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Connecting to the Heart of Christ through Prayer

Prayer FOR THE GLORY OF God

*A Greater Revelation
of Christ*

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P. Douglas Small
President, Project Pray
International Prayer Coordinator

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We see prayer as a prop, with work and ministry being the most important thing. We must see prayer as primary, as the means by which we join God, who is already working.



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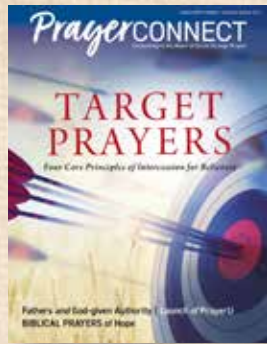
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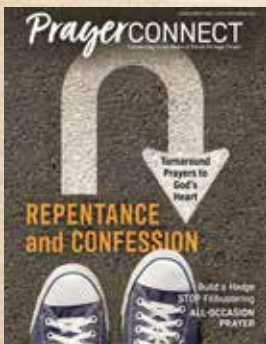
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We are looking for general articles, ideas, and news stories on what God is doing as a result of prayer. We are primarily looking for newly written pieces that have not appeared in other publications. Writer's guidelines are available by emailing Carol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

My nine-year-old grandson Jack seems to have a heart for prayer. I noticed this recently when he was eating at Grammy and Grampy's and we asked him to pray our before-meal prayer. He gladly agreed—and then took off praying.

He thanked God for family, blessings he had experienced at school (like finding a best friend), for his stuff, etc. Then he “came against” COVID and prayed for its removal. But he forgot to thank God for the food! No biggie. But I chuckled at this omission as he prayed.

This problem—forgetting the primary reason for the prayer—is not unprecedented in the pages of Scripture. When Babylon was at the gates of Jerusalem and about to overrun it, Jeremiah goes to prayer (Jer. 32:17–25). For the first 75 percent of the prayer, he just praises God for who He is, and then lists some miraculous things God did in the past for Israel. Then it is almost like he remembers, “Oh yeah, I'm supposed to be praying about the impending attack!” He offers a short statement about Babylon.

Paul demonstrates this in Philippians 4:4–8. He seems to emphasize that rejoicing, offering thanks, and thinking about positive things are more important than our requests if we want peace in our lives.

Even when Jesus taught about prayer in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6), He ended the entire teaching by telling us not to worry about everyday stuff like food and clothes. Rather, we should “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (v 33).

A Better Focus

Most of us spend the bulk of our prayer times putting our needs and the needs of others before the Father. While there is nothing wrong with praying about personal concerns, we might benefit more if we focused on God rather than on our needs. A few simple steps can flip that around.

First, increase the amount of time you spend praising God for who He is. Jesus taught His disciples to begin with recognizing God. Their passionate prayer in Acts 4, when they were threatened with their lives, started by recognizing who God is. This enabled them to have more of a “bring it on” attitude rather than a “get us out of this” focus in their prayer. The result: the place was shaken, they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they proclaimed the Word of God boldly (Acts 4:31).

Second, spend time thanking God for what He has done for you in the past. This will be a powerful source of faith for you! As you remember God's faithfulness in your life, the issues you want Him to fix become less important to list.

And if we forget to pray for the food like my grandson Jack? No problem. God will take care of such things when we simply seek His Kingdom and righteousness!

– Jonathan Graf



Previously in



A movement is rising up among Gen Zers—those ages 9 to 24—and they are increasingly passionate for revival. Get a glimpse into this generation and pray with hope! Order this issue and other back issues from prayershop.org.



NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER
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National Prayer Leaders Gather in Hollywood

Leaders of the Hollywood Prayer Network (HPN) believe that “through prayer for Hollywood comes cultural revival.”

The National Prayer Committee (NPC), which moves its annual meeting to different cities, gathered strategically in Hollywood in January to meet with entertainment industry professionals and pray for revival and spiritual awakening in “the world’s most influential mission field.”

Karen Covell, who heads up HPN (hollywoodprayernetwork.org), says, “There’s no place in America you can go that is not affected by Hollywood.” Her ministry serves more than 10,000 professionals in the Los Angeles area and other entertainment centers across

the country. The NPC prayer leaders listened to a panel discussion and prayed over several members of the HPN network, including actors, make-up artists, producers, stunt people, musicians, and other industry professionals.

Covell also encouraged NPC members to take a more hopeful view of Hollywood. “Don’t discourage young Christians who want to be here. I will get them connected and make them part of a community. We need Christians in Hollywood to build community.”

Other NPC leaders gave reports of how God is orchestrating prayer across the nation. Kathy Branzell, president of National Day of Prayer (NDP), notes the 2022 theme comes from Colossians

2:6–7: “Exalt the Lord who has established us.” She says that in a very divided nation, “we have forgotten how to keep our conversations from turning into confrontations.”

The National Day of Prayer is always observed on the first Thursday of May, and it will never be cancelled because, according to Branzell, “It is law and our president *must* declare a day of prayer for our nation.” This year’s NDP will be on May 5.

“We exist to mobilize unified public prayer across America,” says Branzell. More information about how to host an observance in cities, churches, and other public places can found at nationaldayofprayer.org.

Missionaries Staged Daring Escape in Haiti

The final 12 of the 17 Christian Aid Ministries (CAM) missionaries who were kidnapped in Haiti in October 2021 executed a daring escape plan after they prayed.

“Over the time of their captivity, God gave various hostages a desire to attempt an escape, but it took them a while to all agree on when or how this should take place. To attempt such a thing would be dangerous! They sought God in prayer over and over again, seeking direction from Him,” CAM spokesman Weston Showalter reveals in a statement.

“Twice when they planned to escape, God gave clear signs that this was not the right time. On both occasions, on the very minute they had discussed, the exact thing took place they had requested as a sign. God was at work, but the timing

was not right,” Showalter adds.

The group kept strategizing and praying until they miraculously united and agreed that they would make their great escape from a barricaded house where they were being held on December 15.

“During the night, as God directed, they prepared, put on their shoes, and packed pouches of water in their clothes for the journey,” Showalter says. “When they sensed the timing was right, they found a way to open the door that was closed and blocked, filed silently to the path they had chosen to follow, and quickly left the place they were held, despite the fact that numerous guards were close by.”

Once they were away from the hostage camp, the missionaries moved toward a



mountain feature identified as a landmark and journeyed as much as ten miles under starlight. During the times they weren’t sure which way to go, they stopped and prayed, asking God to show them.

The group eventually found someone who helped them make a phone call.

“No doubt your prayers to Almighty God played a part in all the hostages now being reunited with their loved ones,” says Showalter.

LEONARDO BLAIR, taken from The Christian Post (christianpost.com).

Supreme Court to Hear Case of Praying Coach

Joe Kennedy, assistant coach for the Bremerton, WA, high school football team, had a seven-year tradition of kneeling at the 50-yard line after games to pray. But in 2015, the Washington state school district suspended him, accusing him of endorsing his religion while serving in an official state capacity. The Supreme Court has now agreed to review the case after previously denying Kennedy’s request in 2019.

