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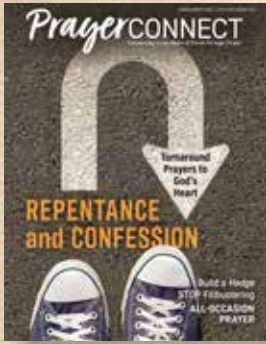
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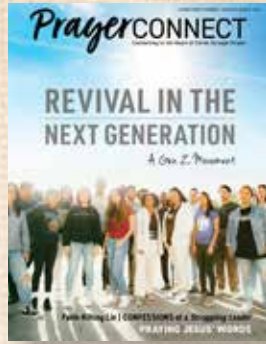
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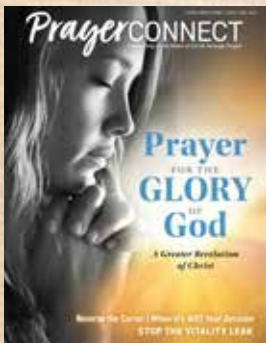
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Article Submissions

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

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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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Well Done, Faithful Servant

On November 26, 2022, Dave Butts, an extraordinary and influential prayer leader, passed into the arms of Jesus. While we do not normally run obituaries in *Prayer Connect*, the magnitude of this loss personally to me and to the prayer movement warrants it.

Dave's primary roles were as the president of Harvest Prayer Ministries and the chairman of America's National Prayer Committee. But he also served on numerous prayer and revival ministry boards and leadership teams, some as chairman of the board. He authored or co-authored 15 books on prayer and revival and wrote prolifically on blogs and his *harvestprayer.com* website.

After more than two decades pastoring a local church, Dave and his wife Kim co-founded Harvest Prayer Ministries in 1993. That's when I met them.

When I was editor of *Pray!* magazine, I joined the executive team of America's National Prayer Committee. Dave, Kim, and I became fast friends. In 2004, as the Lord led me away from *Pray!*, we put our new ministry, the Church Prayer Leaders Network (CPLN), under Harvest. That began our 18 years of ministry together.

Together we launched PrayerShop Publishing (*prayershop.org*) to publish niche resources to help churches grow prayer. We taught conferences and launched websites that ministered to thousands each day. In 2011, we launched *Prayer Connect*.

While I focused on the nitty gritty of all that, Dave focused on his calling—to be a networker of prayer leaders and ministries. As the chairman of America's National Prayer Committee, he used that platform to help multiple prayer ministries launch and gain exposure to the broader Church. God used Dave mightily in that role!

I am going to miss my relationship with Dave the most. He was a good friend, mentor, and boss—one of the sincerest and kindest people I know. We spent long hours over a meal or a cup of coffee in his office, just talking about prayer. He would beam when he talked about the soon-coming revival and spiritual awakening.

Harvest Prayer Ministries, the Church Prayer Leaders Network, *Prayer Connect*, and PrayerShop Publishing will go on without Dave. But he will be sorely missed, and we will remember him fondly for many years to come.

— Jonathan Graf



Previously in



If God answered all our prayers exactly as we desired, it could be disastrous! But in His sovereignty, He answers for our best. Even “unanswered” prayer is to our benefit. “God’s Better Way” and other back issues are available at *prayershop.org*.


Editor's Note

While I hesitate to refer to anyone as a “prayer expert,” Dave Butts probably comes closest to fitting that description. I count Dave as a valued mentor and treasured friend.

I will especially miss him as a member of the *Prayer Connect* editorial team. As we bantered around our ideas about content, Dave would listen carefully and then insert a clarifying comment at just the right moment. And no matter our agreed-upon topic, Dave had already either written or spoken about it. His experience was just that vast.

Our grief in going forward without Dave is overtaken only by the joy of imagining his first moment with Jesus! And now he knows the answers to all his prayers.

— Carol Madison



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Love 2 Pray is a ministry of the *Church Prayer Leaders Network* and *Prayer Connect* magazine.

More Americans Support Prayer than Kneeling

A majority of Americans support prayer during public high school sporting events, compared with roughly a third who approve of professional athletes kneeling during the national anthem, according to a new survey.

The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll found more than six in ten think a coach leading a team in prayer, a player leading a team in prayer, or a coach praying on the field without asking the team to join in should all be allowed at public high school sporting events.

The findings come months after the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling to allow a public high school football coach in Washington state to pray on the field after he was suspended for refusing to halt the practice.



