul knew that he needed a prayer shield. No less than five distinct times he recruited personal prayer partners to pray for him and for Christ's work through him. (See 1 Thessalonians 5:25, Romans 15:30, 2 Corinthians 1:11, Philippians 1:19, Philemon 22.)

I love to honor my prayer shield. I give careful thought to consistently and creatively expressing appreciation to those who pray for me and for Christ's work to be accomplished through me. I recruited my first prayer partners when I went off to college. I sent out letters to many people in my home church asking them if they would be willing to pray for me daily through my college years. To my surprise 18 wonderful people agreed. I am confident the reason God blessed me during the four years of college is largely due to these individuals' faithful prayers.

The future belongs to the intercessors, and we are all indebted to them for their faithful prayer ministry on our behalf.

- FRED HARTLEY

are. God will help you identify them and gather them in prayer.

My friend and mentor J. Edwin Orr was not only a brilliant revival historian with three earned doctorates in the history of revival, he was also a catalytic practitioner who was anointed to stir people to seek Christ and to gather them in God-encountering prayer. As a young man desperate for God, I attended a conference on revival prayer at which Dr. Orr was a speaker. My friends and I took him out to lunch and asked him, “In your 60 years of study, can you summarize everything you’ve learned in a single sentence?”

I waited to hear his next comment.

“Yes,” the great revival Jedi-master replied. “Whenever God is ready to begin something new with His people, He always sets them to praying.”

IT TAKES A TEAM

In order to effectively build a praying church, a congregation needs to build a strong prayer team. The prayer team is not responsible to carry out all the work of prayer on behalf of the congregation; rather, it is responsible to mobilize prayer throughout the church family. The first work of every Christian is to pray, but some believers have a distinct calling to pray for their local church and to mobilize prayer.

A strong prayer team is built from a core group of leaders, each of whom has both a heart to pray and a love for the church family. People with both of these callings are needed to form a prayer team.

A prayer team is made up of five to ten pray-ers, all of whom love Jesus, long for His manifest presence and, preferably, know how to minister in the revelatory gifts. They should be people with godly character and maturity who understand lines of authority and confidentiality and who will protect, not undermine, the leadership of the pastor.

There are two sets of people to build the team from: those who have influence with God, and those who have influence with people.

The first set—those who have influence with God—need to be people who love your church and can express a genuine Holy Spirit call on their lives to intercede for your church. These people are worth their weight in gold. As you look for them, keep in mind a tip that the Holy Spirit taught me a number of years ago: *the shakers and movers in the Kingdom of God are not necessarily the shakers and movers in the kingdom of men.* These are the kind of people who will be your prayer force, and they don’t necessarily need to have broad influence with people as long as they have significant influence with God.

The second set of people to build your team from is made up of prayer mobilizers. These are the individuals who have influence and leadership among the various people groups in your church family. We intentionally select people for our prayer team who represent the diversity of our church family—men and women, young and old, business owners, laborers and middle management—and we represent as many different nationalities as possible.

The duties of our church’s prayer team members are extensive:

- They serve as the leaders of our central, all-church, God-encountering weekly prayer gathering.
- They serve as prayer ministry team leaders along with our elders during the response time of our Sunday morning corporate worship celebration—praying for people’s healing, deliverance, salvation and any other number of needs.
- They make up part of the prayer shield of the lead pastor as personal prayer partners and advisors.
- They mobilize prayer throughout our church life for children, youth, young adults, men and women.
- They facilitate prayerwalks in the neighborhoods around our church campus.
- They help facilitate nights of prayer periodically throughout the year.
- They pray together every Sunday

prior to our worship celebration.

- Most importantly, our prayer team members are assigned the highest responsibility to minister to the presence of the Lord. While this responsibility belongs to all of us, if no one else does it, then—like the Levites—the prayer team members are willing.

THE COLLATERAL BENEFITS

Over the past 20 years in northeast Atlanta, we have seen God completely reshape our local church to truly become a house of prayer for all nations. We went from being a lily-white, English-speaking congregation to now worshipping every Sunday with people born in more than 60 different nations of the world. We have planted 12 international congregations and have seen several thousand people pray to receive Christ.

No one understands better the collateral benefit of being a praying church than Steve Gaines. He is currently pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, TN. Prior to serving in that position, Steve pastored First Baptist Church of Gardendale near Birmingham, AL. For seven years First Baptist Gardendale led the entire state in baptisms—and they never had an evangelistic program. People often asked what Steve’s secret was. He simply explained, “When God comes to church, people get saved.”

That’s what I’m talking about!

When we put our energy into attracting the manifest presence of Christ through prayer, people get saved.

Does this whet your appetite for Christ to make His presence conspicuously known among your people? You have everything you need right now to build a praying church. Be courageous! 🙏



FRED HARTLEY is the lead pastor of Lilburn Alliance Church in metro Atlanta, GA. He is the author of 19 books and the president of the College of Prayer International (collegeofprayer.org). This article is adapted from his book *Church on Fire—A 31-Day Adventure to Welcome the Manifest Presence of Christ*.

WHAT

Fulfill Your Calling

LEADERS NEED FROM INTERCESSORS

FERVENT, FOCUSED PRAYER is a leader's greatest asset and primary protection against spiritual attack. Leaders and their families and ministries need to be surrounded by a shield of prayer.

For more than 40 years, my husband and I have been surrounded by a prayer shield of personal intercessors who pray for us. They stand beside us and uphold our hands in prayer. In some ways, they are more like family than friends. We genuinely love them and enjoy their fellowship.

