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REVIVAL IN THE NEXT GENERATION

A Gen Z Movement



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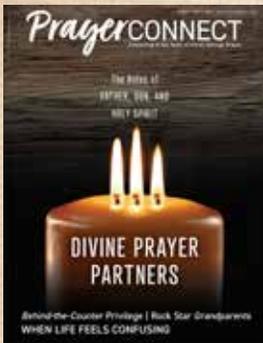
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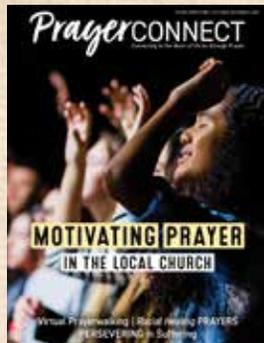
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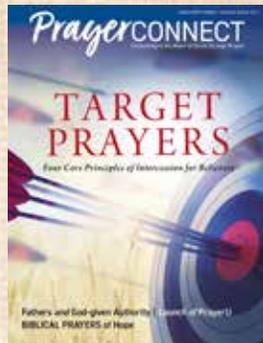
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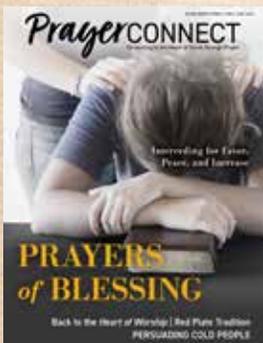
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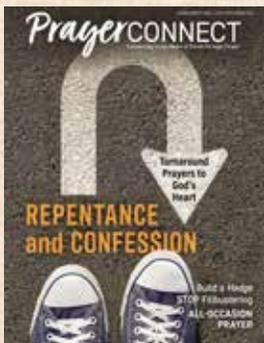
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We are looking for general articles, ideas, and news stories on what God is doing as a result of prayer. We are primarily looking for newly written pieces that have not appeared in other publications. Writer's guidelines are available by emailing Carol 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:

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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, and mentoring the next generation in prayer. The Church Prayer Leaders Network also has many speakers associated with its ministries. You can find contact information at the respective emails or websites.

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The mission of **PRAYER CONNECT** 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.

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Renewed Hope for Revival

Several of my favorite characters in the pages of Scripture first appear as young people doing something significant for the nation. Samuel learned to hear God's voice as a young boy. King David, as a teen, stood up to the giant Goliath when an army of men retreated in fear. And Josiah, the boy king, brought the nation to spiritual revival.



Prior to going into magazine and book publishing, I was a high school English teacher and a youth group sponsor at my church. I have always loved the spunk and spirit of young people, both teenagers and college-aged young adults. I still do. Apparently, God does too.

Did you know that throughout history, God often used young adults as catalysts for revival? A few leaders include Evan Roberts (Welsh Revival), Jeannine Brabon (Asbury Revival) and Samuel Mills (Haystack Prayer Meeting and Revival). And God continues to use the young in these days as His return draws near.

That's what this issue is all about—how God is raising up the next generation for His purposes. We hope it encourages you.

Plan to Reach a Younger Audience

Back in our July 2021 issue, I introduced you to Niko Peele, our new assistant editor, who also works to raise up young leaders on college campuses. Niko's influence is strongly seen in this issue. But beyond hiring a younger editor, the Church Prayer Leaders Network (our parent ministry) has been praying for some time about ways to reach a younger audience with our extensive content.

We currently have more than 1,000 pages of prayer content online at prayerleader.com, including now 47 issues of *Prayer Connect*. Each month more than 30,000 pages are viewed there.

PrayerShop Publishing, our publishing arm, has produced 57 books and more than 10,000 pages of content over the past 13 years. We now want to repackage and reformat this content for digital delivery.

In early 2022, we will launch Love2Pray, a “help for one's personal prayer life” site and app that digitally delivers practical prayer tips, prayer guides, Bible studies on prayer, and access to digital versions of many of our books to members who sign up. The site will also ultimately have a function that allows for people to have prayer partners and prayer groups interact with each other through praying together, sharing prayer requests, hosting Bible study discussions, and so on.

While Love2Pray will be geared toward a 20- to 40-year-old audience, many of our current subscribers and members will be interested, too. It should help to make a person's prayer life more consistent, effective, and dynamic.

Watch for more information on Love2Pray or check out Love2Pray.com.

—Jonathan Graf

Previously in



Most intercessors can agree on the season we find ourselves in—the soon return of Christ. “Come, Lord Jesus” offers insightful ways to pray toward His second coming. Order this issue and other back issues at prayershop.org.

RESCUE AFGHAN CHRISTIANS SAVE LIVES

An Afghan Christian family that has managed to reach Pakistan. Barnabas Aid is assisting them.



Converts from Islam and their children face almost certain death at the hands of the ruling Taliban, who will kill them as apostates. Barnabas Aid is in direct contact with many hundreds of Afghan Christian families.

Join us in saving the lives of Christians left behind in Afghanistan.

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Election Audits Saturated with Prayer

If the prayers of Doug Logan (Cyber Ninjas CEO) are answered, nothing less than revival will flow from the months-long work in the Maricopa County forensic election audit. Logan joined Pray with America's Leaders on Sept. 30, along with Virginia State Senator Amanda Chase, to discuss the much watched and disputed forensic audit.

"I truly feel like the entire audit, I was carried through prayer," Logan says, thanking the Intercessors for America (IFA) prayer warriors. "I was very aware of all the people praying all the time."

The audit team installed a prayer wall at the Arizona Veterans Memorial Coliseum. Over the course of the project, staff and volunteers added poster boards to collect all the prayers and Scripture.

The audit revealed significant discrepancies about the Arizona election. Many questions remain, but now

responsibility for answering them is in the hands of Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich.

Intercessor Cheri Tuttle described the tone that was set early on, as Logan met with staff and volunteers to emphasize the importance of living above reproach and of individual and national repentance. Tuttle was impressed when Logan spoke about listening to the Holy Spirit.

According to Logan, "There were so many days where I privately got on my knees and was in literal tears as to the weight of what was going on and in prayer. I could just tell that people were praying for us."

Logan continues, "I don't fully understand why this audit is so pivotal in what is happening to our country right



now. But it is in the spiritual realm. It's not just in the physical realm. It has a core impact on where our country is going. And I'm truly believing for revival. I don't know how revival comes out of an audit, but that's what I've been praying for!"

At least five people working on the audit gave their lives to the Lord.

JOYCE SWINGLE, taken from Intercessors for America blog (ifapray.org).

Afghan Christians Deal with Crisis Through Prayer

Widespread chaos consumed Afghanistan when the Taliban gained control of the country, inciting fear among Christians who worry about an increase in persecution.

International Christian Concern, a non-profit persecution watchdog, spoke with an Afghan church leader about the enormous dangers confronting people of faith in the war-torn country. The anonymous church leader explains that the Taliban has a great deal of influence against people in terms of obtaining information. He says that some Christians cannot even trust their own family members.



"Definitely, they're going to kill some of the Christians that have been known and that way they want to spread that fear. . ." the church leader adds.

The church leader also explains that many Christians are dealing with the crisis through prayer.

"Definitely we trust in the Lord and pray that He is sparing His people," he says. "We believe in God and we believe that as Christians we know there is persecution. Every Muslim background believer like myself that converted to Christianity knows the consequences of conversion. Islam is very clear, for the apostasy it is death. And there is no mercy on those people."

The church leader adds, "God has a purpose and a plan. He knows what's best for His children in Afghanistan."

ANDREA MORRIS, taken from Faithwire (faithwire.com).

Brownback Urges Apology to Native Americans

Sam Brownback, the United States Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom under President Donald Trump, told Native Americans in Washington, D.C., who were gathered for worship and prayer, that it is time for the current president to formally apologize to them.

Brownback, a former U.S. Senator from Kansas and the state's one-time governor, read an apology to Native Americans for the first time in the nation's capital, inviting fourth-generation pastor and evangelist Dr. Negiel Bigpond to stand beside him.

Bigpond, a full-blooded Euchee/Yuchi Native American whose family traveled the Trail of Tears, joined Brownback and other indigenous Christians in writing the apology signed in a defense appropriations bill on December 19, 2009—but never

publicized—by President Barack Obama.

In addition to praying together in D.C., Brownback and Bigpond are featured in a documentary “The Apology,” which highlights their 20-year friendship and collaboration on the little-known legislation passed by Congress 12 years ago. The documentary also showcases Bigpond and Native Americans extending forgiveness at a prayer gathering around the Washington Monument.

Wearing a native-style necklace from a late American Indian Christian leader, Dr. Jay Swallow, Brownback thanked Joann Swallow for the couple's inspiration in helping to write the apology that



became the law and for her husband's prayer reconciliation work in western Kansas.

A strong believer, Brownback says America has a spiritual problem. “We moved Native Americans from their ancestral homelands in the Indian Removal Act at a great cost of lives.”

According to the “Apology Now” movement website, “To many Native people, an apology not expressed is worse than no apology at all, just another set of meaningless words buried in official treaties and broken promises.”

To learn more and watch the documentary, go to theapologynow.com.

STEVE REES, taken from Assist News Service (assistnews.net).

Pastors Fight Chicago's Gun Violence with Prayer

According to the U.S. Department of Defense, between 2001–2020 more people were killed in the Windy City than in the combined military conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Spiritual leaders in the city are joining together, hoping to change that narrative. Their weapon is the power of prayer and the gospel.

Pastor Dimas Salaberrios, a former drug dealer from New York, knows firsthand the reality of gun violence. After fasting 40 days for an end to the violence, he felt compelled to take America where it happens in his film “Chicago: America's Hidden War.”

“I would say in Chicago there is definitely a demonic presence that I sense when I'm praying and interacting with people on the street,” explains Salaberrios.