School district officials asked Kennedy to stop praying in public and offered him a private space to pray in the press box. When he continued to pray on the field, players and attendees started to join him.

The district said it had to fire him to avoid violating a constitutional requirement that the state cannot endorse a religion. Kennedy argues his prayer was a personal expression and had nothing to do with his coaching duties.

“No teacher or coach should lose their job for simply expressing their faith while in public,” says Kelly Shackelford, president and CEO of First Liberty.

By agreeing to take this case, the Court will have an opportunity to protect the rights of Americans to live out their faith, including praying in public, without the fear of punishment. The outcome could restore the Free



Exercise Clause of the First Amendment and strike a serious blow against a legal precedent that’s harmed religious liberty for more than 30 years.

CAROLINA LUMETTA, excerpted from *World and Intercessors of America* (ifapray.org).

Nepal Pastor Sentenced for Prayer to Heal COVID

A court in Nepal sentenced a pastor to two years in prison under the country’s harsh anti-conversion law for merely saying that prayers can heal COVID-19.



The District Court in Dolpa sentenced Pastor Keshab Raj Acharya to two years in prison and a fine of \$165 (20,000 Rupees) for suggesting on social media that prayer could bring healing from the coronavirus, the U.S.-based persecution watchdog International Christian Concern says.

Pastor Acharya was first arrested on March 23 last year from his home in Pokhara, Gandaki Pradesh Province, on charges of spreading false information regarding COVID. Though he was released, he was rearrested moments later on charges of “outraging religious feelings” and “proselytizing.”

After more than three months in prison, he was released in July 2020, after paying bail equal to about \$2,500.

In a video published on social media, Pastor Acharya prayed in front of his

congregation, “Hey, corona—you go and die. May all your deeds be destroyed by the power of the Lord Jesus. I rebuke you, corona, in the name of Lord Jesus Christ.

By the power of the ruler of this Creation, I rebuke you. . . . By the power in the name of Lord Jesus Christ, corona, go away and die.”

After his release last July, Acharya had told *Morning Star News* that it was a “very difficult” time for him.

“I would think of my little children and my wife, and I would cry out to the Lord in prayer. I would look up at Him in hope that if it is in His will that I should be put through this, He would get me out of this,” he says.

After his release, Acharya says he believes government officials and police worked against him.

Christians have been under attack since before the promulgation of the country’s new constitution in September 2015. The constitution establishes Nepal as a secular country but also effectively

bans evangelism, as it states that no one is allowed to make an attempt to convert people of other religions to his or her own. It also calls for the protection of Hinduism, the majority religion.

ANUGRAH KUMAR, taken from *The Christian Post* (christianpost.com).



Prayer Calendar

Global 4/14 Day of Prayer for Children
Thursday, April 14
global414day.com

National Day of Prayer
Thursday, May 5
nationaldayofprayer.org

30 Days of Prayer for Muslim World
April 2–May 1
30daysprayer.com

Weekend of Prayer for Children at Risk
June 4–5
viva.org/pray

Prayer FOR THE GLORY OF God

Several years ago, about 200 people gathered in my church's worship center to watch the livestream of the Nationally Broadcast Concert of Prayer, produced by Dr. Bob Bakke and originating from Moody Church in Chicago. This was our first time hosting a national prayer event in our local church. I was the promoter and organizer of the gathering, but I had an additional job that night. I was in the sound booth with just one task—control the volume level.

The broadcast began with some music, and then we heard the voices of the cohosts—in *Spanish!*

Every head in the worship center turned and looked at me with puzzled and somewhat accusatory stares. All I could do was shrug and say, “Do you want your Spanish louder or softer?” (To this day, I do everything possible to stay out of the sound booth!)

Eventually, gifted people figured out the technical difficulties on the broadcast and we enjoyed our first concert of prayer led by national prayer leaders.

As the Waters Cover the Sea

This was my introduction to the gathering of believers in a larger and more unified prayer movement across our nation. In the years to follow, my prayer experiences expanded to include participation with the Global Day of Prayer—a

A Greater Revelation of Christ

collaborative movement of prayer in 200-plus nations of the earth. Just imagine praying toward the glory of God through every time zone on the earth, beginning in Fiji and circling the globe! That was the beauty of the Global Day of Prayer.

Since those early beginnings, Bob Bakke and I remain ministry friends. We continue to pursue unified prayer because he has also been my pastor for the past 14 years. His life verse—on all his correspondence and spoken often from the pulpit—is Habakkuk 2:14:

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

I've heard and read this passage so many times that I can easily quote it. And it has become one of my most hopeful prayers: that we will see the glory of God displayed throughout the earth in a way that no one can deny His power and majesty.

For the Glory of God

In this issue, David Bryant recounts the profound and holy moment when more than a million men got on their faces in the dirt on the National Mall to repent and be silent before the Lord. In that hushed and prolonged silence, the presence of Christ transformed countless men. Bryant demonstrates how seeking the glory of Christ will change the way you pray.

Jonathan Graf looks at how adding a simple “so that” to your prayers will extend your heart toward a Kingdom perspective. Ultimately, all our prayers benefit from seeking to showcase the glory of God.

Cristina Baker closes out our theme section by highlighting prayers that capture the fascination and intimacy of intentionally “beholding” Jesus. She writes about how “something supernatural and powerful happens when we pray and fix our eyes on Jesus.”

I've participated in years of marvelous national and global prayer movements. They are profound in seeking a greater revelation of Christ. They may not yet be the fulfillment of Habakkuk 2:14, but they certainly serve as a glimpse of the promise that's to come.

May we soon see a worldwide flood of the glory of God in answer to our prayers—because Jesus is worthy! **PC**

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

*Seeking the
Glory of Christ
Transforms
Every Other Way
You Pray*

One Prayer TO BIND



The most familiar words from J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy go like this:

One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them, One Ring to bring them all, and in the darkness bind them.

As the story goes, the One Ring referred to was secretly forged by evil Sauron in the fires of Mount Doom and had the power to dominate 19 other Great Rings. This would allow him to command the minds of those who wore them. In this way, Tolkien introduces us to how Satan works.

Three Questions about the One Prayer

To better understand this one prayer, let me ask you three questions. Pause to reflect on your answers.

1. What was the *most powerful prayer meeting* you've ever attended?
2. What was the *most powerful prayer* you've ever prayed or heard prayed?
3. What was the *most powerful answer* to prayer you've ever received?

Then consider my answers to those three questions:

1. *The most powerful prayer meeting I've ever experienced* took place when 1.5 million men gathered on The Mall in Washington, D.C., in October 1997. They came from coast-to-coast to spend six hours praying for the spiritual reclamation of America—praying for what I personally have been speaking about and fostering for years: what I term a nationwide Christ Awakening movement.

2. *The most powerful prayer I ever prayed* was prayed again that very day but this time with many others. This occurred when I read to the men John's description in Revelation 1 of the magnificence of our ascended Lord Jesus Christ. Then, I called on us all to join in doing what John did in the passage—to fall on our faces, spread flat out on the grass, prostrated before our Savior King.

Next, I invited them to remain totally silent for three whole minutes, focused on God's Son in the majesty of His supremacy—the One who is, in Himself, the ultimate reason for and answer to *every* other prayer we will ever pray.