I remember an invitation I received some years ago to minister in Haiti. I'm a fearless person (probably to a fault), and I have traveled all over the world alone. But for some reason, I didn't feel peace in my spirit to go. Without giving any additional information to our intercessors, I emailed them and asked for their spiritual insight. I was overwhelmed with "No!" responses. It wasn't that the assignment was too much for me, they replied, but the timing wasn't correct. Good thing I didn't go. The massive earthquake that hit Haiti in 2010 occurred during the time I would have been there.

A man in a green jacket is hugging a woman in a red dress from behind. They are framed within a shield-shaped opening in a dark, textured metal door. The scene is backlit, creating a soft, ethereal glow. The man's hands are visible, resting on the woman's back. The overall mood is intimate and protective.

to Love and Pray

By Alice
SMITH

God promised that those who welcome a prophet will receive a prophet's reward (Matt. 10:41). For that reason, I fully expect that any heavenly reward we earn in ministry will be accounted to the intercessors as well. Only God knows how much of our spiritual success results directly from their labor of love in the prayer closet!

FOR LEADERS

Christian leader, if you don't have a prayer shield, I strongly urge you to *ask the Father for one*. However, the mistake many leaders make is to ask every intercessor in their church to serve as their people of prayer. Here are three reasons I believe that's unwise.

1. Mature intercessors rarely accept a long-term assignment without a sure word from God. They understand that their extended assignments are commissioned by the Lord. They

know the weight of that level of responsibility will require His grace to complete it.

2. Immature intercessors will often be so flattered by your invitation that they will jump at a chance for "inside access" to you. In most cases, they will become weary after a season. They tend to drop out from a sense of guilt, reluctant to admit failure.
3. Some intercessors shouldn't hold leadership positions because they are either wounded warriors or recklessly independent *Rambos*. If called into duty, they will present problems for you and your ministry. Their own personal healing and restoration should be their current priority.

Don't be surprised if God raises up some intercessors you would have never selected based on your own analysis. But if they are to be effective and remain

faithful, they need to be God-called, not man-chosen.

Rather than recruit openly, ask the heavenly Father for intercessors. He will answer you. Once you ask, listen closely to what people say to you in casual conversation. You'll start to hear comments like, "The Lord has asked me to pray for you." Or, "God placed you on my heart all week." You prayed for intercessors, so *the Lord will call and commission them*—and then He will reveal them to you.

When you hear comments like that, you should reply, "I've asked God to give me a prayer team. Do you believe God is calling you to intercede for me?" If they say, "Yes," then add them to your list and begin to share your prayer needs with them. Be careful in what requests you share. Some things are private enough that only one or two special confidants should know the details.

FOR INTERCESSORS

If you have a calling to be an intercessor for leaders, it is important that you understand that role. Even if you are not called into a unique role as a personal intercessor for your pastor, you can still pray faithfully for your leaders. Whether you have a special assignment or not, here are suggestions that can help you become a valuable asset to any spiritual leader:

1. **Your leader needs privacy.** Some intercessors find it hard to accept that they may not be invited to experience a close, personal friendship with their leader. They need to remember they are simply called to intercede. *Partnership* and *communication* don't necessarily mean "social closeness." When God told Peter Wagner that He wanted me to be his number-one intercessor, God also told him that we wouldn't have a close, personal relationship. It's true. The assignment was for intercession, but I didn't see Peter often and still don't.
2. **Your leader may know little about your calling.** A leader may not be acquainted with the role and calling of an intercessor. There are many

Encourage
prayer
for God to move in America
during the election season!

Share your passion to see God's transformational power in our nation that only comes through prayer. **That's** the change we need!

The **Get Out The Prayer 2016 Campaign Box** features great tools to use and to share with friends to make God's desire for our nation the focus of the 2016 elections.

© Intercessors for America

Get your GOTP Campaign Box today - \$24.99 plus S & H.
GetOutThePrayer.com

assignments in the Body of Christ. Intercession is one of them—and in some ways it is a unique one that many leaders do not understand.

3. Your leader may assign a staff member to interface with you on a regular basis. Time restraints or the sheer size of a ministry may dictate this.

It's biblical. It follows the pattern that Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, gave him for leading the children of Israel. One person can focus on only so many responsibilities. And to the leader: if you assign this task to a staff member, choose someone who is reasonably acquainted with intercessors and intercession, and who will be sensitive to your intercessors' unique needs.

4. Your leader needs your understanding as well as your prayer. Most Christians don't understand the level of pressure that rests on the shoulders of their leaders. They are on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Ministry emergencies can interrupt a leader's day off, even his or her family vacation. Don't make unnecessary demands on your leaders. Exercise sensitivity.

5. The visibility of leadership means that leaders "live in glass houses." Leaders and their families are constantly on display, or even "on trial." What they do and say, what they wear, and where they go can be continually scrutinized. The prayer warrior should be supportive and protective in all things.

6. Spiritual leaders are targeted by Satan for failure. Leaders are like commissioned officers in God's army—and Satan's attacks are aimed directly at them. We often hear of leaders losing their emotional, mental, or physical health due to stress and overwork (Titus 1:7-9). In worse cases, some leaders fall out of the ministry due to sin. No one can succeed at true Christian ministry on their own, regardless of their gifts and talents. Supernatural power of the Spirit is required—and Satan will seek to

drum a leader out of the ministry.

A leader's faithfulness influences others. When one falls, the cause of Christ is damaged and many are wounded. Leaders carry enormous demands and extraordinary pressures that often require solutions only intercession can provide.

7. A leader's family is also subject to Satan's attack. The enemy loves to inflict pain on a leader by causing his or her spouse to suffer an accident or illness, mental or emotional distress.

Leaders' children are favorite targets for the devil. They are unfairly held to a higher standard than their peers because of who their parents are. Eyes are on them, and Satan knows that ministry anointing can increase generationally. Therefore, because the next generation can cause him even greater problems, he'll work overtime to make sure that doesn't happen.