Pastor Corey Brooks, who heads a ministry in Chicago called Project Hood

(projecthood.org), agrees with Salaberrios. “There's a real spiritual battle going on in the city of Chicago for the lives of people. There seems to be a spirit of murder throughout the city.”

Through his ministry, Brooks reaches out directly to gang members. “We have a violence prevention team of ten full-time employees that go out into the neighborhood to help make sure there is no retaliation for violence.” Salaberrios says a similar effort saved him from a life of crime and violence in New York.

“Three women reached out to me when I was a street god, one of the largest drug dealers. They said, ‘Can we pray for you?’” explains Salaberrios. “When they laid hands on me the power of God knocks me to the floor, demons come manifesting out of me. They started praying in the name of Jesus. I felt a peace come over me like never before and I quit

selling crack cocaine.”

Brooks believes that the same power and peace can now make a difference in their city.

STEVE WARREN, taken from CBN News (cbn.com).

Prayer Calendar

Weekend of Prayer to End Slavery and Trafficking
January 8-9, 2022

facebook.com/weekendofprayer

Collegiate Day of Prayer
February 24, 2022

collegiatedayofprayer.org

Seek God for the City
March 2–April 10, 2022
waymakers.org

REVIVAL IN THE NEXT GENERATION

A Gen Z Movement

I could not imagine how an underground parking garage could be transformed into a worship venue. But as I entered the dark space, with a few dangling lights overhead, lots of sound equipment, and some rugs scattered on the concrete floor, I sensed I had stepped into a holy place.

I was supposed to be available to pray with anyone—including Gen Zers—who sought counsel and encouragement. But to be honest, I couldn't hear a thing. And when I tried to pray with a few young people, I found myself yelling until I was hoarse. I was out of my element. I was pretty sure I would dig out the Advil when I got home.

But I could sense during the passionate worship, preaching, and prayer that God is moving in the hearts of this next generation. They are ready to surrender themselves to Jesus with abandonment.

A UNIQUE GENERATION

Yes, every generation is unique based on the culture and circumstances that surround it. But think for a moment about how quickly things are changing for Generation Z (defined as those currently from ages 9 to 24).

Just imagine the world they are trying to navigate—an ongoing pandemic with

changing demands, gender confusion/identity, racial struggles, sharp political divisions, school board battles—the list seems to evolve moment by moment.

Gen Z is the most racially and ethnically diverse of any previous generation. Born into a digital world, they have no idea of life apart from social media and smartphones. They hold the knowledge of the world in their hands—and they've never known anything else.

So, it only stands to reason that revival in this generation will look vastly different from revivals of the past.

IN THIS ISSUE

What do we mean by revival in the Gen Z movement? We aren't talking just about passionate worship and in-the-moment responses to "altar calls." By revival, we mean an awakening and embracing of all the power and conviction of the Holy Spirit. We mean a generation that comes alive to God's calling to take the gospel to the ends of the earth.

We don't mean praying for a return to "the good old days" when things were more comfortable. That won't suffice in a world torn by strife and outrageous ideologies. We are contending for a generation passionate for Christ in a culture that has determined such faith is not relevant.

Luke LeFevre works with Gen Z students, and believes we are headed into the greatest days of revival our nation has ever known. He writes about praying for a generation called to wholehearted consecration. Aaron Custalow understands God's burning heart for Generation Z. He has written an excellent prayer guide to help you intercede for this generation—that they will know Jesus, understand their identity, and rise up as leaders.

We also asked this question to several leaders who minister to Gen Z: "What will revival look like in the next generation?" Their insightful answers will give you more direction for prayer.

Our theme is capped off with an article by Hal and Cheryl Sacks, who have worked with younger generations for years. They have invested sacrificially into mentoring and encouraging generations to run together for the sake of Christ.

As we pray for revival in this Gen Z movement, let's also pray for something dramatically different. It's time to move into society with radical, missional, gospel-oriented living. And this is the generation to do it! 

CAROL MADISON is editor of *Prayer Connect* and author of *Prayer That's Caught and Taught* (prayershop.org).



What Does Revival



The Acts of God IN THE NEXT GENERATION

"We're seeing something different in Gen Z." I've heard this sentiment echoed by pastors and leaders across the country. Many add a similar sentiment: "We're seeing a different level of hunger and passion for spiritual things—a greater level of commitment to Jesus and zeal for the gospel."

Across the nation, the consensus seems to be the same. God is moving in a profound way among Gen Z. I recently spoke with a pastor

Look Like Among Gen Z?

who states, "I've never seen unity among believers like I'm seeing in Gen Z. They all want to be a part of each others' ministries and go to each others' events! Where is this coming from?"

I can say the same thing from personal experience. As a 24-year-old, I fall into the very first tier of Gen Z (from 9- to 24-year-olds). What I have witnessed among college and high school students is nothing short of miraculous. In just the past three years, we have documented more than 1,000 responses to the gospel in Nashville, TN, where I live. The majority of these

responses come from some of the hardest and darkest of places.

GREATEST DAYS OF REVIVAL

Before I dive into some of the details of how God is moving, let me first state that I believe we are heading into some of the greatest days of revival and spiritual awakening that our nation has ever experienced. While it may not look like how we've always assumed revival will manifest, it is coming, nonetheless. There is an undercurrent of radical, audacious faith that is filling a generation. And with faith like that, the miraculous is never far behind.

Several years ago, I spent a season in prayer. The Holy Spirit spoke to me clearly, saying, "Luke, I want you to be very careful because your generation is about to reap a harvest that it did not sow. So, stay extremely humble and give honor to those who have labored for and sown the harvest that you will reap."

I believe the unprecedented harvest we are getting ready to reap in America—and that we are already seeing—is the result of fathers and mothers who have labored, toiled, wept, and prayed for God to move. The miraculous fruit, the rare spiritual hunger, and the powerful

BY LUKE LEFEVRE

moves of the Holy Spirit we are seeing among Gen Z are a direct result of the prayers of the generations that precede us. It is a multigenerational work.

This mixture of the prayers and labors of fathers and mothers—and the radical faith and actions of the upcoming generation—make for an explosive combination.

WHAT IF?

Growing up, I used to ride my bike to my grandparents' house and listen to my grandpa tell stories about revival. He would describe Duncan Campbell and the Hebrides revival, Evan Roberts and the Welsh revival, the Great Awakenings in the U.S., and the stories about men like Reinhard Bonnke (an evangelist with significant gospel outreach in Africa). These examples set the standard back then for what I believed God could do in a generation. And they are the standard I still hold to as I ask God to do it again.

These stories of revival put courage into my heart later in my life when I first heard about the crazy, drunken parties among the high school students in my city. I remember my shock when I met with a couple of teenagers to catch up on their lives, and one of them handed me a phone. With discouragement in their voices, they asked if I had heard about “raves”—their terminology for “parties.”

I looked at the picture on the phone that showed hundreds of high school students, most of them inappropriately dressed, dancing like they were in a club. I learned two boys at a local high school had borrowed money from their parents to start a “business.” The business was throwing raves.

When I saw the picture, my heart was gripped. I sensed the boldness of the Holy Spirit rise up in my chest. I could feel the presence of the Lord as He invited me to take a bold step of faith for the salvation of these kids.

But I didn't know how to reach them or even contact them. I wasn't the cool kid in high school or in college who could just roll up to one of these parties and fit in. But I sensed the Holy Spirit urging me further.

It started as a “what if.”

What if, I thought, *the Lord would open the door for us to preach the gospel at those raves?* It seemed like a crazy idea, but just the kind of crazy where God likes to show up.

LAUNCHING OF REVIVAL

After hearing about the raves, I met up with one of my close friends who leads several ministries here in Nashville.

Daniel MacLeod had heard about the raves as well. As we prayed, we sensed

the Lord stirring us that He was going to open the door for us to preach the gospel at these parties. But we had no idea how it would happen.

We've learned over the years that when God speaks, our job isn't to figure out all the “hows.” We simply need to take the next step of faith. God will take care of the details as we take a risk. While there are too many pieces of the story for me to recount, I can say that miracle after miracle occurred after we stepped out in faith.

The Lord miraculously connected us with the two boys who were throwing the parties. In our first meeting with them, both Daniel and I tried to mask our trembling hands and voices as we convinced them to let us preach the gospel at their next rave.

We also reached out to our friend Kenny Alonzo, who is the director of a ministry in Nashville called Rocke-town—a faith-based youth outreach facility. He allowed us to offer his state-of-the-art venue to the boys for free if they would agree to get as many kids there as possible.

The boys agreed to our proposal, and on the night of the rave more than 1,000 high school students from all over Nashville came through the doors.

We also got connected with Josh and Victoria Rich, who lead a ministry called Crave, which specifically hosts raves for the sake of gospel outreaches. The connections God provided and the synergy in united outreach efforts were just some of the miracles that were overflowing.

On the night of the rave, God moved powerfully through the gospel presentation. And out of the 1,000 students who came, nearly 400 responded to the gospel—with one of the first responses coming from one of the two boys who started the raves!

Out of that rave, the Lord launched a revival that has now led to nearly 900 high school and college students responding to the gospel.

Inside the Hearts of Gen Z

This next revival will be unstoppable because it will be an empowerment of all believers. Revivals of the past have been led by single men and women or their ministries. God is getting ahold of a global generation that is completely in love with Jesus. We are already seeing fires of revival from the courage of young leaders from nations like Burundi and Kenya, or even previous Muslims who met Jesus in Europe and the Middle East. These leaders across the world are seeing God move powerfully through their simple obedience to reach their generation.

— Yasmin Pierce: Circuit Riders (circuitriders.com).

LET THE NEXT GENERATION ARISE

The Power and Purpose of Young People in Revival

Why does God like to use young people? Because praying for revival requires child-like faith, humility, and submission—and usually the ones most willing to make such changes are the young.