THEM ALL

But for Jesus followers, here's a radical *revision* of that mythical rhyme:

One PRAYER to rule them all,
One PRAYER to find them,
One PRAYER to bring them all,
and before God's throne bind them.

What is this "one prayer"? It is any appeal to heaven that seeks a greater revelation of God's glory in Christ Jesus—for yourself, another person, a situation, a church, a community, a nation, or a whole generation. It's the one prayer that defines, designs, and discharges final answers to all the rest.

Once Christians understand the reason for and the content of the most consequential prayer of all—the one that rules and binds all the others—and makes that passion their own, everything about their praying will be transformed forever.

BY DAVID BRYANT

“Show me your glory” stands as the one prayer that binds all other prayers.

Hushed. Listening. Waiting. Watching. Anticipating. Open to the wonders of our risen, reigning King. Those three minutes in silence before Jesus was biblical prayer at its zenith! It’s the kind of powerful praying I’ve experienced time and time again.

3. *The most powerful answer to prayer* I’ve ever witnessed was manifested that same autumn day across the whole landscape. In the years since, as I’ve traveled the nation, I’ve lost count of the times men have come up to me to share what always is essentially the same testimony. It goes something along these lines:

David, the entire six hours that day were a tremendous prayer event for me. But the moment that had the greatest impact was when we were prostrate and silent for three minutes, looking to Jesus alone.

Then they’ll proceed to tell me how in that sacred space they encountered the Master in new ways, or how their ministry for Christ was revived, or how the trajectory of their lives has since changed. Some even told me they committed their lives to Christ for the very first time while we were motionless in the dirt.

Three minutes—when none of us did anything! Three minutes—when a revelation of the Son of God by the Spirit of God that flooded the people of God with the glory of God became a miracle of God in thousands of lives.

All Prayers Are Really One Prayer: the Prayer of Moses

If you had asked Moses, one of Scripture’s greatest spiritual leaders, these same three questions I asked you, here’s how I think he might have answered, based on Exodus 33–34:

- *The most powerful prayer meeting* for me

took place any day I met with Jehovah God “face to face as with a friend” in a structure I called “the tent of meeting.”

- *The most powerful prayer* I ever prayed was my heart-cry to God when my role as a leader started overwhelming me: “Lord, show me Your glory!”
- *The most powerful answer* I ever received came when God responded: “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence” (33:19).

That was precisely what I needed: a fresh revelation of God’s glory!

Here’s why it is important for us to know about Moses’ experience in Exodus 33: According to 2 Corinthians 3, that entire narrative in Exodus is meant to point us to Jesus, who takes all of it to the highest level. Referring to this incident and its aftermath, Paul writes:

For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. . . . We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. . . . Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces are beholding the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit (vss. 10–18).

Essentially, this passage tells us three things:

- The destiny for every Christian life is for us to see, experience, enter into, and be transformed by the glory of God in Jesus Christ.
- Moses’ prayer to see that glory was answered in a temporary, fading way. But for us, because of Christ, it is answered in an unsurpassed, unending way.
- The Holy Spirit liberates every believer to become fully engaged with an ongoing,

inexhaustible, revolutionary process of being captivated by the nature, character, riches, and ways of the living God through the person of the risen, living, reigning Son of God.

In other words, though he didn't know it at the time, *Jesus* would become the most powerful answer to Moses' most significant prayer.

In fact, just six verses later in 2 Corinthians 4:6, Paul distills the essence of that answer to one sentence. It defines the ultimate outcome of every prayer that has ever been prayed—including yours:

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of *the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ* (emphasis added).

Such a breakthrough of Christ's glory, like the explosion of creation itself, is God's desire for all of us, all the time. Therefore, "Show me your glory" stands as the one prayer that binds all other prayers because 2 Corinthians 4:6 is the final answer for all other prayers.

God's answer to our every prayer is *Jesus*—that is, deeper revelations and more open manifestations of the glory and reign of Jesus. Whatever the topic, the occasion, the sense of desperation—for oneself or when interceding for nations—*every* prayer we pray should end up sounding like Moses' prayer.

To say it another way, every prayer should sound like the last prayer of the Bible (Revelation 22:20): "*Come, Lord Jesus.*" We simply need *more of Him*. It's the prayer that binds all the others.

My Changed Prayer Life

For nearly 50 years, I've served the Kingdom by mobilizing prayer, praying people, and prayer initiatives—including the founding of Concerts of Prayer International in 1988. Over that time, I've fostered and served movements of


united prayer—national, urban, and international.

So, let me close by suggesting a few implications of the "One Prayer" for my own prayer life:

- The one central **principle** for igniting and sustaining a life of prayer—or a movement of prayer—is to be focused foremost on Christ as the "*hope of all the glorious things to come*" (Col. 1:27). It's more a matter of what we're praying *toward* than what we're praying *about*.
- The primary **agenda** for all prayer is for a greater *revelation* of God's glory in the person of God's Son. Keep that always in the forefront.
- The preeminent **answer** to every prayer, therefore, is the Father giving us *more of Christ Himself*. God has nothing more for us beyond who Jesus is.
- The main **goals** for every prayer

time and every prayer gathering are fourfold:

1. To give us a richer *focus* on the glory of Christ.
 2. To give us wider *fulfillments* of the purposes of Christ.
 3. To give us new depths of the *fullness* of the life of Christ.
 4. To give us the way into greater *fergency* for the person of Christ.
- Biblically speaking, there are six primary **approaches** to seeking the glory of God "in the face of Christ":
 1. **REJOICE:** By prayer, worshipping, celebrating, praising, and thanking our reigning Redeemer for all the wonders of His glory that we've already experienced.
 2. **REPENT:** By prayer, confessing and putting away everything in our lives that is *incompatible* with the glory of who God's Messiah is,

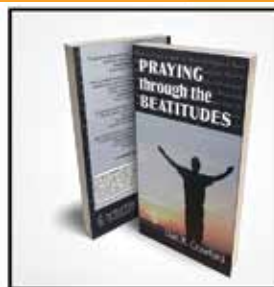


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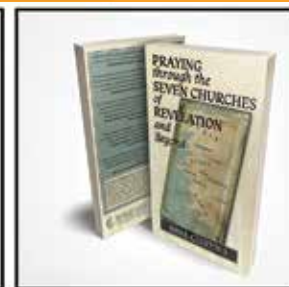
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or what He's doing right now, or how He gets exalted.

3. RESIST: By prayer, standing against every strategy of the powers of darkness against God's Kingdom, and inviting the Light of the World to defeat Satan by spreading more of the glory of God's Son in our lives, churches, nation, and world.

4. REQUEST: By prayer, seeking God's face for increased revelations, manifestations, and mighty displays of the glory of King Jesus on behalf of whatever needs, desires, or concerns we're dealing with.

5. RECEIVE: By prayer, stopping, listening, waiting, watching—becoming literally silent before the Lord of Glory long enough to hear what He wants to say to us or what He wants to do

in us or through us, in answer to our prayers.