8. Your leader needs your love. Christian leaders can suffer rejection and the pain of shattered friendships. Though not necessarily obvious in public settings, some are lonely, wounded, or depressed due to a barrage of criticism. And yes, some even lose their lives due to the crushing weight of ministry. I see more discouragement in pastors and leaders today than I ever have before.

Thank you for your commitment to pray for leaders. I've learned that few people can love a leader or make a difference in a leader's ministry like an intercessory prayer warrior. **PC**



ALICE SMITH is the executive director of the U.S. Prayer Center in Houston, TX (usprayercenter.org), and the author of several books. She is a member of America's

National Prayer Committee.

BEST NEW PRAYER NOVEL OF 2016

The Pray-ers

BOOK ONE

"Troubles"



MARK S MIRZA
Author, Blogger, Conference Speaker
Founder Common Thread Ministries



CTM PUBLISHING INC.
Available in hard and soft cover, audio and eBook editions

ORDER ONLINE: www.ThePray-ers.com

Do you struggle in prayer and long for more consistency?

You are not alone!

More than 70% of believers say they are unsatisfied with their prayer lives.

Would you like to grow in prayer and help others grow, too?

If you struggle in prayer, the PrayerCords™ tools, developed by Strategic Prayer Initiative, have been designed for you. PrayerCords is a simple, but proven way to help Christians become more effective in prayer and draw closer to Jesus. The commitment is not difficult or overly burdensome, and the benefits can be very helpful and powerful. If you already have a “good prayer life” you will be blessed by PrayerCords as you encourage two friends in their prayer lives!

Together you and your Cord covenant to do THREE THINGS:

Alone:

1. Pray for two (2) minutes per day. Tools are available to guide you.
2. Read two (2) verses of the Bible each day.

Together:

3. Meet with your Cord once per month for prayer, accountability, and encouragement.

Starting a Cord is easy:

1. Find two same-gender people who commit to being in a Cord with you.
2. Choose one of you to act as Administrator for the group
3. Sign the confidentiality agreement
4. Start praying, reading, and meeting!

*Here's what
people who use
PrayerCords
are saying!*

"It has been very positive, encouraging, uplifting. I look forward to our monthly times together and wish we could get together more often. Yet I believe it is because we are only expected to connect monthly that it is possible to make the commitment to be involved. Better to be left wanting more!"

"The experience for our Cord has been very positive. We have become more consistent in our prayer time and Bible reading. The clear guide for a Cord is helpful to keep us consistent."

"I have found that I am praying more consistently and being accountable is very helpful too. I love the *Love to Pray* book."

"My PrayerCord group has been a huge blessing. I'm so grateful for the ladies and to have a safe place to discuss very personal things. . . . It's nice to have been able to be flexible with what our Cord operates like. I feel like it's been a blessing knowing I'm lifted in prayer regularly."

PrayerCords can be used effectively with:

- you and two (2) others
- in an already existing small group
- or with entire churches.

PrayerCords is for you!

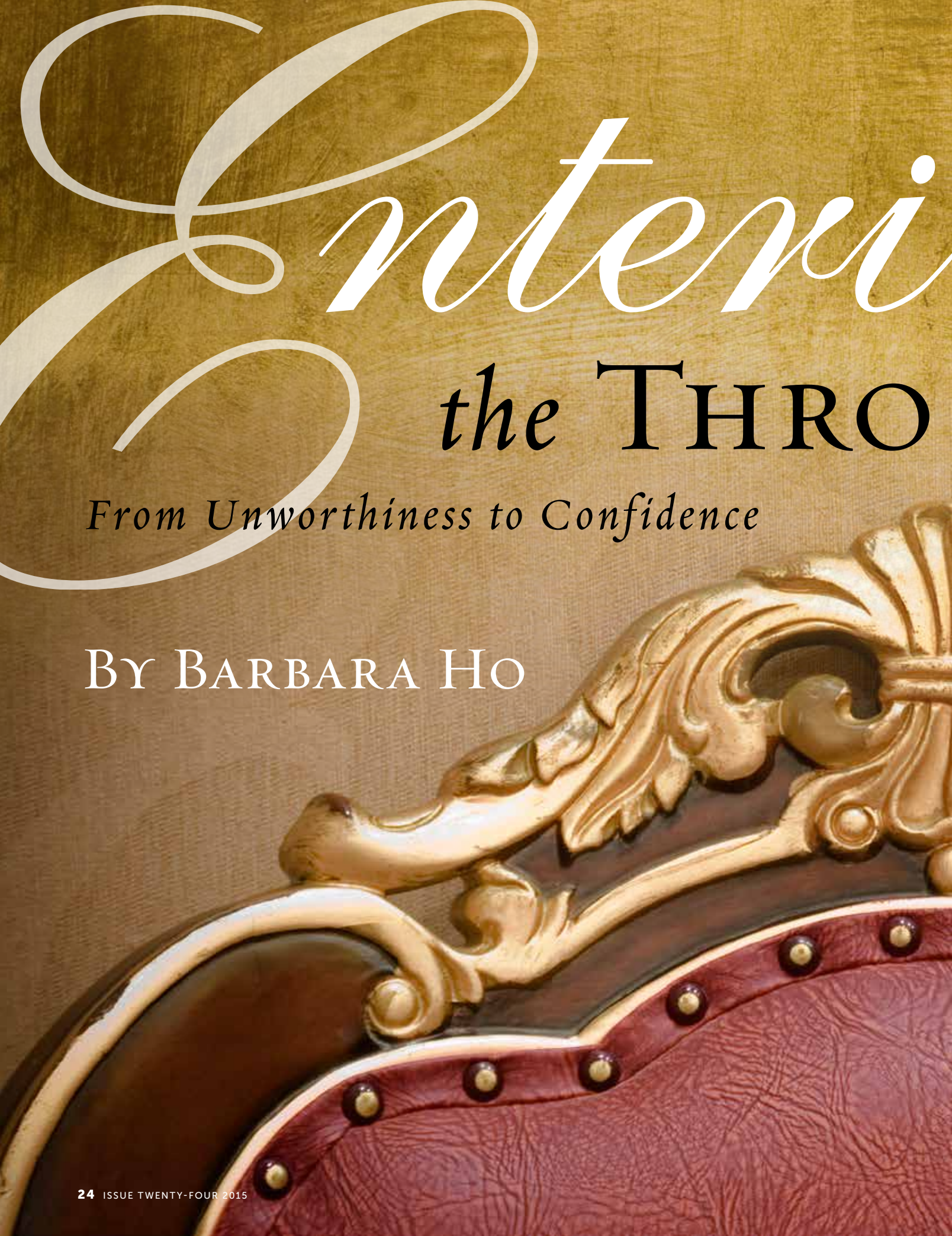
We are working to help genuine Christians in America to develop and/or maintain "Good Prayer Lives" so that they can more effectively fight the spiritual battle spoken of in Ephesians 6:12, Daniel 10:12-14,