Great Awakenings and Missions

Early in the 18th century, when God began to reignite the fires of 24/7 prayer, revival, and world missions, He used a young Moravian in his mid-20s by the name of Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf. A few years later God used the Moravians again to help ignite revival in England by inspiring two young Wesley brothers (John and Charles) and 21-year-old George Whitefield.

These young men preached the gospel with power and passion to tens of thousands, and Britain was awakened and rescued from moral collapse and certain destruction.

By the end of that century the fires of revival had given birth to the modern missions movement in the British Isles. Soon William Carey, Henry Martyn, Robert Morrison, Robert Moffat, Alexander Duff, David Livingston, and James Hudson Taylor—all men in their 20s—were setting out to share the hope of Christ with a gospel-starved world.

FIRST FRUITS

I believe this is just the first fruits of what God is preparing to pour out in this generation. The Lord spoke to me several years ago by saying, “I am going to begin to open the door for the gospel to be preached where the lost are already gathering in the masses.”

The rave was a confirmation of this. I believe more and more in the coming days, the Lord will miraculously open doors where the lost have already gathered—if we will step out in radical faith. And out of these bold steps of obedience, the gospel will continue to do its work in

The Haystack Prayer Meeting

In 1806, Samuel J. Mills, a 23-year-old freshman at Williams College in Williamstown, MA, found the campus stirred by the recent move of the Holy Spirit. Mills and four other students were praying in an open field when suddenly they were caught in a thunderstorm. They took shelter in a nearby haystack and finished their prayer meeting. They pledged to take personal responsibility for the Great Commission.

Just six years later, America sent out its very first missionaries to Asia—all because a handful of young college students dared to believe God’s Word and pray it into action.

The Welsh Revival

By 1902, many believers in the British Isles began to earnestly pray for another outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Then in 1904, God surprised everyone by using an unknown 26-year-old coal miner named Evan Roberts.

The revival started at a mid-week young people’s meeting as Roberts shared his vision for revival in Wales. Soon, everywhere Roberts and his young ministry team went, the fires of revival followed.

saving souls and transforming lives.

In the days ahead, my sense is that the Lord’s call to Gen Z is one of whole-hearted consecration—a consecration to holy lives and to God’s mission.

The great evangelist D.L. Moody once said, “The world has yet to see what God will do with a man fully consecrated to him. By God’s help, I aim to be that man.” I believe God is looking for just such a generation, who will say alongside D.L. Moody, “My aim is to be fully consecrated to God.”

This renewed dedication to holiness and to God’s mission will stir a fresh

The Jesus People Movement

God delights to send revival through flawed and broken people. This is what happened in the late 1960s and early ’70s during the Jesus People Movement.

It was an age of political and social unrest—an era of defiant self-expression. War, riots, and assassinations cast a dark shadow of fear over the whole nation.

Then in 1967 revival broke out in an unexpected place—among the hippies of Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco. From there the revival gained momentum in Orange County at Costa Mesa’s Calvary Chapel. Soon a wave of revival was washing over the whole California coast, transforming thousands of young drug addicts and runaways.

The revival moved east and broke out in places like Asbury College in Wilmore, KY. God was especially moving among the youth counterculture.

If we want to see revival, God may be asking us to cultivate in ourselves the tender heart of the young—a hungry heart with honest faith.

DAVID SMITHERS, condensed from original article in Issue 19 of *Prayer Connect*: <http://www.prayerleader.com/let-them-arise/>.

move of revival within the Church in America. And if we see revival in the Church, we can see awakening in America once again.

And if America awakens, perhaps these could be the days when the gospel reaches the very ends of the earth and the ears of all nations. **PC**



LUKE LEFEVRE lives with a passion to see revival in the Church and awakening in America. He is the visionary and director of Consecrate, a young adults conference calling his generation to radical holiness, audacious faith, and a renewed commitment to the Great Commission.



A Prayer Guide

Informed Intercession FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

There I was, lying on the floor, the carpet drenched with my snot and tears. I was completely undone. It all started when I asked God to give me a greater desire for prayer.

Suddenly, He gave me a glimpse of something I hadn't seen before—His burning heart for Generation Z. I had been praying for youth for many years and had spent a decade in full-time ministry at a house of prayer (and much of that time as a youth pastor, too). I felt like I had prayed just about everything there was to pray for God's purposes in the next generation.

But this day was different. As I wept before the Lord, I realized my prayers barely scratched the surface of what God truly felt in His heart for Gen Z.

FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

"Generation Z is Mine!"

Those are the words that thundered into my spirit during this encounter. "Mine," I heard Him say.

I would have used a lot of other words to fill in the blank: Gen Z is—lost, rebellious, broken. But that's not what the Father said. He declared this generation belongs to Him! And I needed to start aligning my prayer life with what He desired, instead of continuing to pray my sad, negative prayers that usually went like, "Oh, God, this generation is so lost and messed up! Do something!"

I'm not saying it's wrong to be desperate in prayer or to be a realist either. After all, statistics do show some very negative trends in Gen Z. But God is inviting His people to know His heart and to pray from that perspective.

Before I offer ideas for prayer, I want you to understand the *why* behind what we pray. The starting point for informed intercession is to know the heart of the One we are praying to. As we dive into these key issues facing youth today, it's paramount that we have the Father's perspective. Without it, these topics can be depressing and discouraging (and so could our prayers).

Having Jesus' heart for this generation is far more important than having the right words or topics to pray. Remember in Luke 8:49–56 when Jesus had to kick all the mourners and professional weepers out of the house before He raised the 12-year-old dead girl back to life?

to Issues Facing Gen Z

BY AARON CUSTALOW

Inside the Hearts of Gen Z

Revival among Gen Z needs to begin with honest repentance and a fervent pursuit of holiness. We are a generation far too consumed with the patterns of this world—and doing what's easy over what's holy. This next generation has fallen captive to ideologies that are not according to Christ. Beyond repentance, we ought to be saturated in the truths of God's Word so we can faithfully go to war on behalf of the gospel. I am praying that we will see a King Josiah revival in our day, where repentance will lead to reformation, and reformation will happen by restoring the Word of God in my generation.

– Gabrielle Odom: (gabrielleodom.com)

They seemed to have the right words, emotions, and realistic response to the tragedy playing out before their eyes, but they didn't have Jesus' heart. Jesus sent them outside because they were just causing a commotion. Only the father and mother and Jesus' closest disciples were invited inside to be part of this miraculous resurrection.

EMBRACE THE FATHER'S HEART

When I caught a glimpse that day of how God feels about Generation Z, I realized that I could either embrace the heart of the Father with faith and be invited in to see awakening in this generation, or I could stay on the outside, continuing to cause commotion and miss what Jesus was about to do.

I chose to agree with His heart the best I can. This young generation is in desperate need of fathers and mothers who carry God's heart for them.

So, before you start praying through these prayer points, carve out some time to ask God about His heart for Gen Z—and see what He says.

A PRAYER GUIDE TO ISSUES FACING GEN Z

1. *Knowing Jesus*

This generation desperately needs to

know Jesus and see Him with the eyes of their heart. Jesus is the answer to every issue facing Gen Z. They must *see* Him. They need what Paul prayed for the church of Ephesus: “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you. . .” (Eph. 1:17–18).

- Pray for the veil to be removed from the hearts of Gen Z, for them to see the glory of Jesus (2 Cor. 3:16).
- Gen Z is constantly distracted with phones, social media, TV streaming, etc. Pray for their eyes to behold Jesus.
- Most youth want what's real. Hearing concepts about Jesus is great, but they want to see it for themselves. Pray for real encounters with Jesus (1 John 1:1–3).
- Pray for them to know the fear of the Lord (Prov. 1:7, 9:10).
- There is so much deception and false teaching spreading across the Internet. Pray that they will have a spirit of wisdom, discernment, and knowledge of the Word (2 Tim. 2:15).
- Gen Z is hungry for the supernatural. Many are looking in the wrong places like witchcraft, spiritual readings, and various occult practices.

Pray for deliverance from demonic oppression and for supernatural encounters with God.

2. *Identity*

Generation Z is perhaps the most confused generation when it comes to identity. They are coming of age in a day when people are encouraged to choose their own gender, identify according to various sexual orientations, and define themselves as whoever they want to be.

Gen Z is desperately searching for meaning and to discover who they truly are. But they aren't turning to the traditional structures that have historically contributed to identity and that sense of belonging they crave. The traditional idea of family is being obliterated by the entertainment and media they constantly digest, leaving many youth wondering where to go for acceptance, love, and to safely discuss their deepest questions.

Many Gen Zers also live under the pressure of other people's opinions every time they open apps on their phones. With all the likes and comments pouring in from friends and strangers on social media, there's an unrelenting barrage of content telling them who to be, how they should live, and how they should think (and it's typically not in the direction of Christ).

- Pray for youth to understand that they are made by God, and He is the One who defines them. “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you” (Jer. 1:5).
- Pray for youth to catch the revelation that God writes their stories and that discovering their true purpose means discovering what God says about them (Ps. 139:16).
- Pray for youth to walk in the spirit of adoption as sons and daughters of the Father (Rom. 8:14–17).
- Pray for families to be restored, and for God to raise up fathers and mothers who carry His heart for their children and for the next generation (Mal. 4:5–6).

- Pray for healing and deliverance from sexual brokenness and wounding in young people’s lives that so often open the door to deception and confusion.
- Pray for this generation to understand and submit to God’s intentional design for gender and biblical marriage (Gen. 1:27).

3. Mental Health

Whether it’s from growing up during a worldwide pandemic, the disconnectedness of digital relationships, the confusion of sexual identity, financial uncertainty, social media pressure—or all the above—Generation Z is one of the most plagued generations when it comes to mental health. Anxiety, depression, suicide, insomnia, and mental health disorders are rampant in Gen Z.