A majority of those surveyed did not believe the ruling would result in other public-school officials praying with students during school hours, while just under a third (30 percent) believe that religion holds too much influence on school curriculum.

It turns out, when it comes to sports,

nearly one in five Americans pray about the outcomes of high school, college, or professional games. A third of parents of a school-aged child, meanwhile, pray about the outcome of their child's sporting events.

But while the survey found few adults disapprove of professional athletes praying on the field or expressing their faith publicly, respondents held less favorable opinions toward professional sports players kneeling during the national anthem, with 30 percent approving of that form of protest and 37 percent disapproving.

When it comes to playing the national anthem and "God Bless America" at pro sporting events, more people are in favor of both.

IAN M. GIATTI, taken from *The Christian Post* (christianpost.com).

Father of Little Leaguer Grateful for Prayers

After falling twice—once from a bunk bed and a second time in the hospital—Easton Oliver's CAT scan results have come back "normal." Oliver, 12, traveled to Williamsport, PA, to play in the Little League World Series. Soon after arriving from Utah, he fell out of his bunk and sustained a skull fracture.

In an interview with the Associated Press, Oliver's dad Jace says, "I'm just grateful that he's still alive, because I was pretty much told he had a zero percent chance to live."

"There is a chance of a full recovery," he adds. "It's just a matter of how

long and the therapy that he's going to receive. We're just asking for prayers. . . modern-day miracles can still happen."

The family's Instagram account states how Oliver's mom Nancy has relied on her faith in Jesus to sustain her during Easton's remarkable progress.

"Our message the whole time is to remind people that we have a loving, heavenly Father and a Savior who wants us to be happy," Jace says. "If we just go



to [Him] in prayer, anything is possible, and we're seeing that with Easton."

TRE GOINS-PHILLIPS, taken from *Faithwire* (faithwire.com).

Pro-Life Activists Settle Over Arrest for Praying

Pro-life activists have reached a settlement with a North Carolina city in which officials agreed to allow them to demonstrate peacefully on public sidewalks, including during public health emergencies.

Love Life, also known as Global Impact Ministries, and other pro-life activists sued the city of Greensboro and Guilford County, NC, after they were arrested in March 2020 while praying outside A Woman’s Choice, an abortion clinic in Greensboro. Their arrest occurred at a time when state and local governments had implemented lockdown orders during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Alliance Defending Freedom, a law firm representing the pro-life activists, filed a lawsuit against Greensboro and Guilford County in April 2020 in response

to the arrests, arguing that the punishment of the pro-life activists was unconstitutional.

ADF Senior Counsel Denise Harle, director of the ADF Center for Life, says that she believes “this case was never about public health and safety.” She concludes that instead, “It was about the government silencing people because it didn’t like what they had to say.”

“That said, we commend the city for finally agreeing to respect the free speech rights of Love Life members and acknowledge their freedom to pray and speak in the public square,” she adds.

Although the plaintiffs argue that they had taken certain public health



precautions to comply with public health orders issued by the city and county, such as limiting their gathering to ten people and standing six feet apart, the activists were nevertheless arrested and threat-

ened with fines of up to \$1,000 for their actions outside the clinic.

County officials reached a settlement with the pro-life activists, paying \$15,000 in attorneys’ fees and agreeing to respect the First Amendment rights of the activists in the future.

MICHAEL GRYBOSKI, taken from The Christian Post (christianpost.com).

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Texas Praying Judge Wins Major Victory

After a lengthy legal battle, a Texas judge can continue opening his courtroom proceedings with prayer, according to a split ruling from a New Orleans-based appeals court.

The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) targeted Montgomery County Justice of the Peace Wayne Mack in 2019 over the judge’s custom of starting each court day with a few minutes of prayer delivered by faith leaders from the community.

The 5th Circuit Court of Appeals voted 2-1 in favor of Mack, rejecting the FFRF’s claim that invocations could be viewed as prejudicial. The judges ruled Mack can continue allowing chaplains and ministers to pray at the start of legal proceedings as long as he extends the invitation to leaders from different faith backgrounds and does not impose consequences on anyone who declines to participate.

The ruling in favor of Mack comes years after the U.S. Supreme Court decided 5-4 in May 2014 that prayers before government meetings are constitutional.

TRE GOINS-PHILLIPS, taken from Faithwire (faithwire.com).