2 Corinthians 10:3-5, 1 Peter 2:10-11 and Revelation 12:7-9.

Get more information on the PrayerCord tools or to receive
complementary PrayerCord materials, email
mike@harvestprayer.com or
call **708.655.1044**

strategicpi.org


PrayerCords™ is a ministry of Strategic Prayer Initiative.



Enteri *the THRO*

From Unworthiness to Confidence

BY BARBARA HO



my PRAYER ROOM

I have claimed this verse in prayer more times than I can begin to count: “The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective” (James 5:16). God answers the prayers of the righteous. I’m reminded of this every time I pray—and I often speak it with confidence.

Are you able to pray with confidence, or do you feel too unworthy to have your prayers answered? Can you come boldly before the Lord and bring your concerns and burdens to Him, or do you struggle with feelings of condemnation or unworthiness? How can you pray with assurance when you know you’re far from perfect?

The Prayers of the *Righteous*

To begin with, our righteousness comes from who we are *in the Lord* and our relationship with Him. It’s based on what Christ has accomplished on the cross. Once we have surrendered our lives to Christ, we are then free to receive forgiveness for our sins—past, present, and future. He paid the penalty for our sin. That is our firm foundation!

“This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe” (Rom. 3:22). We are able to pray in confidence because of our *position* of righteousness in Christ! How freeing this is! I don’t have to be perfect to come before the throne of grace. In Hebrews 10:19–23 we read:

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience . . . for he who promised is faithful.

I don't care what life you've lived or how many heinous sins you've committed. If you've dedicated your life to God and truly serve the Lord Jesus, you can pray in confidence. Some translations of Hebrews 10:19 use the word "boldness." Picture yourself boldly coming before Jesus seated on His throne. Do you understand what this means? No matter how hard Satan tries to condemn you,

you can refute his lies! You can pray for whatever is on your heart and know that God is listening. We have that privilege.

But I'm Not Perfect

There is a second part of righteousness. Living righteously means conforming to God's standard of right and wrong. It means making a decision to live out the principles in the Bible. We cannot live life our way and expect God to answer our prayers. "The LORD is far from the wicked but he hears the prayer of the righteous" (Prov. 15:29).

We are not perfect! In Romans 7:19 Paul wrote that the things he wanted to do he didn't do, and the things he didn't want to do were the things he found himself doing. Isn't that the truth! We are flawed people. No matter how we try, we can never live a perfect life, not on this side of heaven. That's why it is so awesome that our righteousness is based

on what Christ has done. Thank God He doesn't expect perfection!

Faith and righteousness go hand in hand. Righteousness is faith being lived out. True faith in the Lord will lead to righteous living. We can't claim to have faith in the Lord and live life our way. Fully surrendering means making a conscious decision to walk under the direction of God, as He would have us live.

At the same time, our righteousness comes by faith in Christ. The English word "righteous" originated from an old Anglo-Saxon word, *rihtwis*, which meant *right wise*. The Old Testament Hebrew word that is translated as "righteous" means *lawful*, or *clean*. Both of these have to do with the idea of right choices.

Repentance and Confession

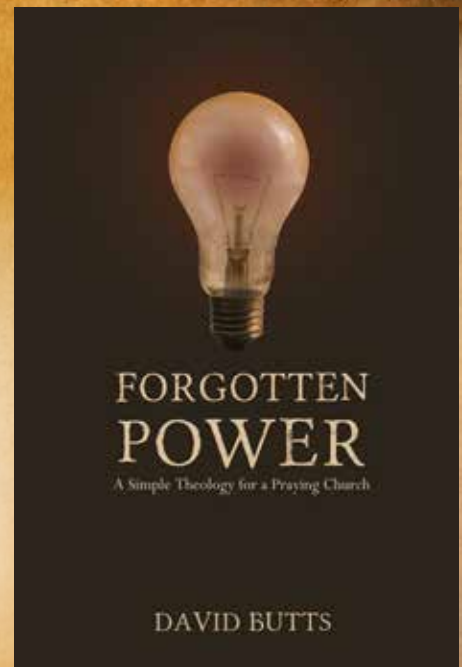
Because of our sinful tendencies, confession and repentance need to play a large

Tap into the POWER!

"Much power has been ignored by the Church because of its failure in the area of prayer." —David Butts

Forgotten Power is a must read for pastors, elders, church board members—anyone who leads in a church. It is time that leaders understand the importance of prayer and what can happen if it is put into practice in their church. Use it as a discussion starter in your church.