We know God cares about this, and He has the peace and deliverance they are looking for.

- Pray for God to deliver youth from a spirit of fear, and for them to receive the “sound mind” that only God gives (2 Tim. 1:7).
- Pray for youth to know God’s peace (John 14:27).
- Pray for youth to come to God with their mental health issues—and not try to hide it.
- Pray for safe spaces in the church and in Christian communities for youth to be vulnerable about their mental health struggles.
- Pray for young deliverers to be raised up who walk in the anointing of the Holy Spirit to break oppression off their peers (Isa. 61:1–3).

4. Leaders and Messengers to Arise

Gen Z is a bold generation. I believe God is raising them up to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. As I look at this generation, I believe we could see the fulfillment of the Great Commission in their lifetime.

Right now, our Gen Z For Jesus

and Jesus Clubs teams are seeing young people all over the earth rising up to proclaim the gospel, walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, do miracles, pray, fast, and lift up the name of Jesus. This is a revival generation!

- Pray for God to raise up the next generation of prophets, messengers, and “Nazarites” (Amos 2:11).
- Pray for God to send laborers into the harvest who carry His heart of compassion (Matt. 9:36–38).
- Pray for God to raise up fathers and mothers who will shepherd and empower the next generation—and not quench their fire or discourage their consecration (Amos 2:12, Mal. 4:5–6).
- Pray for a spiritual awakening in the youth and for God to pour out His Spirit (Joel 2:28–29).
- Pray for boldness, miracles, healing, signs and wonders to accompany

these young messengers as they proclaim the gospel (Acts 4:29–31).

- Pray for these young leaders to be rooted in their identity as sons and daughters of the Father and for their roots to go deep in the Word and in His love (Eph. 3:14–19).

Thank you for praying for Generation Z and for gaining Jesus’ heart for them. They need spiritual fathers and mothers like you. Your prayers are such a key to God’s purposes in the youth.

Don’t lose heart over this generation. Keep praying! 🙏



AARON CUSTALOW and his wife Juliana are missionaries with One Voice Student Missions in Dallas, TX. He also directs a national movement called Gen Z For Jesus (*genzforjesus.com*), which is a collaborative initiative with multiple ministries.

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Empowering God's Mighty



RUNNING TOGETHER

Not long ago, the Lord gave us a prophetic picture of three generations of horses running together in a race. The younger generations were like stallions: strong, gifted, spirited, and having great potential. Yet, they needed to be trained to run with endurance and excellence.

In this vision, the more experienced generations were coming alongside the younger horses, much in the same way older believers might come alongside younger ones to offer godly wisdom, encouragement, and instruction in God's Word. This older generation of horses ran with understanding and a sense of pacing. They

nudged the younger horses in the right direction while running alongside them, acting almost like trainers or coaches.

This was a very meaningful picture for us. In 40 years of ministry, we have cherished the opportunity to run with many multigenerational prayer and worship movements that have proven transformational. We've learned there is great synergy and multiplication of God's power in the generations running together!

GENERATIONAL SYNERGY

A few years ago, four young men came to us with a vision to pray inside Arizona's most distressed schools and asked for our help. We eagerly said, "Yes!"

They wanted to rent 11 high school auditoriums for 11 straight weekends and pray for each school's most significant needs. It was a massive endeavor, yet we committed to investing into these young men and their vision.

Since the young leaders were from various cities throughout the state, they needed to operate from a hub. We gave them office space and loaned our administrative staff to help them with project management, fundraising, and financial oversight. We also gave them keys to our home. They came and went as needed, sleeping in our guest bedroom and on living room couches in between and during all-night weekend prayer events.

We prayed with these young leaders, helped them raise money, and attended all 11 of their 26-hour events. We held planning meetings and debriefed after the events. During the all-night prayer and worship, they often would come and ask what we were sensing from the Lord as things unfolded.

The results at these schools were astounding. Academic scores went up and drugs and suicides

Work in All Generations

BY HAL AND CHERYL SACKS

MENTORING AN EAGER GENERATION

Three times a year, I receive an invitation to teach a session on prayer to a new group of Gen Z interns with an evangelistic organization called Pulse. I share some general prayer principles I've learned over the years. But mostly, I tell stories.

That's because after a lifetime of prayer involvement in my church and various avenues across the city and nation, God has given me some *great* stories of answered prayer. And they are meant to be shared!

Even though sometimes I feel like I'm staring at a conference table full of blank faces, the session on prayer consistently ranks as one of their most-liked teachings. Recently, a young man approached me in a coffee shop and said he thought he recognized me from Pulse. He was one of the interns I taught several sessions ago.

He asked permission to sit down with me. He started telling me about all the ways he had implemented many of the prayer practices I had shared with the group. He had a journal full of his answers to prayer. He had lots of questions—some I couldn't answer. In fact, he was thinking about things that had not yet occurred to me. His enthusiasm spilled out as he shared how he has heard God speak and watched Him move.

Eager to Learn

I am a witness to how Gen Z is eager to learn from older generations. And they love the stories because it shows authenticity, which is important to them. They don't want to be preached at—they want to learn practical ways to take great steps of faith. They are inspired by examples of God's power and grace in answer to bold prayers.

This is a generation wanting to be mobilized. Get to know some Gen Zers. Share your stories. Pray with and for them.

Let's help lay the groundwork for revival in their generation.

CAROL MADISON is the author of *Prayer That's Caught and Taught: Mentoring the Next Generation* (available from prayershop.org).

went down. Poor schools received grant monies and donations they had not even applied for. And most notably, the entire atmosphere changed in many of the schools.

Even after these initiatives ended, we continued to walk with these young men in their life journeys, their struggles, and in making big decisions. We prayed with them in choosing their mates, attended their weddings, and have been there as their families grow. We have continued to run together in other Kingdom endeavors.

INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION

The Scriptures are full of examples of young people who did mighty things for God.

In 1 Samuel 17, we find the account of young David's victory over the Philistine giant, Goliath. Then there was young Joshua, who was trained under the mentorship of Moses and learned from the older leader to cultivate intimacy with the Lord before moving out with decisive action (Ex. 33:11).

Mary, teenage mother of Jesus, demonstrated incredible grace and faith as she welcomed God's work in her life, making her the mother of the Messiah. She greatly benefited from the nurturing companionship of her older cousin Elizabeth during that strategic season of her life (Luke 1). And let's not forget Timothy, the protégé of the apostle Paul, who wrote two letters of the New Testament to Timothy and was responsible for much of the advancing, territory-taking work of the early Church.

What all these young biblical heroes had in common was the presence of an older believer in their lives who believed, mentored, and invested in them.

We've realized in our many years of ministry that even kids brought up in Christian homes and raised in the church often lack the security and empowering influence of a community that builds a protective hedge around them in prayer

Inside the Hearts of Gen Z

I believe revival will come through the next generation. However, it may not arrive in the same way as it did in past generations. Gen Z's constant access to current events across the world has made them acutely aware of the human capacity for deceit, betrayal, and evil. This has fostered a general distrust and skepticism, which means they will no longer just listen to the street corner preacher, traveling evangelist, or youth pastor on stage. They need space to slowly trust someone, observe that person up close, and know that person will stay in their lives.

— Hannah Gronowski: Generation Distinct (generationdistinct.com)

Inside the Hearts of Gen Z

and runs alongside them in the race of life and ministry. Somehow in the busyness of home, work, and church life, we adults miss out on opportunities to cover and train the next generation as they run their leg of the “race.”

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us (Heb. 12:1).

When Moses turned over his leadership to Joshua, he had already mentored the younger man for some time. “Encourage and strengthen him,” God told Moses, “for he will lead this people across and will cause them to inherit the land that you will see” (Deut. 3:28). Naomi walked with Ruth, Elijah mentored Elisha, Elizabeth taught Mary, Jesus walked with the disciples, Barnabas walked with Paul, Paul instructed Timothy, and Priscilla and Aquila walked with Apollos.

We might think of these relationships as “mentoring” or “discipleship.” Today, mentoring is a buzzword and doesn’t necessarily mean the same thing to everyone. People talk about discipleship, yet many do not understand that there are two basic models of discipline or training. Most commonly we see a Greek form of dialogue, questioning, and information sharing. This model most often looks like the trainer standing before those who desire to learn, downloading information to them. Sometimes questions are solicited, yet usually the trainer charges the trainees with figuring out how to walk it out.

Being raised in a Jewish home, I (Hal) am more familiar with the Hebraic model we see in Scripture. This training method involves the elder or leader bringing around him those who want to walk with him and learn from his life while they are on a journey together. Certainly, Jesus spoke to the 5,000 as He gave the Sermon on the Mount—one of the most potent

Rather than expensive lights and super-polished, trendy sermons, I see Gen Z desiring genuine, authentic encounters with Jesus! Revival will take young, everyday believers leading the way, being bold, seeking to reach their friends with the gospel. It will be digital, as many in Gen Z are coming to faith online. It will be global, multi-ethnic, and focused on fulfilling Christ’s Great Commission. Like the old Student Volunteer Movement goal, I pray that Gen Z may see “the evangelization of the world in this generation”!

– Jordan Whitmer: HowToLife Movement (howtolifemovement.com)

exhortations in the New Testament. Yet it was the 12 who walked closely with Him who changed the world!

MENTOR MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

When I (Cheryl) was a young woman, and at a critical crossroads and spiritual crisis in my life, a mentor made all the difference. At the time, I was moving back to Texas from Florida to be with my

mom after the tragic death of my father.

I was fortunate to have a praying mother, and one added benefit was that her best friend Hazel wanted to spend time with me and help me develop my faith and prayer life. She never told me that was her intention and she never used the word “mentor.” I certainly had no idea I was being mentored. But I suspect Hazel knew exactly what she was doing.