Prayer Calendar

Weekend of Prayer to End Slavery and Trafficking
January 7–8, 2023
facebook.com/weekendofprayer

Collegiate Day of Prayer
February 23, 2023
collegiatedayofprayer.org

30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World
March 22–April 21, 2023
30daysprayer.com

The Power of Prayer Movements

Sustained and Strategic Intercession

The first time I remember joining a prayer movement was in the 1990s when Luis Bush and the A.D. 2000 and Beyond Movement announced the 10/40 Window prayer initiative. They had identified the least-evangelized portion of the world (the rectangular area of North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, approximately between 10 degrees north and 40 degrees north latitude), dominated by Islam, Hindu, and Buddhist religions.

I was just one of an estimated 20 million Christians who focused their prayers on this region of the world, asking God for breakthrough. But I was part of a movement!

Now, more than 30 years later, we hear stories of explosive advancements of the gospel in this previously dark and resistant part of the world. In fact, some of the fastest-growing church movements are in 10/40 Window countries, including Iran, Afghanistan, and China. Miracles, visions, and even Jesus appearing to people are common in this region.

One of my favorite stories of God's miraculous breakthrough comes from a missionary in a Middle Eastern country. This church planter describes meeting a man who claimed that every night for a month, an unusual man in dazzling white clothing knocked on his door. He

said he could not look at this man's face because it was so brilliant and shiny. The man was instructed to write down everything this visitor spoke to him. When the missionary asked to see this man's transcribed notebook, he was astonished to read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This supernatural figure had dictated the entire Gospel of John to this man.¹

Admittedly, I did not see that coming when I started praying 30 years ago!

That's how sustained and strategic prayer movements work. It may take a long time, but God-inspired prayer always results in breakthroughs.

In This Issue

God has raised up so many prayer movements over recent decades that we cannot possibly list them all. For this issue, we invited key prayer leaders to write about their experiences with some of these prayer initiatives that are witnessing breakthroughs and increased spiritual fruit.

Jamie Morgan draws on her experience as a pastor leading her congregation to pray in unique and timely ways. She has conducted many prayer journeys in the U.S. and writes about how understanding God's heart should always result in strategic prayer.

After 15 years of faithful intercession at the Supreme Court regarding abortion, Matt Lockett was a firsthand witness to the astonishing ruling by the Court that overturned *Roe v. Wade*. He describes several lessons he's learned in sustaining such a prayer movement for so many years.

Jason Hubbard has a worldwide perspective of prayer movements through his role as director of the International Prayer Council. He documents millions of hours of intercession that have opened doors to massive missions movements in difficult-to-reach areas of the world.

I wish I had been more spiritually astute and engaged at the beginning of the prayer movement to strike down abortion. I was slow to jump on board with that prayer burden, but I'm grateful to be part of this powerful initiative for the past several years.

Many faithful intercessors have gone before us. But we can all join them now for an end-times push to see righteousness, justice, revival, and spiritual awakening fill the earth! **PC**

¹ <https://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/jesus-visited-him-every-night-middle-eastern-missionary-shares-amazing-story-of-god-on-the-move>

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



His Call to Prayer

God's Heart Revealed

By Dr. Jamie Morgan

While in

Israel on my 50th birthday, my tour group visited many different Old and New Testament sites, including the Garden of Gethsemane. As sightseers often do, our cameras were ready to snap pictures of the place where Jesus prayed while facing His crucifixion. It's also the place where the disciples fell asleep after He asked them to pray.

In the middle of this photo opportunity, God began revealing His heart to me.

I could feel my heart beating loudly. An intense grief washed over me. To say that my spirit felt sick and in tumult would be an understatement. I looked around the group to see if anyone else was responding in like manner; they weren't.

God had my attention.

"Lord, why am I having this reaction?" I asked.

I knew God was pulling back the curtain of His heart but didn't know why. He didn't hesitate to answer.

"Just as the disciples fell asleep when Jesus asked them to pray, my

Church has also fallen asleep to the place of prayer. I am raising you up, along with leaders around the world, to call the Church to pray for revival."

I felt stunned, honored, and overwhelmed at the same time. He had revealed His heart. God wants to revive His Church and is calling His people to a movement of prayer that will serve as the precursor to that revival.