6. RECOMMIT: By prayer, giving ourselves totally to Jesus as Lord, whatever it costs us, to be part of the answer to all our prayers as we become a channel through which His glory is declared to others.

• Finally, there is one substantial **guarantee** that our prayers will be heard and answered. Simply ask yourself, looking back at what you just prayed: Can you envision the Father answering your prayer in such a way that, *above all else*, the answer will:

- EXALT Jesus' *name*?
- SPREAD Jesus' *fame*?
- EXTEND Jesus' *reign*?
- INCREASE Jesus' *gain*?
- RATIFY Jesus' *claim*?

The Best Part of Silence

Here's why I often say that those 180 seconds of stillness on The Mall—as we were seeking and savoring the Lamb on His throne—may be the holiest moments of my entire life.

You see, just before I went up to read Revelation 1:12–18—about Christ's ascended glory—and then invite the multitude to fall down before Him, I believe the Spirit of God gave me two insights.

These came to me when I stepped into the “intercessor tent” behind the main platform, 20 minutes before I went to the mic on stage. Sixty earnest believers laid on hands and prayed over me. As they prayed, in my heart I heard two things from the Spirit:

1. I was to set aside my prepared talk and lead the men in the unique approach that I finally took.
2. In the scene that would soon stretch before me—an ocean of men stretching back to the Washington Monument—I was about to witness, in the Lord's words, “a picture of things to come.”

This extraordinary promise—and what I saw—has driven my prayers and my ministry ever since.

This is why today, through *ChristNow.com*, Proclaim Hope is working with many strategic alliances to facilitate a national campaign for a Christ Awakening throughout our land by 2024.

I believe with all my heart a day is fast approaching when—to paraphrase Habakkuk 2:14—“The church and this nation will be fully alive to and saturated with the knowledge of the GLORY OF CHRIST as the waters cover the sea.”

It's the answer to millions of prayers. It's the one prayer that binds them all. **PC**

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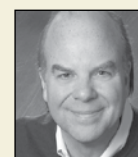
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*Learning
to Pray for
God's Glory
Above All*

So-That PR

In the apostle Paul's day, Rome was not a good place to be a Christian. In fact, it was a crime to worship anyone or anything but Caesar. Believers there likely experienced intense struggles. They had to live out their faith amid pain, rejection, and even fear for their lives.

Today, Western believers don't face many of those hardships. But our lives are not without pain. We face loss of loved ones due to sickness; we face growing disdain from nonbelievers in our society; we face financial setbacks, loss of jobs, and bad things happening to our kids. All these things are common in believers' lives.

did Paul, in the middle of a passage on evangelism, pray for joy, peace, and hope in the believers?

People who have hope in tough times are attractive to other people. You know that to be true. Any time you find a person who is going through something difficult—an illness, pain with a wayward child, or any painful circumstance of life—but doing it with a buoyant spirit and a smile in his heart, people are drawn to him. Such a person can then share the power of Christ in his or her life with others.

That's why Paul was praying for Roman believers to rise above their circumstances and let the joy and peace of God shine through their lives. And the amazing answer to prayer is that people will be attracted to the gospel!

PRAYERS

So, Paul's prayer for the Roman believers has implications for us:

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:13).

What did Paul pray for? Joy and peace.

Why did he pray for those things? So that the believers would overflow with hope.

Hope Is Attractive

When you look at the context of the passage around this prayer, another distinction is added. The other verses are all about evangelism and the gospel going to the Gentiles (non-Jews). The context is seeing people—Romans—come to faith in Jesus Christ. So why

What about Your Prayers?

As I look at all of Paul's prayers, I see an interesting pattern. Almost all of them have a "so that" within them. Paul often prays something "so that" something else will happen. In our Romans 15 prayer, he wants them to have hope, but he prays for joy and peace. Why? Because possessing those things will bring hope.

For the Philippian believers, Paul wants them to be discerning and live blameless lives. But he prays that their "love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight" (Phil. 1:9).

Love is an amazing force! Paul was praying for love—for both God and for each other—so that they would grow in their discernment of what was best (God's will and purposes) and that

BY JONATHAN GRAF

What if you consider that whatever has come into your life, God wants to use it for His glory?

they would live pure and blameless lives.

How can an increase of love bring about all that—a deeper recognition of God’s purposes and a great desire and ability to live a life pleasing to Him? What would an increase of love in everyone do in your church? What would a deeper level of love do in your marriage and family?

Most of our prayers for ourselves and for others usually rest in what my friend Steve Hawthorne of WayMakers calls “little answerables.” Another way of putting it is that most of our prayers are “fix it” in nature. Something has happened that has made our life or the life of someone we love uncomfortable. So, we logically pray the obvious thing—for it to be removed—so life will be normal again.

But what would happen if we thought to pray beyond that? What if we consider that whatever has come into our life or the lives of those we are praying for, God wants to use it for His glory to bring about His purposes and grow His Kingdom?

How would we pray then? I think we would add a “so that”!

But it is difficult to do because the obvious quick fix is so much nicer to experience. To add a “so that,” we need to develop three spiritual attitudes or practices in our lives. I see these three things in John 15:1-10:

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

“I am the vine; you are the branches.

If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love.”

Verse 7 is a prayer promise everyone loves to quote: “ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” But truthfully, that promise does not seem to work in everyone’s life. It certainly does not work 100 percent of the time in my life!

We forget that the promise has some conditions (or three spiritual attitudes). And those conditions will add a “so that” to our prayers!

Make these “attitudes” part of your prayer life:

1. Stay Connected. If we desire to see God’s glory above all in any situation, we must stay connected to the Vine, to Jesus. Our relationship with Him must be at the forefront. If this is true of our lives, we will desire what He desires.

2. Take in His Words. The promise in verse 7 says, “if you remain in me [that’s staying connected] and my words remain in you.” That means we are studying the Bible, His Word to us. We are developing our knowledge of His will as we read

His Word. And remember, 1 John 5:14–15 reminds us:

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

Asking for something that is His will is important if we are to receive what we asked for. So, knowing His Word—which is always His will—is an important condition to understand.

3. Bear Fruit. As believers, our primary purpose is to “bear fruit,” to grow the Kingdom of Jesus on earth. The verses prior to our promise in verse 7 focus on our fruit-bearing. We will be pruned, shaped, and fertilized by Jesus to develop our fruit-bearing abilities.

If I understand that purpose for me as a believer, then I will pray with that in mind.

Beyond Fix-It Prayers

So here is how verse 7 works. If I stay connected to Jesus and concentrate on my relationship with Him, if I take in His Words (read the Bible, memorize Scripture) so I better understand His will and purposes, and if I understand that in all circumstances, my purpose is to bear fruit, then I am less likely to quickly ask God to do the obvious, quick-fix solution to my problem.


I am more likely to think, *what does God want to do in this situation for Him to receive glory? For His purposes to be fulfilled?* That’s a prayer that will be answered!

If we want to see Jesus glorified through our prayers, we may need to shift our thinking. Instead of focusing

on the quick fix, maybe God wants to be glorified through another solution.