Available from prayershop.org or through your usual Christian book outlet



part in our prayer lives. Repentance means making a decision to turn around and go in a different direction. Understand that confession of sin does not bring about forgiveness. We don't fall out of forgiveness every time we sin. Forgiveness is included in our position in Christ.

But confession and repentance are important in keeping us humble before the Lord and keeping our lives on the track God intends. I picture our lives like a car. If you take your hands off the steering wheel it will begin to veer, be it ever so slightly. Eventually, you'll be going totally in the wrong direction. Confession is like keeping our hands on the steering wheel. It keeps us on the right path.

I almost always begin my prayer time with "soul searching" and confession. I ask God to put a spotlight on my life and bring to mind areas where I need to confess to the Lord. Sometimes nothing needing confession comes to mind. Sometimes it does. It may be a sinful thought or a wrongly spoken word.

I remember one incident that happened to me years ago before I was married. I had a friend staying over for the night and the two of us had a bit of a heated conversation. We both then went to bed mad. Before I dozed off I decided to pray. I opened my Bible to Matthew 5. There, in verses 23 and 24, Jesus tells us that if we're offering a gift to God and remember an offense we have against another person, we're to leave the gift, fix the offense, and then come back to offer the gift to the Lord.

I got out of bed and went into my friend's room. To my surprise, she was crying. I apologized to her and we made up. I needed to clear that offense up before I spent time with God.

Stand Against Lies

Once I have confessed and set things right, I can continue in prayer knowing that I am cleansed. I remind myself that my position in Christ gives me the right to pray! If the enemy has tried to convince me there is an area of my life that

makes me unworthy to enter into prayer, in faith I take back that territory. I do this by specifically standing against his lies. I will often verbally claim Scriptures that support my spiritual right as a follower of Christ to enter into prayer.

Be aware that attacking our worthiness to approach Christ is one of the primary methods Satan uses to try to

destroy our prayer lives. It's not unusual for him to whisper how sinful we are and try to bring a feeling of condemnation. "Again, you fell!" "You'll never overcome this!" Scripture refers to him as the "accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night" (Rev. 12:10). I've prayed with countless sisters and brothers in Christ who are so

PRAYER CAN CHANGE A NATION!

3 Resources to Help You Pray in a Biblical Way Over the 2016 Elections

2016 Election Prayer Facebook Community
Join an online community and receive non-partisan scripture-based prayer themes that will keep you targeted on God's purposes for our nation.
Facebook/2016electionprayer

"How to Pray for an Election"
Download this Election Prayer Guide at <http://harvestprayer.com/election-prayer-guide>

A 40-Day Prayer Initiative to Pray Together
Desperate for Change:
40 Days of Prayer for America

Available at www.prayershop.org

Harvest Prayer MINISTRIES
harvestprayer.com

caught up in these particular lies of the enemy that they feel unworthy to pray. What a liar Satan is! Of course we might need to alter our life choices, but as we understand our position in Christ, we can and should be bold in our prayers in the throne room of God!

For others Satan brings the lure of

self-confidence and pride. Their focus is solely on their relationship in the Lord and they've neglected the righteous living the Word speaks of. They need to choose to follow the principles of the Word of God and determine to make life changes.

Both of these lies are dangerous and

need to be severely dealt with in order to have an effective and dynamic prayer life.


Appropriate Confession

There are occasions when we need to confess publically before others. I've seen this misused, however. We're not expected to—nor should we—confess *all* our sins publically. We need to be wise in this area.

I've seen people confess things that were totally inappropriate and not helpful, either for the person confessing, or for those hearing them. One man confessed sexual sin that had occurred many years ago to a room of mostly children, many of whom were his Sunday school students. Another confessed sin in a church service that should have been confessed in private. None of these people ever asked or even told the pastors or leaders of their intentions. They were acting out of condemnation and guilt.

There are times, though, when we do need to publicly confess our sins and shortcomings to others. It's important to first ask a pastor or leader you respect and trust for direction and counsel.

A time of confession and repentance should also be included in a group prayer meeting. It's a good idea to give a time of quiet reflection before people are asked to pray. Ask God to put a spotlight on the lives of those in the room. Unconfessed sin will hinder prayer, both personal and corporately.

When we really understand the concept of righteous living, both in our positions in Christ and our daily life choices, tremendous freedom comes into play. Our prayer lives are able to rise to an amazing level. God is honored, we are blessed, and results are seen! 



BARBARA HO is an author and a marriage and pre-marital counselor. She and her husband Daniel are church-planters in Houston, TX. Her book *Ultimate Connection* is available through prayershop.org.

Subscription Information



Take Prayer to a NEW LEVEL

If you enjoy this issue of *Prayer Connect* magazine, why not start a regular subscription? There are three types of subscriptions available:

Print Subscription. Our most popular subscription, the print sub sends a hard copy of *Prayer Connect* through the mail to you four times per year. You also receive full digital access to all issues online at prayerconnect.net. Price: \$24.99

Digital Subscription. This version provides just the online version of *Prayer Connect*. Each issue, an email announcement is sent to you with links to the articles at our password-protected website. You can view any or all articles, and have access to the articles in all back issues. Price: \$19.99

CPLN Member Subscription. This subscription is an annual membership in the Church Prayer Leaders Network. Besides a subscription to *Prayer Connect* (U.S. members receive a print subscription and foreign members a digital subscription), members receive a bimonthly email newsletter, *Prayer Leader Online*, and discounts on most of the 300 plus products at our webstore prayershop.org. Price: \$30

Three Ways to Subscribe:

Online. Go to prayerconnect.net and click on "Purchase" on the upper right hand side of the toolbar at the top. Then simply select the type of subscription you want and follow the instructions.