For about seven months, Hazel and I spent some part of almost every day

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Inside the Hearts of Gen Z

Members of Generation Z desire deep, authentic connections with God and with one another. One of the primary ways they establish those connections is through prayer.

They are expressive in their personal style, activists for justice, and are willing to cross boundaries to befriend others. They remind me of apostle Peter: energetic, impulsive, and a little rough around the edges.

They are dynamic, and they will create revival within their generation—beginning with prayer—and extend that revival to the world in unconventional ways.

— Nick Hall: Pulse (*pulse.org*)

together. Sometimes we went out to lunch, or for coffee, or for a walk in the mall. Much of the time, we attended Bible studies and Christian services. Each time we were together, Hazel asked, “How are you doing? How can I pray for you? Is there anything I can do for you?”

Hazel’s life marked with joy and love amazed me, yet it was her supernatural faith and mountain-moving prayers that

most filled me with awe. I listened carefully to how she phrased scriptural, positive, faith-filled prayers and determined that I would accept nothing less for my life. As I put the things I was observing and absorbing into practice, new doors began to open to me.

Hazel prayed with me for God’s choice of a husband and attended my wedding. She laid hands on our daughter

Nicole as a baby and blessed her. Hazel prayed for me and cheered me on as I spoke in my first church service and wrote my first book. She never had children of her own, but my picture sat on her bedroom dresser as a reminder to pray for me until the day she died.

Embers of passion glow in the spirits of many young people—embers just waiting to be fanned into white-hot flames by mature believers like you and like us. How? By running with young people in prayer, ministry, and Christian living. We can mentor, encourage, pray with, and strengthen them so that they will indeed inherit the land of God’s promises!

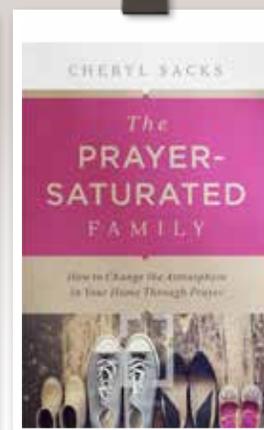
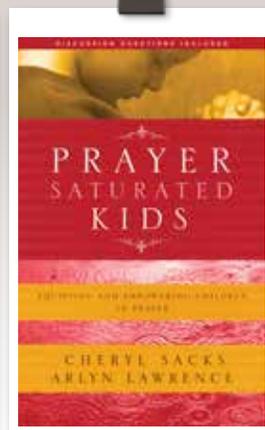
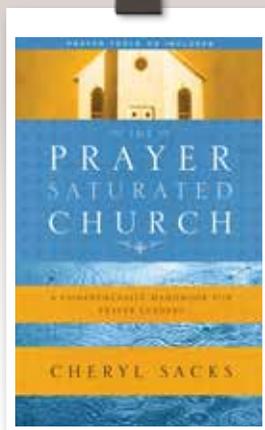
GIVING UP THE REINS

When our daughter Nicole and her friend Stephanie were only 15, they and a small group of friends started a successful citywide, youth-led prayer

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movement in Phoenix called “Sacred Edge.” Its purpose was to call youth to pray for the healing and restoration of their generation. Meeting the first Friday of every month, 100–300 young people came together from across the city for worship and prayer.

The endeavor started small; the first night only 25 kids showed up. Nicole said it felt like “their prayers fell to the ground.” But from this humble beginning, adults began to come alongside to help, support, and pray with them. With the adults’ coaching, Nicole and her team learned how to lead, teach, and draw together other young people for powerful times of worship and prayer.

When young people are on fire spiritually, a coach is generally not needed to get them going so much as to provide wisdom along the way. Many times, the guidance process takes the form of “debriefing” after the young leader has

had spiritual encounters or ministry experiences—either positive or negative—and needs to unpack it to gain greater wisdom. This requires sensitivity, patience, and grace on behalf of the coach.

It also includes humility—being willing to give up established ways of doing things and letting young leaders have the reins, so to speak, when the time is right. Every generation struggles with the challenge of holding onto the old ways. But historically, God is always doing something new and fresh with every emerging generation. His Word never changes, but His methods often vary to reach the hearts of the next generation.

God is doing a powerful thing in our young people today. The prayer and ministry lives of the young adults may look different than yours when you were young. That’s okay. Be willing to let God be God and move in their lives in unique and powerful ways. You may learn a

thing or two from them—instead of the other way around.

Most of all, remember that the privilege of offering ministry comes only out of relationship. With that in place, you can partner with the younger generation in advancing God’s Kingdom.

As we run together, it is our prayer that the “young stallions” we equip and encourage will become “victors in the race” and mentors of their next generation—and that they will run further and faster than we did! 🙏



DR. HAL and CHERYL SACKS are co-founders of Bridge-Builders International (*bridge-builders.net.*), with headquarters on the campus of Arizona Christian University. Their ministry mobilizes believers of all generations in transformational prayer. They are the authors of numerous books and articles that equip intercessors to pray for revival and godly reformation in every sphere of culture.

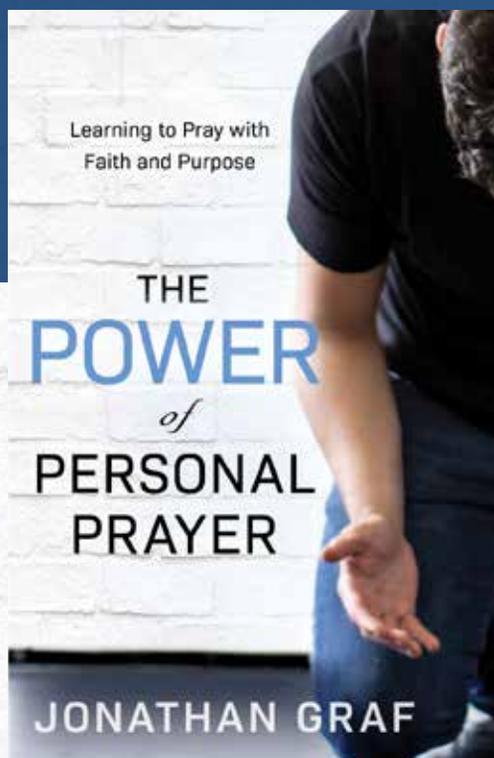
You Don't Have to Be a Super-Spiritual Saint to Have a Meaningful Prayer Life

In an easy-to-understand and encouraging way, author Jonathan Graf presents the keys to a dynamic prayer life. Whether you are a new believer or one who has struggled with prayer for years, *The Power of Personal Prayer* will help you grow more passionate and effective in your prayer life.

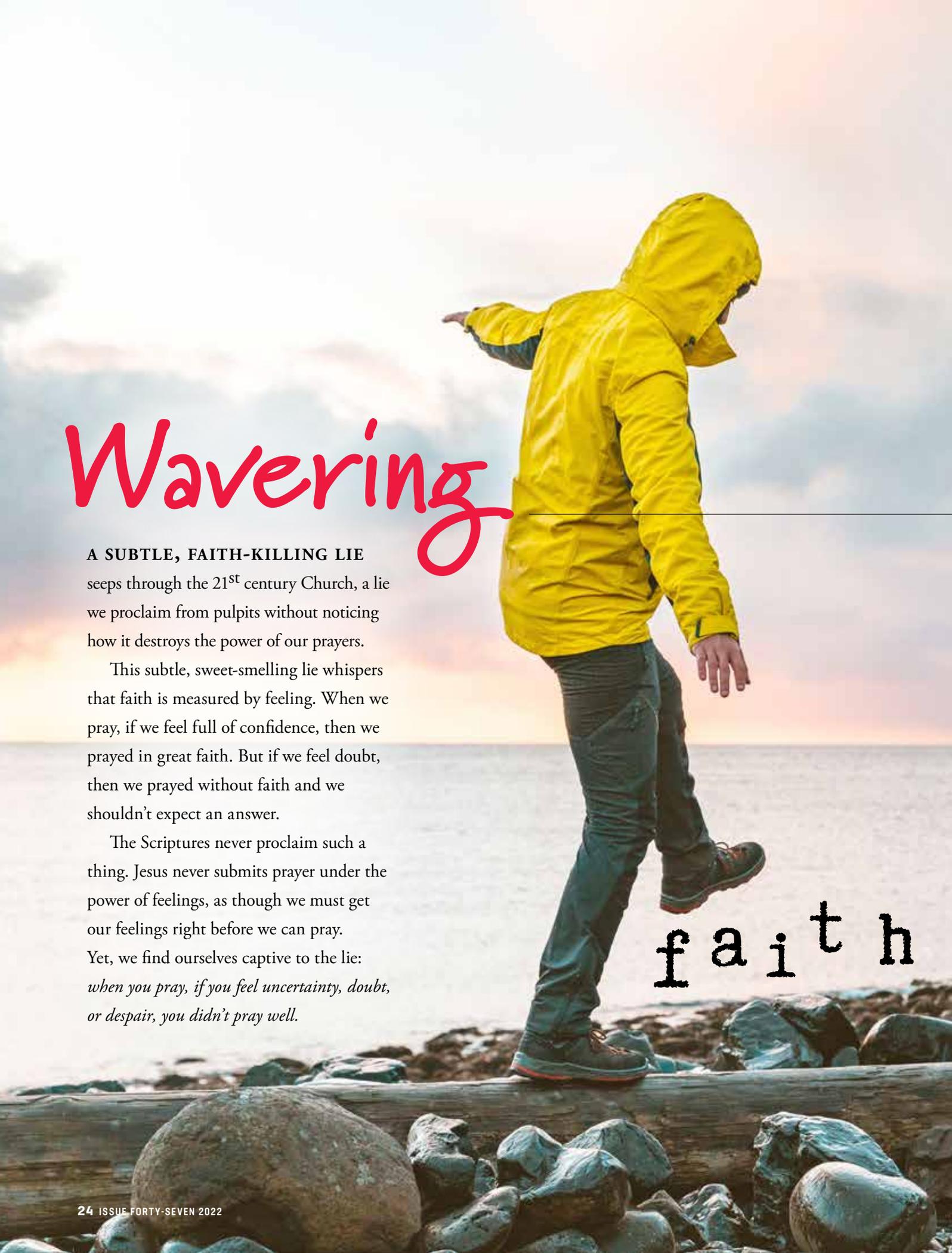
“Whether you are experiencing a new interest in prayer or have devoted yourself to intercession for many years, this book is filled with helpful insights.” —PHIL MIGLIORATTI, THE REIMAGINE NETWORK

“Having served with Jon in the national prayer movement the past ten years, I can assure you that no one is more in touch with [prayer’s] personal dimensions. His inspiring and insightful chapters will equip any Christian with fresh tools for a fulfilling personal prayer life.”