When you pray for a situation, instead of quickly praying the obvious solution, I recommend two things:

- First, ask the Holy Spirit what you should pray. Then *listen*—and begin to pray how you sense the Holy Spirit is directing you.
- Second, if you are not sensing what to pray, begin to ask: “What’s the fruit-bearing solution here?” or “What can I pray that will bring glory to Jesus?”

So, next time you pray, ask yourself: *What’s the “so that”?* 



JONATHAN GRAF is the publisher of *Prayer Connect* and the author of *The Power of Personal Prayer* and *Praying Like Paul*, which covers this topic in greater detail. Both are available at prayershop.org or wherever you purchase your Christian books.

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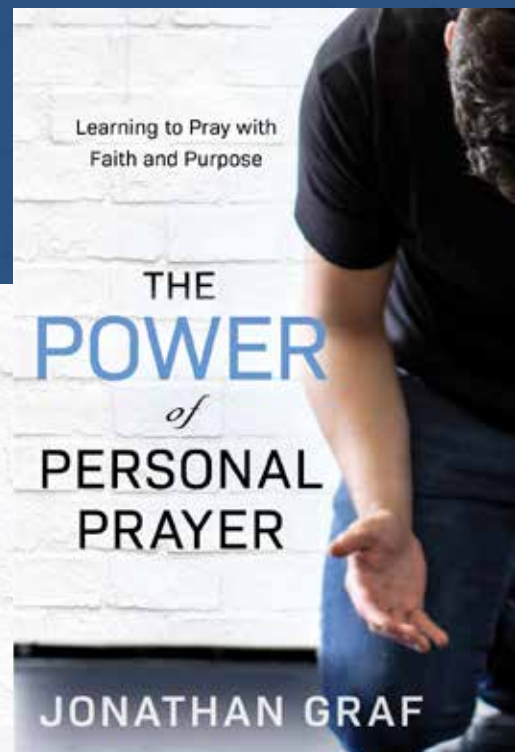
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Beholding

*Prayers
of
Fascination
and
Intimacy*

I was standing at a crossroads in life. I had just been released from jail and was facing a possible conviction. At that crisis moment, I was invited to a prayer meeting at my job. Reluctantly, I decided to go. It was my last resort.

And it forever changed my life.

I was at the end of my rope and couldn't see a reason to even live any more. Before I reached out my hand to open the door to the prayer meeting, I could hear the sound of people praying. But it was unlike anything I had ever heard before. It was a mix between a humming and a roar that sounded like a song.

But it was in this wilderness where God began to teach me about the power of prayer and pursuing the face of Jesus and His heart during the storms.

God taught me about intimacy with Him during this season of my life.

Remember What He Has Done

Whether you have been walking with Jesus for many years or have just begun your journey with Him, your life is marked with moments when the Lord intervened, protected, and showed Himself strong to you. Remembering our history with God will unlock breakthroughs in the Spirit. The power of thanksgiving and praise is released over your life and in the world around you when you remember the words of Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18:

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

When I walked into that prayer meeting many years ago, I didn't have a history of walking with Jesus. But I can look back on my entire life and see how He was always there, even when I denied Him. The compassion in His heart ravished me and I was never the same. The more I reflected on the goodness and faithfulness of God, the deeper I fell in love with Him. The deeper I fell in love with Him, the more I wanted to be with Him and spend time in prayer and in His presence!

Jesus gave it all for you. He suffered, died, and gave Himself up so that you can spend eternity with Him.

JESUS

It was like Someone was pulling me in.

When I walked into the room, a thought crossed my mind: *If there is a God, these people have come face to face with Him.*

That day, the atheist who stuck her fist up at God and denied His existence her whole life came face to face with the beauty of the King. This group of intercessors, immersed in their fascination with Jesus, introduced me to Him. I invited Him into my heart and began my journey of walking with Him.

I'd love to tell you that everything was a cakewalk after this experience many years ago. But it was quite the opposite. Many times, when we first come to the Lord, we go straight into a wilderness where God deals with all the things that first entangled us in sin.

I was lost, addicted, confused, and unsure of what the future held for me.

BY CRISTINA BAKER

There is something supernatural and powerful that happens when we pray and fix our eyes on Jesus.

What greater history do we have with God than this?

We have so much to be thankful for, and as you reflect on all that you have walked through with the Lord, your spirit will be moved with a passion for Jesus. You will be filled with the oil of joy that only He can give!

Passion for His presence moves us to pray and seek His face. Remind yourself of

what He has delivered you from, every moment you thought it would be the end—and somehow, somehow, God showed up in the 11th hour and broke through in your situation when you thought there was no way.

This is the God we serve. He creates beauty from ashes. And what has been impossible for us, He makes possible. He loves you and has a wondrous plan for your life that He longs to fulfill in you.

I pray that as you read these words today, God will bring to remembrance the moments you have shared with Him. May you be stirred to seek Him and pray with passion!

Rising Above the Storm

In Acts 7:55-56, we read about Stephen's death:

But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

Stephen was nearing the end of his life. He was about to be stoned to death, making him the first martyr of the early Church. At this moment, he shifted his focus from the world around him to the open heavens where he saw the Lord Jesus Christ standing at the right hand of the Father. As Stephen beheld the face of Jesus and His glory, he became like Him—and even prayed for the very ones who were stoning him!

There is something supernatural and powerful that happens when we pray and fix our eyes on Jesus no matter what is happening in the world around us. The cares and the weights of life fade into the background and the very light of His face, the kindness of His eyes, and the love of His heart for you begin to transform you from the inside out.

Today, despite whatever you're facing or

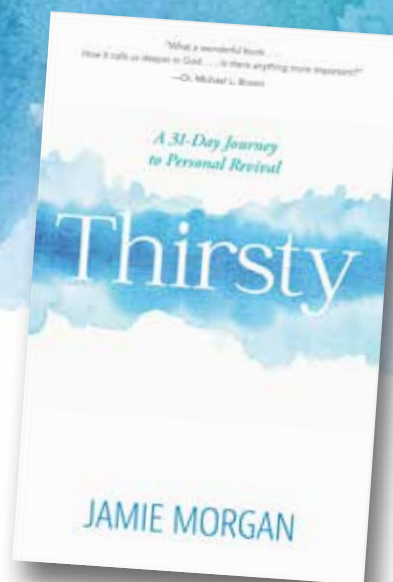
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the challenges surrounding you, choose to look away from the cares of this world. Fix your eyes on the One who loves you, sees you, and has your entire world in His hands. Beholding Jesus is what transforms us. Striving will not.

When you connect with His heart and pray, God will shift your perspective from what you see, to what *He* sees. You will rise above the circumstances and storms that surround you.

Loving God, Loving People

As you seek out the heart of God in prayer, your heart changes. His passions become yours—His passion for *people*. Jesus demonstrated this while He walked the earth. The heart of the Father was on display through His Son, and Jesus lived His life serving and loving people.

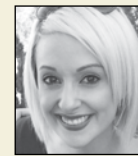
God's heart has always been about

people. He came to the earth for people. He laid His life down for people. The greatest love story of all time—the cross—has always been about people. Connecting with God in prayer changes us. The more you see life through His eyes, your desire to love others the way He loves people becomes your passion!