Phone. Call Joanne at 1-800-217-5200 or 1-812-238-5504 and have her help you place an order (you need to have a credit card available). She is available 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM EST.

By Mail. Simply make out a check to *Prayer Connect*, in the amount of the subscription you want and mail it to us. Mail to: **Prayer Connect, P.O. Box 10667, Terre Haute, IN 47801.**

PRAYERCONNECT | 1-(812) 238-5504 | prayerconnect.net



Refugee Crisis: Five Objects to Fuel Prayer

The refugee crisis continues to grow each day. We witness people desperately scrambling ashore from boats or walking across borders into new countries that will hopefully guarantee them safety and freedom. Media attention on this crisis will eventually drop, which means we can easily forget the needs of thousands.

How can we continue praying daily, persistently, and passionately to support the people in this crisis? Here are five everyday objects you can use to motivate your prayers for refugees:

Shoes. We wear shoes everywhere, whether heels or work boots, sandals, slippers, or flats. So let's use them to pray.

When I put my shoes on, I tend to look inside to make sure there's nothing in there. Buy a pair of insoles, and write your prayers for the refugee crisis on them. This means that every time you put your shoes on, you can pray for the refugees. Think about the journeys that some of them have been on—and pray for their protection and strength.



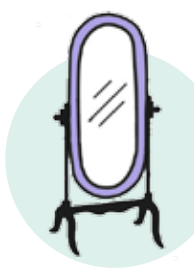
Toothbrush. Brushing your teeth is something that you do at least once a day, especially if you don't want bad

breath when you meet and talk with people! Many country leaders are meeting and talking about what to do about the vast number of refugees arriving through their countries. So it's really important to pray for people in power.

Use a sticky label or permanent marker to write the name of a leader or country on your toothbrush. Every time you brush your teeth, pray for wisdom, guidance, and unity in the decisions they make.

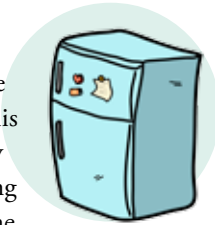


Mirror. We all look in the mirror at some point in the day, whether that's first thing in the morning, throughout the day, or last thing at night.



Use lipstick to draw some lines on your mirror (men, you can always borrow some!). Or draw countries on pieces of paper and stick them to your mirror. These lines represent borders that are often blocked or covered with guards; borders that are treacherous and dangerous. Pray for safety and welcome from countries that refugees are entering.

Refrigerator. When I'm hungry, I know that there is something in the house that will satisfy my needs. And if there isn't, I can go out and buy it. Many people in the world don't have this privilege, especially the refugees crossing our continent. Some may not have eaten since they left home.



Parents are sacrificing their food to give to their children.

Write prayers for those who are malnourished on pieces of paper and stick them on your refrigerator. Every time you go for some food, pray for energy, nutrition, and health for refugees.

Car. Without my car, I wouldn't be able to go places or see people. Refugees use any mode of transportation they can to travel from war-torn nations to the safety of another country.

Buy some sticky dots, and stick them on your transportation, such as on your steering wheel or bike handle.

When you see the sticker, pray for those on long journeys. Pray for guidance, right decisions, and wisdom for those who offer transport to refugees.



TANDIA REEVES is part of the 24-7 Prayer team supporting prayer rooms internationally. She is also part of the Prayer Spaces in Schools team in the United Kingdom (24-7prayer.com). This article is reprinted with permission from the 24-7 Prayer blog.

Will You Pray with Us?

We value your prayers on behalf of *Prayer Connect*. As a staff, we pray that each issue will encourage you to grow in your prayer life. In turn, we love knowing that you are supporting us in prayer. Here are some upcoming needs:

- The National Prayer Committee meetings are the last week of January in Orlando, FL. Dave Butts leads those meetings, and it is a key time for Carol Madison, Jon Graf, and Kim Butts to connect with prayer leaders. Many stories and article ideas come out of our time together. Please pray for good interactions with prayer leaders who might be potential authors.
- This is also a time to encourage prayer leaders to promote the magazine in their networks, as well as make decisions to advertise in *Prayer Connect*. Pray for favor with the various prayer ministries.
- Pray for ideas for future themes to come from these meetings.

War Room: A 30-Day Boot Camp Response | By Kathy Branzell

As a prayer coordinator for my church, I saw the movie *War Room*, and it was an answer to prayer! *War Room* brought the opportunity to inform and inspire my church family and Christians around the world to pray fervently, strategically, and faithfully.

With tear-filled eyes and choked-up voices, people in theaters all over have declared, “I want to learn to pray like that!” The challenge is taking those raw emotions and heightened desperation of wanting to “pray like that” from the theater to the prayer closet.

There are amazing follow-up materials for small group studies and a personal prayer journal written by Alex and Stephen Kendrick that are available from Lifeway Publishers (lifeway.com). The timing of our small group launch did not allow us to use the materials right away. Therefore, I felt the need to grab on to the passion inspired by the movie before movie-goers gave up on the idea of “praying like Miss Clara.” I prayed, asking God how I could not only prompt a deeper, strategic prayer life in my church family, but also help them build a habit of “War Room” prayer with daily practice—a prayer “boot camp.”

I started thinking about how I could give my church family a guide to start praying the minute the movie credits ended. It had to break down the steps and build powerful prayer closet habits. This 30-day prayer boot camp recalls a quote from the movie, and then adds a short teaching on how to start filling your own *War Room* with Scripture and strategies for every area of your life.