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A person wearing a bright yellow hooded raincoat and dark pants is walking across a large, weathered log that lies horizontally across the foreground. The log is supported by several large, smooth, grey rocks. In the background, the ocean stretches to the horizon under a soft, hazy sky with a mix of light and dark clouds, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall mood is contemplative and somewhat somber.

Wavering

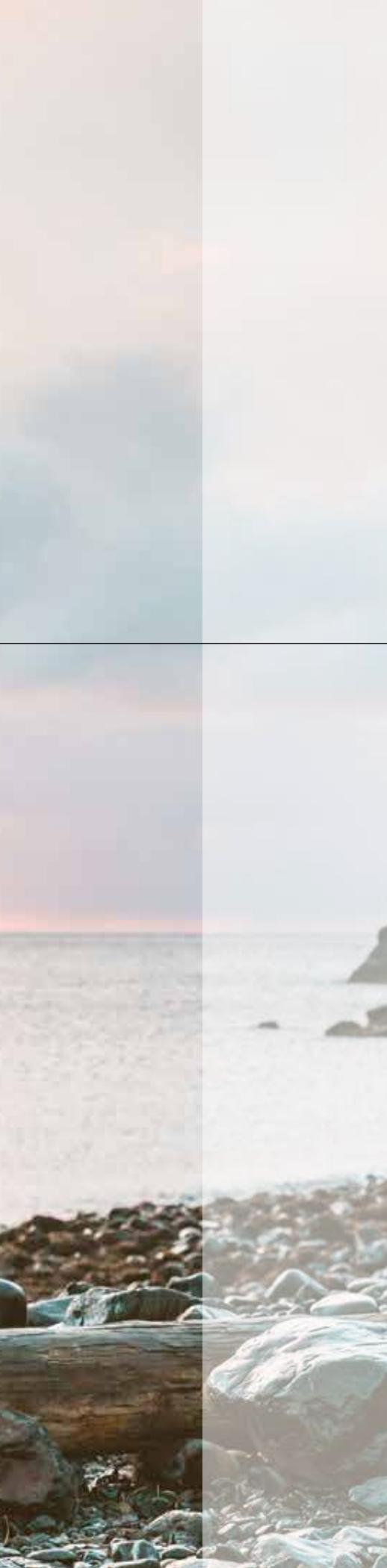
A SUBTLE, FAITH-KILLING LIE

seeps through the 21ST century Church, a lie we proclaim from pulpits without noticing how it destroys the power of our prayers.

This subtle, sweet-smelling lie whispers that faith is measured by feeling. When we pray, if we feel full of confidence, then we prayed in great faith. But if we feel doubt, then we prayed without faith and we shouldn't expect an answer.

The Scriptures never proclaim such a thing. Jesus never submits prayer under the power of feelings, as though we must get our feelings right before we can pray. Yet, we find ourselves captive to the lie: *when you pray, if you feel uncertainty, doubt, or despair, you didn't pray well.*

f a i t h



By Kyle Davison Bair

How Well-Meaning Teaching Traps Christians in Doubt

This lie keeps legions of Christians from their prayers. Most Christians feel all too well the doubt and despair swirling in their souls. They dare not pray out of such depravity. How can they hope that God would ever answer? They can't muster a feeling of faith no matter how hard they try.

Put simply, this subtle lie deprives the world of millions of prayer warriors.

“You're out of your mind!”

When we imagine what successful prayer looks like, we conjure mental pictures that often differ starkly from what the Scriptures record. In reality, prayers that we consider failures end up working miracles.

In Acts 12, Herod Agrippa kills James and arrests Peter. While Peter is jailed, the local church gathered, and “the church was earnestly praying to God for him” (Acts 12:5).

What do you imagine when you read this? What do these church members look like while they are fervently

praying for Peter's freedom? What are they feeling?

The narrative soon tells us. God hears their prayers and sends an angel to rescue Peter, leading him straight out of the jail. The act is so supernatural that Peter first believes he is dreaming.

When Peter realizes he's truly free, he runs to the house where the local church gathered to pray for him. He knocks on the door, eager to tell them that God answered their prayers.

A servant girl named Rhoda hears Peter's voice, but leaves him outside. She runs into the room where these prayer warriors have gathered and proclaims, “Peter is at the door!” (Acts 12:14).

How do these fervent prayer warriors respond?

Do they say, “Praise God! We knew He would answer!”?

Do they rejoice, knowing that God had to answer their prayers because of how faith-filled they were?

No. They scoff in doubt, telling Rhoda, “You're out of your mind!” (vs. 15). These Christians are so consumed

with doubt that they simply can't believe God heard their prayers.

Rhoda keeps pressing, insisting that Peter really is free and God really has answered. Yet their doubt only grows, and the crowd of Christians claims it must be Peter's angel, perhaps signifying that he died because God didn't answer.

Finally, they open the door at Peter's incessant knocking. When these Christians see Peter in the flesh, "they [are] astonished" (vs. 16). They are flabbergasted that God answered their prayers.

What Is Faith?

What then is faith?

By most modern conceptions, these Christians lacked faith entirely. They did not believe God would answer and they doubted every report to the contrary. They believed their prayers were hopeless and Peter was doomed.

Why then did God answer? God answered because they possessed tremendous faith. They didn't possess feelings or confidence or conviction. But they certainly possessed great faith.

Faith is trust. Faith is not feeling or conviction, but trust as expressed through obedience. If we trust God, we will do what He says. The people of great faith are those who simply obey, regardless of what they feel.

The church in Jerusalem faithfully interceded for Peter. They prayed, asking God to move. Their act of obedience was utilizing the gift of prayer that God entrusted to them to intercede for those in need.

God responded to their obedience. God answered their prayers, which were indeed offered in great faith—although

the people themselves had no confidence they would be answered.

Faith doesn't require confidence. Faith requires obedience—trust lived out. If we obey God by asking, and trust He will do His part in answering, we have prayed in faith.

Faith Vs. Doubt

If faith is trust lived out in obedience, then what is doubt?

Doubt is lacking trust in God. People who doubt God do not trust that God will be faithful to answer. They try to exert extra influence on God to force His hand. Doubt works itself out as manipulation, trying to bend God to our will instead of submitting our will to Him.

Often the people with the greatest doubt are the ones we think have great faith.

People who doubt will try to summon as much "faith" as possible when they pray, believing that a high-enough threshold of "faith" will force God to answer as they desire. This is nothing but doubt. Because this person doubts God, they try to manipulate God.

Others who doubt will try to feel as confident as possible when they pray, believing that if they can banish any feeling of doubt, then they have prayed in faith. But this again is manipulation. It doubts that God will answer their prayers unless they can pray in exactly the right way.

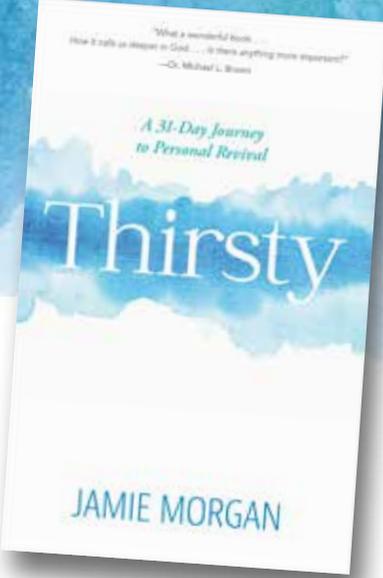
Still others who doubt will attempt fasting or acting super-pure to add extra punch to their prayers. They doubt that God will answer "normal" prayers, so they seize on anything that might give their prayers extra power. But this doubt is transparent manipulation.

Finally, some who doubt God give up on their prayers. They doubt He will answer, so they don't ask. But even this kind of doubt reduces to manipulation. If these people believed they had a "trump card" that would force God to say "Yes"

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to their prayers, most would jump at it. They don't pray because they don't believe they have enough to manipulate God to their will.

We pray in faith when we trust that God will answer simply because we are obedient enough to ask. We pray in faith when we trust that God's answer is best, even if it is different from what we desire.

We pray in doubt when we do not trust that God will answer unless we twist His arm. We pray in doubt when we try to manipulate God to do our will, not content to trust His will.

Fervent Prayer

Acts 12:5 describes the believers praying "earnestly" for Peter's release. Other translations render the word as "fervently," "constantly," or "continually."

What do these terms mean? Clearly, they do not mean that the believers felt confident about their prayers, because they lacked confidence entirely.

Rather, it means they prayed without ceasing. They gathered to pray for Peter's release, and they kept praying until they received word from Rhoda that something had happened.

Doubt manifests as manipulation, but faith manifests as reliance. Fervent prayer relies entirely upon God, waiting on Him to answer. Fervent prayer does not try to force God to answer or manipulate His answer. It presents the request, then keeps presenting it until God gives an answer—whatever answer that may be.

Fervent prayer is not about emotion. Fervent prayer keeps on praying even when emotions waver.