Over the years, I have found great joy as I connect with His heart in intercessory prayer for others. Jesus said that the expression of our love for Him will be displayed in feeding His sheep (John 21:15-17). Loving people, sharing joy, praying for and serving others, releasing His peace, and sharing what He has given to us—all these are examples of feeding His sheep. They bring great joy to the heart of our Father!

As you seek the Lord, He fills your cup to overflowing. Share what He has given to you with others. The Father will reward you with the greatest gift that we

could ever receive—the fascination and intimacy of His presence. **PC**



CRISTINA BAKER has a deep desire for people to find victory and freedom through the power of prayer. She also creates video content on social media. Her book, *Hope in 60 Seconds*, is available at any online bookstore. She resides in Austin, TX, with her husband Ryan and their son Evan.

For Further Reading

Check out some additional articles on blogs and websites related to “Prayer for the Glory of God” at prayerleader.com/issue-48-extras.

- A Prayer for God's Glory and Splendor, by Debra Przybylski
- 17 Power Prayer Points for Manifestation of God's Glory
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M

BY JOAN SHERMAN

ilitary life seems to be a series of big decisions followed by much smaller decisions. At age 16, our son Matt decided to explore the United States Marine Corps (like father, like son). Decisions made at that stage are investigative and the commitment level is low.

But soon enough, the stakes are high, and the commitment gets very real. At age 17, he decided to enlist in the Delayed Entry Program for the Marine Reserves. At 20, he decided to apply for (and was awarded) a Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) scholarship. At 23, he graduated from college and was commissioned the same day; eventually he was stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Look Up,

As a Marine, Matt consistently displays the tenacity and dedication that make a Marine, a Marine. Because of his unique path, he has the distinct honor of graduating from *two* boot camps (enlisted and officer). He graduated top in class in his Reserves specialty, oversaw millions of dollars' worth of equipment, and was the solo officer within his specialty for a battalion of 900-plus Marines. He displays excellence at every turn.

At age 26, a big decision was before him: choose to “re-up” in the Marines or accept an honorable discharge and join the civilian sector.

As an officer, Matt makes many decisions all the time. The decision to “re-up” is a three-year commitment. If he makes that decision, the Marine Corps makes the next big decisions for him: where he will live, the work he will do, and more.

Weighing Options

Matt systematically weighed the options; it seemed he had compelling reasons to stay and equally compelling reasons to leave.

I didn't know what he should do, but I did know this: it was fully his decision. He's an adult and an officer, capable of making good decisions, and he alone would live with the consequences of this one.

Part of Matt's decision-making process included talking to his Marine father, his Marine brother, fellow Marines, and other connections God put before him. God's Word says that's wise:

- “. . . let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance” (Prov. 1:5).
- “The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice” (Prov. 12:15).

When the Decision Isn't Yours to Make

and Up the Prayer

Matt initiated several phone calls with my husband Dean and me where he laid out his rationale for staying and for leaving. During those calls, I didn't have much to say. It's not that I don't have opinions, but I simply do not know more about this decision than his father or the others he sought for counsel. I knew there were other sources of practical advice for him, and those voices would have greater knowledge and advice. They would weigh more heavily than mine, and that is right and good.

So, what was my role? I'm his mother. How could I support this important decision?

Up the Prayer

Of course, prayer. Dean and I learned early on that when you have a military son (or two), prayer becomes as natural as breathing. A "pray continually" kind

of thing (1 Thess. 5:17). It's so easy to watch what's happening on the world stage and succumb to fear, but we know that's not what God has for us. And so, we pray.

But this time, it felt different. Elevated. This is a big decision for Matt. His decision would affect the next three years of his life. This is not the civilian world where you can take a job, and then, if it's not what you want or expect, you can look for something else and leave (the military frowns on that). The stakes were high.

What was the right choice? What did God want him to do? We know God knows the plans He has for Matt (Jer. 29:11)—and that's what we all wanted.

The Lord showed me how Matt's decision about whether to "re-up" was a direct call for me to "up" the prayer. As he (we) marched forward toward the

decision deadline, we continued to pray for Matt. Thanks to Jesus' blood-bought, perfect, righteous redemption in my life, I knew "the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective" (James 5:16). "Storming the gates of heaven" *was* the work before me. I know it was the Holy Spirit stirring and leading me.

Being a Marine vet, Dean could offer prayer *and* practical advice. But prayer alone became my highest calling. God showed me that my *faith in prayer* was my "contribution" to Matt's decision. I could take my hands off everything else. I could look up—and keep looking up. Fix my eyes on Jesus (Heb. 12:2).

Perspective Flipped

To my surprise, God flipped my perspective from frenzied, desperate, hand-wringing prayer—"Oh, Father, please! Which path is right? What is Your will? What should he do? What do You have for my son?"—to an entirely different perspective.

Over time, I saw these two paths stretch out before my son in a new way. It was still an "either/or" decision, but suddenly, instead of one right way, I saw *both* choices leading to Matt's challenge, opportunity, and growth in the Lord. Whether he stayed in the military or left, I chose to believe God was leading and guiding him forward in that decision, whatever it was.

I kept praying and believing and speaking forth the truth that "God will not let Matt choose wrongly." I said it to Matt, to Dean, to my prayer groups, to anyone who would listen! It wasn't a "name it and claim it"—it was truth, based on the authority of God's Word, that He who began a good work in Matt would carry it right on through to completion (Phil. 1:6). God alone marks out our appointed times in history and boundaries (Acts 17:26), and He knew where Matt needed to be. Matt belonged to Him; I knew God held him in the

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palm of His mighty hand, and nothing could snatch Matt out of it (John 10:28–29).

And peace came. Sweet peace. The kind that only God can give (John 14:27). The kind that transcends all understanding (Phil. 4:7). A perfect peace (Isa. 26:3). On my refrigerator, a magnet reminds me: “The man who walks with God is always moving in the right direction.” Matt walks with God, so he is always moving in the right direction. We were seeking God for wisdom in the confidence of James 1:5, and God simply would not let Matt choose wrongly.

The prayer was still intense, but without the desperation of before.

Bringing it Home

When the deadline came, Matt decided to close out his military career. In the process of his decision to re-up, we looked up, upped the prayer, and the High and Holy One looked down on us with mercy and grace and led Matt forward. And God will continue to do so.

You may not have a military son, but you likely have an adult child, grandchild, friend, or neighbor in your life facing a big decision with potential long-term impact. A career change. A move. A decision to marry or to start a family. A health-related decision. A financial opportunity.

You’re on the outside, looking into this situation, but God has you where you are for a reason. And I think that reason is to pray.

The person making the decision may be praying about it (or he or she may not be). Regardless, we have the blessing and privilege of knowing these truths:

- We don’t need to be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, we can present our requests to God (Phil. 4:6).

- We can ask, seek, knock (Matt. 7:7–8) on their behalf.

These things are true even if the decision itself is not ours. It seems the higher the stakes, the more essential the prayer. I know it might sound elementary, but the value and influence of prayer cannot be overestimated. Remember, your *faith in prayer* just

might be your contribution to their right decision.