Thirty Days of Prayer

The following is Day 1 and part of Day 2 of the 30-day boot camp. The rest of the

prayer guide can be found at prayerconnect.net. This is a free resource to help you build on the motivation of wanting to grow and strengthen your prayer life, even if you have not seen the movie yet. Of course, I encourage you to see the movie and to purchase the resources.

Day 1:

Elizabeth begins reading the papers taped to Clara’s closet and asks Clara, “You wrote prayers for every area of your life?”

Clara replies, “Yes! A prayer strategy!”

In a recent interview, Alex Kendrick said, “We have plans for everything—careers, finances, health. But what about a strategy for prayer for our lives, our spouses, and our children?” This movie and that interview prompted me to put together this 30-day prayer calendar of how to create your personal prayer strategy and “War Room.”

The strategy begins by examining your circumstances right now, and visualizing how things should be—and could be. As you pray over these relationships and responsibilities, write down plans and procedures for getting from here to there.

This means producing a prayer strategy so that God can take you from where you are to where He wants you to be. Prayer clears the path to God’s *best* for your life: His *best* plans, *best* opportunities and blessings, His *best* path and provision for His glory, and His Kingdom purpose in your life.

After seeing *War Room*, many people will want to immediately pinpoint a place of prayer, a “War Room,” in their home, and possibly even a secondary “War Room” in their church, school campus, and workplace. Begin to pray about this and *write down* your commitment to God to be more specific and strategic in prayer.

Ask Him to show you where you can start your prayer closet/War Room.

It does not necessarily mean emptying your closet, but we all have a space that we can repurpose, even if it is shared space. Many times a “War Room” must be disguised as a mild-mannered linen closet or storage closet.


Sometimes we get to post our strategy and Scriptures on the wall, and sometimes we have to keep them secured in a notebook or box that we carry into prayer each day. The important thing is to commit and be consistent; let prayer grow and guide you.

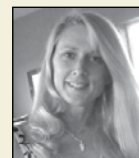
Each day of this calendar will add an opportunity to post something new to grow and sow into your prayer strategy. The devil does not have a fighting chance if you let God do your fighting for you. Start today (Prov. 20:18).

Day 2:

Miss Clara cried out in her powerful prayer, “Lord, we need an army of believers who will stand on Your Word above all else. Lord, call us to battle! Raise them up, Lord! Raise them up!”

Before an army can be shipped into battle, they have to go through boot camp or some sort of training. God needs to train us up in order to raise us up, as we volunteer to be soldiers in His army. . . .

(For more of the prayer strategy, go to prayerconnect.net/resources/prayer-guides/war-room-prayer-guide.) 



KATHY BRANZELL is the founder and CEO/president of Fellowship and Christian Encouragement (FACE) for Educators (prayingeducator.org). She is also a member of the National Day of Prayer Task Force and America’s National Prayer Committee.



A Needed Revival | By Hyman Appleman

Some people think the need for a revival is a sign of decadence in a church. This is not always so. In the New Testament, in the Old Testament, in Christian history, revivals have been a part of God's plan for the advancement of the Kingdom. This is natural. This is spiritual. This is psychological.

It is impossible for a farmer to be always harvesting. The same is true of the Lord's work. We cannot have a perennial revival. We are so constituted that it is impossible for us to be always on the heights. We would go mad with the strain. We could not endure it. The flesh is still with us.

What many people call revivals are not revivals at all. You have heard of revivals with supposedly great singing, great preaching—and with few if any noticeable results. Such meetings are not revivals. You will know it. You will witness it when it comes. Mere preaching is not enough.

We want something that will make people know there is a God in heaven, that the Bible is His Word, that the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ. A real revival shakes, breaks, melts, molds, and causes the power of God to flow over the hearts of people.

We want a revival. God is ready to give it. He will give us that kind of victory the minute we make room for it. Let us, therefore, consider the purpose and the price of a revival.

The first purpose of a revival is to expose sin in the hearts and lives of God's people, and in the hearts and lives of the unsaved multitudes. I can say by experience that nothing can convict of sin, bring people faster and more definitely to a realization of their sins than a revival of religion.

The second purpose of a revival is to enlist souls. First, we must seek to enlist God's people. Why are our churches half empty? Why do not souls come to Christ? Because Christians are not sufficiently concerned about the work of the Lord. We have to enlist God's people.

We must enlist also the unsaved, bring them out of darkness into light, lead them from hell to heaven, from sin to salvation, from iniquity to righteousness.

The third purpose of a revival—the chief purpose, the highest passion, the only purpose God can really bless—is to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ. I am very much afraid that one, if not the chief, reason why God is not blessing our efforts more is that we are selfish, that we have no thought for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If we are in love with Jesus, if we have a passion for Jesus, no matter what the difficulty, no matter what anybody else does, our passion for Christ will drive us to give, to pray, to do. We need to exalt Christ. Only by enthroning Christ can we claim the promises of God, the fullness of His Holy Spirit, the answers to our prayers.

Price of Revival

What is the price of a revival? What did Moses have to pay? What did Samuel have to pay? What did Elijah have to pay? What price did Peter and Paul and Luther and Wesley and Whitefield and

Spurgeon and Moody and Billy Sunday have to pay?

Each of us has to pay the same price—exactly the same price. There is no difference. There never will be any difference. God has never changed His terms. Power is costly. The most expensive power in all the world is the power of Pentecost. The price is high—but we can pay it. Here is how.

We must have a personal devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ. If you will study the biographies of these men I mentioned, you will find that they were characterized by one outstanding attitude. They were in love with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second price of a revival is a purposeful compassion for the souls of men. I mean the kind of compassion that gives us no rest nor peace until we give the best of our thought, the best of our talents, the best of our time, the best of our efforts to seeking out the lost for the Saviour.