Fervent prayer is about obedience. We do our part to pray. God does His part to answer.

This is helpless prayer. We pray fervently when we know that we are helpless to manipulate God into anything. We can't twist His arm. We can only ask. Fervent prayer is what results when we simply obey over and over, asking in

prayer until God answers.

Why do we abandon helpless prayer for manipulation? Because we don't like feeling helpless. We like to take control. We like to do extra things to feel extra powerful in prayer, believing that our extra exertions are making a difference. We don't like to feel helpless, especially when we are.

But helpless people pray well. Helpless people pray fervently, seeking God over and over until He answers. Helpless people know they have nothing without God, so they seek nothing except God. Helpless people don't try to help themselves through manipulation. They trust the only One who can truly help.

Helpless people—such as the helpless people who prayed for Peter's release—witness answers to their prayers. These are the prayers offered in faith: those who trust nothing in their own ability to twist

God's arm, but rather trust entirely on God's sovereignty.

Witnessing Miracles

Will you pray out of simple obedience?

Will you pray until you receive your answer, praying continuously even when emotions waver?

Will you trust God's answer?

Will you rely entirely upon God, letting Him answer however and whenever He desires?

Will you drop any attempt at manipulation, relying entirely upon God for every aspect of your answer?

If so, you may yet witness miracles. **PC**

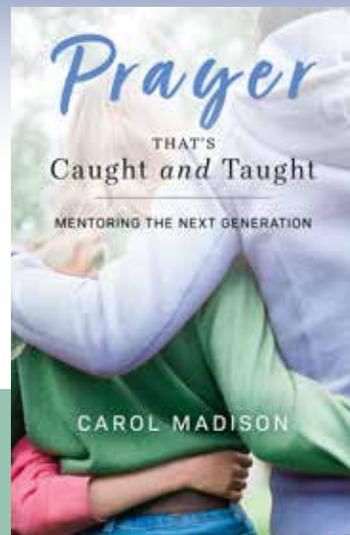


KYLE DAVISON BAIR is the prayer ministries pastor at New Hope Church in New Hope, MN, a suburb of Minneapolis (newhopechurchmn.org).

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First, the Scribbled Note

I've long struggled with my intercessory approach to the Lord. My petitions have been narrowly confined to the immediacies of everyday living—and to the exclusion of most everything else. However, I recently discovered the extraordinary value of the ordinary.

I needed something to help me get out of this rut so that I could pursue the larger aims Jesus has for me. I needed a new routine before bowing my head. Rather than just jumping right in and unloading all my burdens as I typically do, I now take preparatory steps to ready myself.

The one that stands out is probably the simplest. I review a note scribbled on the inside cover of my Bible that reads:

Request from Jesus: that I would desire what He desires, I would love what He loves, I would despise what He despises, I would find increasing joy in what honors Him, and I would follow Him in faith.

Though it felt mechanical at first—and still does somewhat—this daily reminder helps prepare both my heart and mind. It gets the focus off me and onto the Lord before I even seek His face. My quiet times are more life-giving now than ever before.

If your prayer life is in some type of spiritual rut, spend time thinking about practical ways to address it. The Lord can take the ordinary and produce extraordinary results.

GREG GROTEWOLD lives in Oakdale, MN, with his wife and two sons. He works in the financial services industry.

7 Secrets of Effective Intercession

We all have family members, friends, or workmates who need our prayers. Here are some practical tips to make intercessory prayer more effective:

1 Draw close to God. The Bible promises if we draw close to God, He will draw close to us (James 4:8). Too often we forget to begin a time of intercession by coming into the presence of God so that He can direct our prayers. Begin your intercession by focusing on the Lord Himself—love Him, praise Him, worship Him.

2 Cleanse your heart. As we come into the presence of God on behalf of another, we long for God to open the floodgates of His heart to bless, heal, and pour out His love on that person. But for God's love to flow through you unimpeded, your own heart needs to be free from sin. Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart. Confess your sins and accept the Lord's

cleansing and forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

3 Pray Scripture. One of the most powerful ways to intercede is to use the words of Scripture. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you a Bible verse or passage that might apply to the situation you are praying about. Personalize the words and turn them into a prayer. For example, “[Jane] can do all things through Him who strengthens [her]” (Phil. 4:13).

4 Inquire of the Lord. Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father, always interceding (Rom. 8:34). He calls you to prayer; He gives you the burden for your loved one or friend. Ask Him how *He* is praying for the situation or individual. Be still and listen. You will be surprised by what new insights are revealed.

5 Prayer and fasting. When you have a challenging prayer assignment, try fasting while you pray. “Fasting can bring breakthroughs in the

spiritual realm that could never be had in any other way,” writes Richard Foster. Why does fasting add power to prayer? Because fasting—abstaining from eating for a time—denies self. It is an act of humility, which opens your heart more fully to the Holy Spirit to let Him pray through you.

6 Partner with others in prayer. Prayer partnership is based on the power of agreement. “If two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for,” said Jesus, “it will be done for them by my Father in heaven” (Matt. 18:19). Partnership is particularly effective when praying for a long-term request or complex problem. When one intercessor grows weary, the other can offer encouragement. One may receive a spiritual insight that the other can confirm. And when your request is answered, how exciting it is to praise God together!

7 Enter into God's rest. This is probably the best-kept secret of

effective intercession. Intercessors who have depth and breadth and weight to their prayers know how to rest in God's presence. They know how to tap into that quiet, restful reservoir of God's strength. "In quietness and trust is your strength" (Isa. 30:15). Learn to cease from striving as you pray, relying less and less on yourself and more and more on God.

And here's a little suggestion: instead of praying for a long list of petitions

every day, pray for specific requests on certain days of the week. For example, pray for family members on Monday, your church on Tuesday, missionaries on Thursday, etc. Be sure to reserve Wednesday just for praise, *no petitions*. Nothing overcomes a mid-week slump like a surge of worship and praise.

BETSY LEE is the founder Prayer Ventures. In her retirement, she travels internationally and blogs at betsylee.com.

When Your Mind Goes Blank

There I was, surrounded by books filled with pages of inspiring words. Yet my inspiration was nowhere to be found. I usually feel ready to write a compelling article with a cup of coffee and paper and pen on the table of a bookstore's café, but this time was different. This time I didn't come to write an article, but a column—and it would be my very last words published as a staff writer for my college newspaper.

After hours of unproductivity, the pressure I felt to produce a perfect farewell piece rose exponentially. I was getting dangerously close to my editor's deadline and I still hadn't written one word.

I needed a break to rein in my wandering thoughts, so I walked around the bookstore for a few minutes. That's when this thought came to me: *ask for God's help*.

I had been so self-absorbed with trying to figure out what I should write that I forgot to pray for what God wanted me to convey in my column. After praying, I felt reenergized to write. The words started flowing like a stream from my soul to my notepad. It turned out to be my most memorable piece for the periodical. But even more memorable was how God took me from staring anxiously at a blank piece of paper to confidently completing my best work as a college writer.

Tips to Refresh

Here are some things to remember when

you have writer's block or when you don't know what to say to someone:

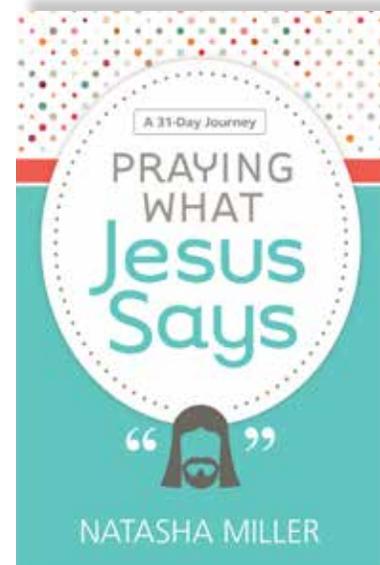
- *Don't try to be a superhero.* We're our own worst enemies when we're fixated on finding what we think are the perfect words—and we forget that it's not about us. Instead, pray for the words that God wants you to tell your reader or listener (see 1 Peter 4:11).
- *Avoid distractions.* We must be good listeners. When we give people our full attention, we'll know what to share as we prayerfully listen to the Holy Spirit. So don't allow anything, including your phone, to pull you away from vital communication with God and others.
- *Trust God for the results.* What you write or speak may be totally different than what you had planned. That's okay! The important thing is knowing you've written or spoken what God has put into your heart to share in that moment.

Stay in the secret place of your heavenly Father and continue to feed on His Word. Inspiration will always come, no matter how bad your writer's block gets or how tongue-tied you might feel.

AARON CARUSO is a freelance writer, a singer-songwriter, and a sports enthusiast. His passion is to inspire and encourage others to live the more abundant life in Christ.

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Praying Jesus' Words | By Natasha Miller

We know that praying God's Word is a powerful practice to include in our prayers. How much more powerful might it be to pray *Jesus' words* over our lives?

Here are some prayers developed from Jesus' words in the Synoptic Gospels. They use a simple pattern that includes Repentance, Declaration, Thanksgiving, and Praise.

Read the passages and let the prayers challenge you in your own walk with Jesus!

Be Salt and Light

Lord, I repent for standing muted, dulled, or snuffed out by sin. I repent for any darkness I've allowed into my life. I repent for when I've quenched the Holy Spirit. I repent for allowing fear or self-ambition, instead of honor, to guide my actions. I repent for when I've not allowed You to act through me. I repent for not always following Your lead.

I desire to bring Your salty flavor and Your light into the world. I declare boldness for myself! I won't shrink back, but I will immediately obey what You speak to me through Your Word and the Holy Spirit.

Thank You for using me for Your glory. Thank You for wanting me to be salt and light, to represent You in this world.

I praise You for being the source of all good and perfect things; that You know the beginning from the end; that You will finish the good work You started in my life.