Is someone dear to you facing a big decision? Look up, and up the prayer. **PC**



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The Challenge of Adoration Prayer

“Most Holy, Righteous and Eternal God, our Heavenly Father. Once again, O God, we come before Thine presence and Thine sight.”

This is the way my dad has begun his prayers for as long as I can remember. He always focuses on adoration of God. And as much as this has been modeled for me, I still find an adoration, God-centered prayer is not easy or natural to do.

Shifting Focus

Typically, when I pray, I tend to focus more on thanksgiving and supplication than on adoration. I find it much easier to give my attention to the hand of God and what He provides for me. It is easy to thank God for all He has done in my life and the lives of others. It also comes much more natural to ask God for what I need for myself and for the lives of those around me.

Simply put, it is easy to pray with a self-centered and other-centered focus as opposed to a prayer that is God-centered.

But my father’s example lines up with how Jesus also modeled adoration when He taught the disciples to pray. The Lord’s Prayer starts with adoration: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name” (Matt. 6:9).

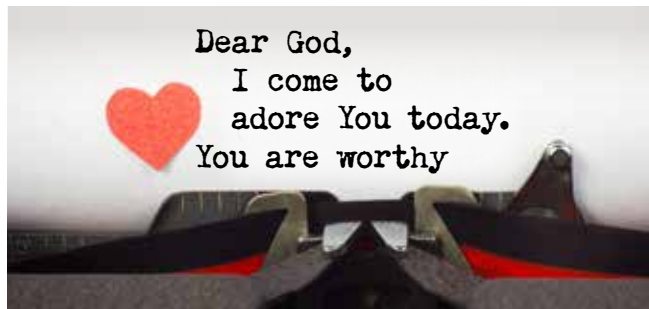
When we pray with adoration to God, we focus on the heart of God and who He is. Our adoration tells God how much we love, worship, and adore Him. An adora-

tion prayer ensures that we are in communion with the heart of God—our desire is for our heart to reach His heart.

Adoration Helps

It can be a challenge to grow in our prayers of adoration, so here are some tools to help you pray in ways that may not automatically feel natural:

1. Do a search. When you put “names of God in the Bible” in an Internet search engine, you get a plethora of websites that detail the multitude of names and their meanings. Make a list of names that most resonate with you to use



2. Choose Scriptures with the names and attributes of God or Jesus. You can use a concordance and look up the names of God or Jesus and then search for Scripture references that support the attribute. The Psalms are full of adoration prayers, such as Psalm 8, 29, 100, and 145.

3. Pray the names and attributes of God using the alphabet as a guide. For example, Alpha, Bread of Life, Counselor, Deliverer, Emmanuel—and ending with Yahweh and Zealous. Take up the

challenge to fill out all the letters of the alphabet.

4. Practice adoration prayers both privately and publicly. Model how to pray with the focus on God and His attributes and encourage others to join you in the challenge of staying focused on adoration before moving to thanksgiving and supplication. People may quickly default to thanking God and interceding for others but try to direct them to stay with adoration so that they can grow with you.

Adoration Prayer Example

Here is an example to help you incorporate more adoration into your prayer life:

Dear God, I come to adore You today. You are worthy of my love, worship, and devotion. God, Your heart is full of mercy, grace and love. God, I call on Your name because the Bible says in Jeremiah 10:6: “No one is like you, Lord; you are great, and your name is mighty in power.”

God, You are Righteous, Holy, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, and Zealous. You are truly Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6). It is truly in Your name we pray, amen!

Adoration can be challenging, but my earthly father’s example inspires me to adore my Heavenly Father!

DR. VANESA SCOTT-THOMPSON has held a variety of leadership positions in multiple churches. Her book *Foundation Basics for New Members: Teacher and Student Manual* was released in February 2022.

When Cursed, We Can Bless

In December 2021, I was in the hospital with a family member. I saw the White House had released an official statement on the omicron variant.

We are intent on not letting omicron disrupt work and school for the vaccinated. You've done the right thing and we will get through this. For the unvaccinated, you're looking at a winter of severe illness and death for yourselves, your families, and the hospitals you may soon overwhelm.

Wasn't that shocking to read? The White House released a word curse over this nation, namely over the unvaccinated and their families.

A curse is a solemn utterance intended to invoke a supernatural power to inflict harm or punishment on someone or something. It is the exact opposite of a blessing. When we pray in Jesus' name, we invoke the name of the Lord to bless, to heal, to save an individual through the power of His Holy Spirit.

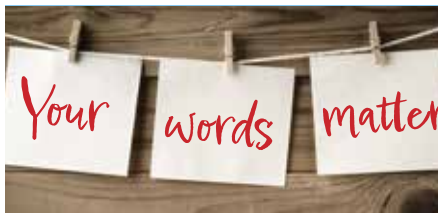
I believe this administration released that statement in hopes of using fear to manipulate the unvaccinated. I do not believe they intentionally released a word curse, but unfortunately, they did. How should we intercessors respond to this—or any other words spoken as a curse?

Your Words Matter

“The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit” (Prov. 18:21).

The words we speak matter. Scripture says that we eat the fruit of the words we speak. When we partner with and then repeat gloom and doom, slanderous, malicious, or fear-mongering words, we come into agreement with the lies of the devil. Remember, he hates us and everything we stand for because we belong to Christ.

Our words are weighty. We have been given the authority and privilege to pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and



share His message with the world. We are His representatives here on earth. Here's how we can pray in response to a perceived curse (using the White House statement as an example):

- **Repent.** Predicting a winter of severe illness and death for our families does not align with God's Word. Let's come before God in prayer, acknowledging this lie and all lies that originate from the devil (John 8:44).
- **Revoke.** Cancel the wrong confession (words of sickness and death released over people and their families). Verbally break any agreement you may have made with this statement in fear.
- **Replace.** Lastly, replace the wrong confession with the right one. We know according to John 10:10 that the thief (Satan) comes to steal, kill, and destroy. Jesus said, “I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full.” Intercessors often pray the opposite of what the world is doing.

Praying Like Jesus Did

Jesus spent much time teaching His disciples about prayer. He taught them to bless those who cursed and hurt them.

Invoke blessings upon and pray for the happiness of those who oppose you. Implore God's blessing (favor) upon “those who curse you” (Luke 6:28)—or revile, reproach, disparage, and high-handedly misuse you.

He goes on to say that when we bless those who curse and hate us, we are truly acting as children of God (Luke

6:35–36). The power of this blessing is greater than any curse. Paul emphasized this with the Roman church: “Bless those who persecute you [who are cruel in their attitude toward you]; bless and do not curse” (Rom. 12:14).

We are called to bless those who curse us. We are called to pray for those who persecute us. We are called to love our enemies the same way Christ loved us when we were once enemies of the cross.

I must confess, last year was difficult. We saw so many drastic, ungodly changes in this nation. Let's pray for this administration once more. They don't need curses. They don't need memes. They need Jesus Christ, plain and simple.

GLORIA ROBLES is a frequent contributor to Intercessors for America (ifapray.org). Reprinted with permission from *The Informer*.



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Prayer that Brings Glory to God | By Kim Butts

The Westminster Shorter Catechism asks and answers many questions about the Christian faith. The first question asks: “What is the chief end of man?”