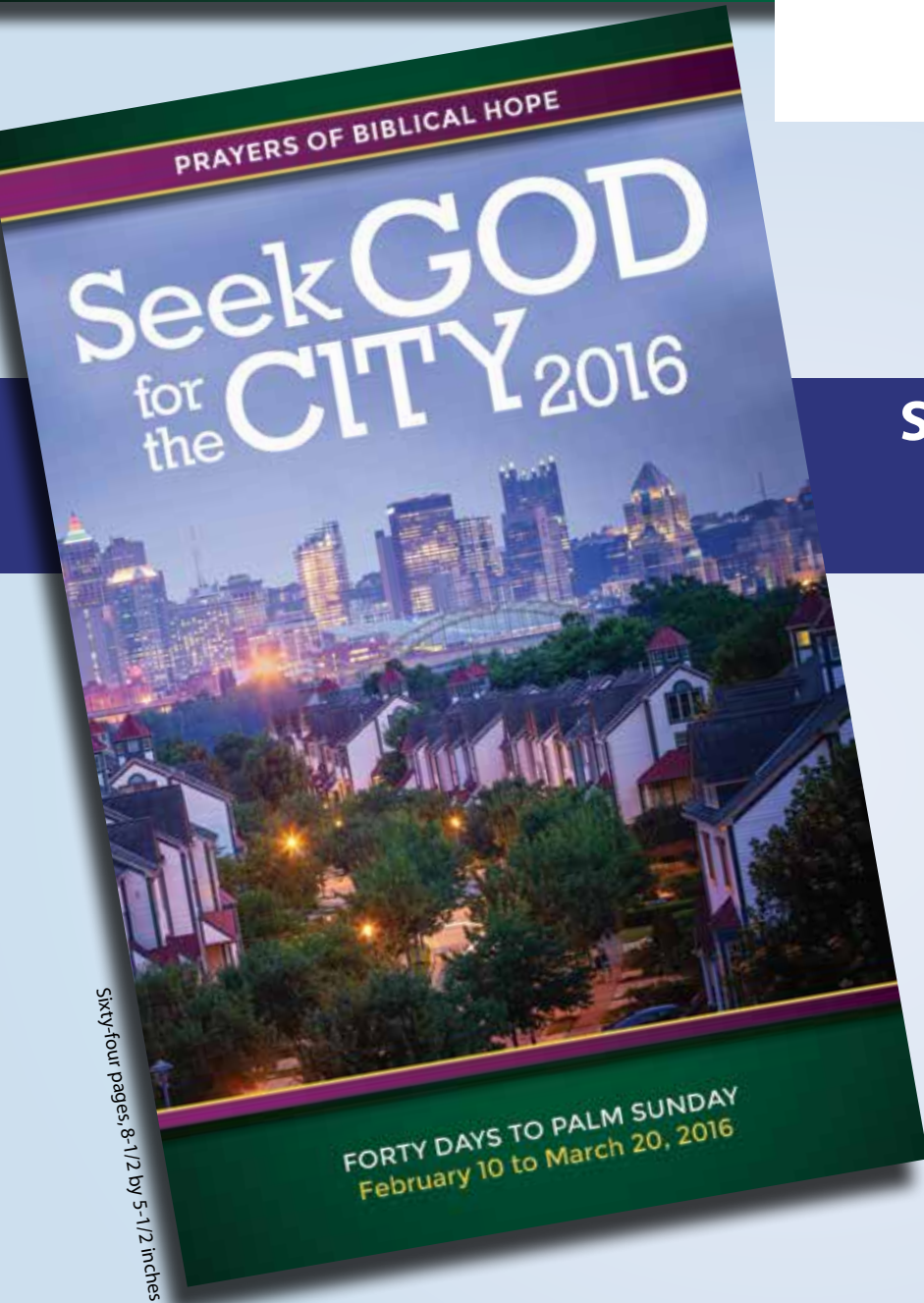
The third price that we must pay for this revival is persistent intercession. If you believe the Bible is the Word of God, if you believe the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ, if you believe God can give us a revival, I implore you, from this moment on, without rest or cessation, let us lift our cities to God's throne of grace. Let us keep them there in the white heat of our prayers until God answers by fire and sends us a revival from above. ☞

HYMAN APPLEMAN (1902–1983) was born in Russia to orthodox Jewish parents who moved to America in 1914. At age 28, he was converted to Christianity, causing his parents to disown him. He attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and became one of the greatest evangelists of his generation.

Pray great things.



3525 S. 3rd Place
Terre Haute, IN 47802



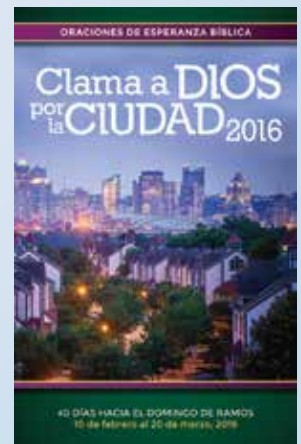
**Pray for God
to fulfill His promises.
Pray in biblical hope.**

Seek God for the City 2016

Forty days to Palm Sunday
February 10 - March 20, 2016

**Fresh prayers to help
you pray toward the
long-range change that
only Christ can bring.**

Also in Spanish!
Contains the same
prayers and scriptures.
The same prices and
discounts apply.



See a sample page at www.waymakers.org.
Pastors and prayer leaders – call now for a complimentary review copy.
(800) 264-5214 or (512) 419-7729

Use the companion app
for smartphones and tablets
(iOS or Android). Makes the
booklet even more practical.
Only 99¢. See details
at waymakers.org.



Only \$3 each

Ask about special church pricing
to help you equip your city or church family.
Order online at www.waymakers.org.



WayMakers
Preparing God's Way by Prayer