(Matt. 5:13–16; Mark 9:50, 4:21–22; Luke 14:34–35, 11:33–36)

Be Good Soil

Lord, You amaze me with Your desire to share secrets of the Kingdom with me. I repent for when I've lacked understanding and didn't search out a matter.

I repent for not adamantly pursuing You. I repent for any lack in my character. I repent for allowing worldly cares and the seductiveness of wealth to distract, deter, and degrade the truth.

I desire to be good soil. I declare I will listen to Your words. I declare when I hear the Word, I will seek to understand it. I declare I will bear fruit from what gets sown into my life.

Lord, thank You for sowing words of the Kingdom into my life. Thank You for sharing the secrets of the Kingdom with me.

I praise You that when You speak, I listen. I praise You that You want me to bear fruit and influence others. You're holy and worthy, and I adore You.

(Matt. 13:3–23; Mark 4:3–25; Luke 8:5–18)

Be Ruthless Toward Sin

Lord, I repent for all sin in my life. I ask You to specifically reveal my sin so I can deal with it. I reject sin and desire to live a blameless life before You. I repent for when my sin hurt my testimony and my representation of You.

Lord, I declare that regardless of the past, I will ruthlessly tackle sin in my life. I will eradicate it because I love You more than the sin. I declare I will be an overcomer in every area of my life.

I thank You that I will bring the Kingdom of God into places: namely, peace, joy, and righteousness. I thank You for tangibly revealing the effects of a repentant lifestyle. I thank You that

I can co-labor with You and call out to You for strength to overcome.

I praise You for being the Great Almighty King who dwells within me and desires to fully manifest Your character. I praise You that You live and move and have Your being in me!

(Matt. 18:7–9; Mark 9:43–50; Luke 14:34–35)

Be Ready

Lord, I repent for any way I haven't made myself ready for Your return. I repent for every way I've taken Your return for granted. I repent for any way I've taken the appointed time of my death for granted.

I declare I will be ready for Your return. I will prepare myself by growing closer to You. In fact, I ask that You show me, Lord, how to grow closer to You.

I also want to ready myself for my entrance into eternity. I declare that I will follow Your leading on how to prepare myself and others. I don't want to be caught lacking and unprepared.

I thank You for the warning—and I've heeded it. I thank You that I will be prepared to meet You either in death or as a witness of Your return. I praise You for Your reminders. I praise You for Your unrelenting outreach. May I always and forevermore respond and reach to You.

(Matt. 24:32–44; Mark 13:28–37; Luke 17:26–35, 21:29–36) **PC**



NATASHA MILLER is the founder of The Haggai Project and Natasha Miller Ministries. These prayers are from her book *Praying What Jesus Says*, which is available at

prayershop.org or wherever you purchase your Christian books.

When a Prayer Leader Struggles | By Anonymous

Editor's Note: We do not normally run anonymous articles in *Prayer Connect*. But we know this prayer leader well, can attest to his effectiveness in ministry, and believe his story will be helpful to our readers.

Prayer leaders are not supposed to have emotional breakdowns. My eyesight had deteriorated to the point I could not see the largest “E” on the ophthalmologist’s eye chart. In November 2015, I was diagnosed with a rare autoimmune disease called CRION. The treatment regimen included large doses of prednisone and a chemo drug to tamp down my autoimmune battles.

In late 2019, after an arduous and lengthy weaning process, I was finally free of all medications. My body and eyesight were fine, but my emotions were not the same. I was unable to control my emotions and became overwhelmed by the slightest of things. In short, I had an emotional breakdown.

Tools to Heal

I began to look for a promise from God for my situation. I found one in Romans 16:20: “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.” This is part of the apostle Paul’s closing thoughts to the Roman church, but I sensed God was issuing it for me and my healing.

Bible reading and journaling have been a part of my life for years, so I decided to go back over my journal for the last six months in search of verses that were helpful. I came up with nine pages of Scriptures and divided them into categories like faith, action, serving, etc. I started taking a walk each day and praying those Scriptures for encouragement.

I repeated verses such as 1 Peter 5:10:

“And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.” Other verses I leaned on included Acts 2:25–26, Isaiah 61:7, Romans 15:13, and 2 Corinthians 4:16–18.

I did not just casually read them; I prayed and immersed my mind in them. They helped increase my faith and counteract the ruminating thoughts of anxiety and doubt that plagued me.

I discovered praise and thanksgiving were powerful tools that also interrupted the tormenting thoughts. I developed a gratitude list of as many “God moments” in my life as I could recall. Eighty of them surfaced and were like lotion for my aching soul.

I also recited out loud several life-changing declarations like, “God can be trusted.” I rehearsed that declaration on my rowing machine with each stroke. Each rep and spoken affirmation filled me with more strength that carried me through the dark thoughts that resurfaced.

I repeatedly listened to sermons on faith and trust (many up to 25 times each). They moved my mind away from terrible fear, doubt, and anxiety—and on to the truth of God’s Word and His sovereignty.

The “Microscope Effect”

Do you remember dissecting a frog in high school? In difficult times, it feels like God puts us on a dissecting table and lovingly shows us the things in our lives that need correction.

God revealed my unforgiveness, negativity, lack of trust, doubt of His goodness, and other impurities I had covered up before the breakdown. I

began to pray over each one and ask God to break those strongholds in my life.

I hoped they would be demolished instantly as I stood on 2 Corinthians 10:4–6. Instant destruction does happen for some, but for me it was the removal of a thin layer of stronghold each day. The value of the “microscope effect” is in slowing down long enough to note the negative characteristics that surface as you ask God to work on them with you.

Along the way, I shared my struggle with a few trusted friends who have prayed for me and my ministry for years. They were a godsend. A counselor and antidepressant/anti-anxiety medication were also beneficial. The medication helped stop the ruminating long enough for me to catch a breath to fight on. I took it long enough to re-enter the conflict with renewed strength.

Accepting God’s sovereign plan for my life and health was extremely painful. My trial felt unfair and cruel, to be honest. It took months, but eventually I surrendered to Him and trusted Him with my situation, future, and all the pain.

Renewed Joy

Now, two years later, my joy for life has returned. My drive and confidence are also restored. I have learned to trust/depend on God in greater ways than I ever could have apart from this experience.

I do not have it all figured out, but I am so thankful for God’s personal training in this crisis. These tools *saved my life*. If they do not resonate with you, God is more than able to provide you with your own set of tools.

As a leader, do not try to carry your pain in secret. Use every means to get well and back in the fight. God will see you through! 📖

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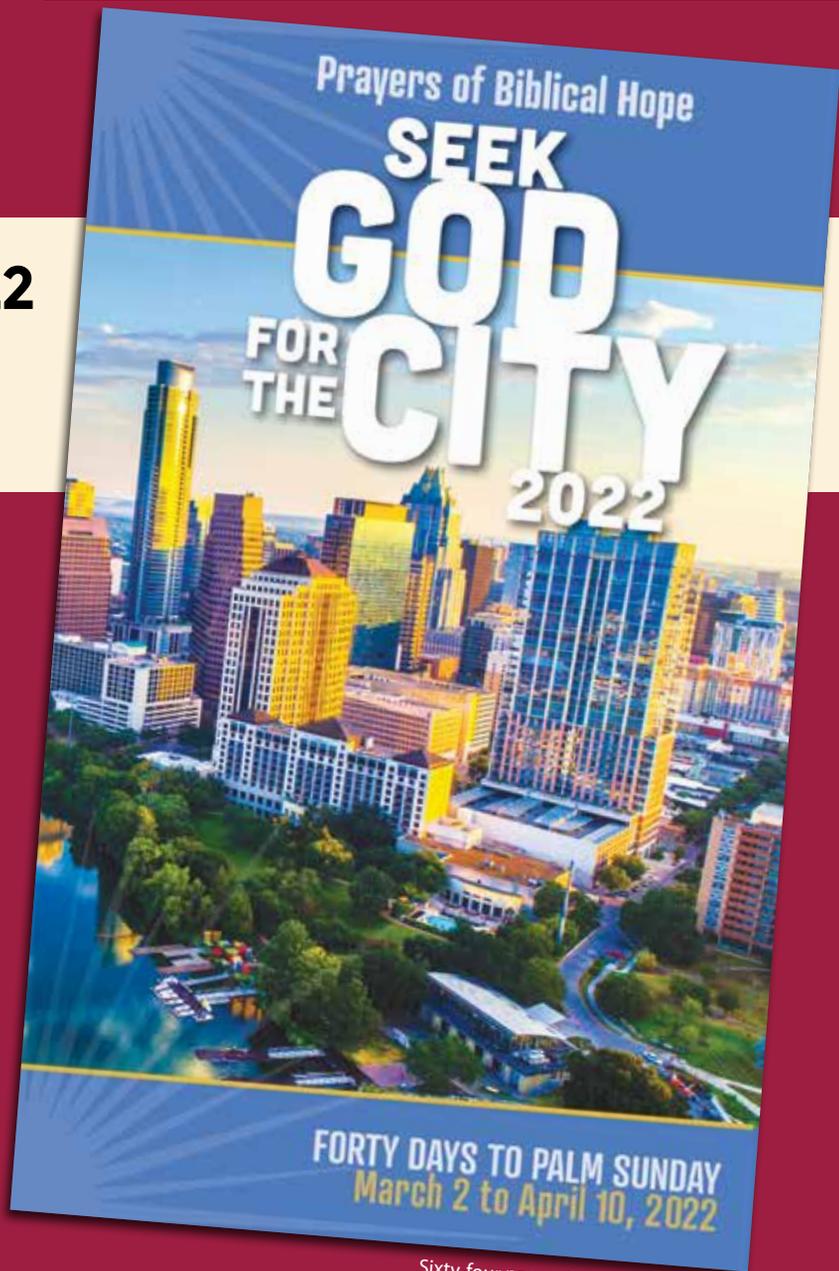
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