The answer? “Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.”

The second question in the Catechism is, “What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?”

The answer? “The word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.”

If our main purpose is to glorify God—and Scripture is the way God has given us to bring Him glory—it follows that when we pray according to Scripture, God will receive glory!

Giving Voice to Prayers

As an example, let’s look at the ACTS acronym for prayer that most of us have used: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication.

The Book of Psalms (and many other Scriptures) can help give voice to our scriptural prayers that bring glory to God. The practice of praying the Word of God assures we are praying in the perfect will of God.

1. Adoration: We give Him glory through our worship and praise.

Speak out this prayer: “All your works praise you, LORD; your faithful people extol you. They tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might, so that all people may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom” (Psalm 145:10–12).

Scripture-informed prayer: We give You

praise, Lord, for You alone do things we cannot even comprehend. We give praise to Your glorious name forever! Father, the heavens You created declare Your glory. The skies proclaim the work of Your hands. May the whole earth be filled with Your glory! (Psalm 72:18–20, 19:1, 29:2).

2. Confession: We give Him glory when we confess our sin and change our behavior.

God gets glory when we recognize our sin, confess it to Him, repent, and turn our lives and hearts around. God then forgives and washes us clean “so that” we can teach the ways of Jesus to others who struggle with sin.

When we pray the Word, it is useful to personalize the pronouns: “Help us, God our Savior, for the glory of your name; deliver [me] and forgive [my] sins for your name’s sake” (Psalm 79:9).

Scripture-informed prayer: Loving Father, help me acknowledge my sin to You rather than ignore it or try to cover it up. May I be quick to confess my wrongdoing and receive Your amazing forgiveness. Please keep me from my desires and temptation to sin intentionally when I know it grieves Your heart. Protect me so that my sins will not rule over me. I want my life to bring You glory (Psalm 19:13, 32:5).

Psalm 51 is an amazing prayer from the lips of King David, following his sinful behavior with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband. Take time to pray through this deeply heartfelt prayer, replacing David’s sin with your own.

3. Thanksgiving: God receives glory when we are thankful.

God’s Word clearly teaches that we are to bring glory to God through our thanks: “I will praise God’s name in


song and glorify him with thanksgiving” (Psalm 69:30).

Scripture-informed prayer: Lord God Almighty, thank You that I am a sheep of Your pasture. I will enter Your gates with thanksgiving and Your courts with praise, giving thanks to Your holy name because of Your righteousness! I will give thanks to You and tell others of Your unfailing love and the wonderful things You have done in my life. I give thanks to You because You are good and because Your love goes on forever and ever (Psalm 100:3–4, 7:17, 9:1, 107:8, 118:19, 21).

4. Supplication (prayer, request, plea, petition): We give God glory when our prayers become more about God’s Kingdom than our own needs.

“So that” prayers will transform a prayer into one that glorifies God and His Kingdom. Psalm 67:1–2 is a powerful example: “May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us [this part is about us]—so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations [about Him].”

Scripture-informed prayer: Lord, may Your name alone receive glory because of Your love and faithfulness. May Your faithful people tell of the glory of Your Kingdom and speak of Your might so that all people may know of Your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of Your Kingdom (Psalm 145:10–12).

May every prayer bring glory to Your Name and to Your Kingdom. 



KIM BUTTS is co-founder of Harvest Prayer Ministries and author of several books available at prayershop.org.

“Take-Action” Prayer | By Thomas Bush

We have important appointments, so we prepare to be successful. When we are ready, we gather our necessities—purse or briefcase, computer, beverage, and lunch—and then head to the car.

Imagine loading your things into the car and then discovering something is wrong. You have a flat tire. This is not what you expected. What do you do?

Do you just get in the car and pretend it's fine? After all, inside your car you feel comfortable and predictable. But in reality, you have a flat—and you're not going anywhere. You need to take action.

It's the same in ministry. God's Kingdom purposes lay before us, but obstacles often arise. Rather than accept things as they are, shouldn't we take action and get our ministries moving forward?

Jesus Takes Action

Prayer leaders need to step up, take risks, and move forward. We can prevent the theft of vitality in our prayers by being proactive. Jesus gives us the perfect model.

- **Jesus takes action in the temple.** Jesus arrives at the temple and does not find it as He expects (Matt. 21:13; Luke 19:46). Jesus declares it is to be a house of prayer but has been turned into a den of robbers. He overturns obstacles in the temple with decisive action.
- **Jesus expresses zeal for His Father's house.** The prophet Isaiah heralds the impact of Messiah: “He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head; he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing and wrapped

himself in zeal as in a cloak” (Isa. 59:17). Jesus was motivated because of His zeal for His Father's house.

- **Jesus teaches how not to pray.** When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He begins, “. . . don't pray like hypocrites [actors in a play] . . . to be seen by others (Matt. 6:5). He adds, “And when you pray, don't keep on babbling like the pagans [Gentiles], for they think they will be heard because of their many words” (Matt. 6:7). Jesus teaches what not to pray because of His passion for the proper focus on inner righteousness—having hearts right toward God—rather than outward displays focused on impressing others.

Stop the Vitality Leak

Prayer often resembles settling for comfortable and predictable, rather than “take-action” prayer.

Like the flattened car tire, our prayer can leak vitality. Without effective leadership, our prayer meetings will focus more on needs than on the purposes of God. Just as Jesus took action, we can proactively move prayer forward in our ministries. These ideas fit with the acronym “LEAD.”

1. Take-Action Prayer: Leadership.

A praying church or ministry requires praying leaders. Daniel Henderson of Strategic Renewal says that “the prayer level of the church never grows beyond the personal example and passion of the senior leaders.” A leader cannot fully delegate the prayer ministry to others.

Leaders should be prayer “champions” who practice, teach, promote, and share prayer requests that will make a difference to the ministry. Leaders have

the greatest ability to affect the praying culture of a church.

2. Take-Action Prayer: Evaluation.

Assess the current state of your church's prayer ministry. Use these measurements:

- **Height:** Is the leadership team modeling, cultivating, teaching, and training others to lead in prayer?
- **Breadth:** Are leaders helping people understand the need for a prayer culture beyond prayer “activities.”
- **Width:** Are leaders being raised up to provide a variety of prayer opportunities?
- **Depth:** Are people equipped to develop prayer that also affects marriages, work, and community?

3. Take-Action Prayer: Apprenticeship.

A vibrant prayer life is developed through discipleship. Cheryl Sacks, a national prayer leader with BridgeBuilders, says that a praying disciple is responsible for her “prayer share.” She prays for her family, relationships, ministries, and leaders.

4. Take-Action Prayer: Deployment. Being “on mission with God” requires a vibrant prayer life. A prayer disciple grows in knowing God, gaining wisdom, and seeking to know His plan. Corporately, a prayer leader seeks God for direction and empowerment.

Don't just limp along, drained of all vitality. Take decisive action to get your praying back on track! 📌



THOMAS BUSH is the director of Prayer Assist Ministries (prayer-assist.org). He consults with and equips pastors, leaders, and faith-based organizations.

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