God Initiates and Calls

When God wants to accomplish a particular purpose on earth, He establishes a pattern:

1. God deposits His heart into the heart of a leader.
2. The leader begins to intercede and invites others to join.
3. The Holy Spirit draws intercessors to unite with the leader.
4. A prayer movement is birthed.

You can rest assured, when God moves upon the earth, someone has answered the call of intercession.

Shortly after returning home from the trip, I began my new prayer

It's an honor to live with the weight of God's heart pressing down. on mine.

assignment: the *United States Prays* was birthed. Since then, I have conducted prayer journeys to many former revival sights across our country, our state, and our nation's capital, as well as our city.

We have also cried out for revival at the Mason-Dixon line, the U.S. southern border, abortion clinics, and even in a movie theater parking lot after viewing the powerful prolife movie *Unplanned*.

And we have conducted rhythms of 24-hour prayer during elections and other crucial events in our nation, with thousands of Christians around the country joining.

It all began eight years ago in the Garden of Gethsemane, when God revealed the desire of His heart: revival.

It's an honor to live with the weight of God's heart pressing down on mine. When God gives us even a small glimpse of His heart, we turn that into intercession. This will cause our prayers to go from "Bless me and mine" to "I cry out for the salvation of nations"—or whatever prayer assignment God has given you.

Although darkness covers the earth, if we make God's heart our foremost concern and partner with other Christians in prayer, God will send breakthrough, relief, and Kingdom advancement. What a day to be alive! The Holy Spirit is imprinting prayer movements upon the hearts of believers all around the world, with the call to link arms.

What do you sense He is speaking to you?

Lightning Rods of Change

God is breathing upon many different prayer movements in this season of the Church. When today's Christians unite with one of these movements of prayer, they become lightning rods of change in the hands of Almighty God. There is an urgency of the hour. And much is on God's heart *right now*.

Prayer for our children is one of the movements God is highlighting. The attempted theft of our children's salvation, identity, and safety grieves the heart of God. He is calling us to partner with Him in intercession to reverse this premeditated attack from the enemy.

School board meetings featured on the nightly news stand as mirrors exposing what's transpiring in the classroom. Ungodly curriculum that reflects an anti-Christ agenda, the celebration of the sin of homosexuality, and the tragic but prevalent school shootings in our nation have caused parents, teachers, and concerned Christians alike to arise and cry out to God on behalf of our children.

After the tragedy in Uvalde, TX, in May 2022, labeled as the deadliest school shooting in the history of our nation, God spoke to Donna Martin to

launch the prayer movement "Covered: The Largest Online Back-to-School Prayer Gathering."¹

She says, "It's easy to post 'thoughts and prayers' on social media after a tragedy. But God has mandated me to call every mother in our nation to contend in prayer for their children's protection, identity, and encounter with the God who loves them."

Prayer movements for the lost are also on God's heart. You've never locked eyes with someone Jesus doesn't deeply love and His mercy can't reach. If we could hear God's heart beating, it would sound like this: "*SOULS, SOULS, SOULS!*" Yet, one-third of the world is denied access to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

An example of a prayer movement God has raised up to focus on intercession for the Great Commission is "A Third of Us." From this movement, the "International Day for the Unreached" was birthed to bring prayer awareness to this critical issue (athirdofus.com).

Through prayer movements like this one, we can intercede together to increase the population of heaven and decrease the population of hell—always primary on God's heart.

Movements on God's Heart

Another key prayer area God is emphasizing in this season is intercession for pastors. Sadly, statistics reveal that 42 percent of pastors are currently considering permanently leaving the ministry.² Many pastors are only hanging by a thread; it wouldn't take much for them to walk away.

The reasons are many and varied, but include discouragement, pandemic fatigue, the upheaval in our nation that has brought division to the Church, loneliness and isolation—and the list goes on and on.

Revived churches are led by revived pastors. The old adage, "As the pulpit goes, so goes the pew," still rings true

today. Prayer for pastors is often one of the most overlooked, but desperately needed, components of revival.

The assignment to pray for pastors is one that JoAnn Kates of “Pastors Need Prayer—The Movement” takes seriously.³ Through online and in-person gatherings, she prays for pastors across the nation, imparts a passion to God’s people to pray for their pastors, and teaches the body of Christ how to biblically cover their pastors in prayer.

And yet another area of deep concern to God in this hour is government—city, county, state, and national. When righteous men and women are placed in governmental offices, godly laws will be established and godly justice will prevail. In addition, the leaders presently in office need to be immersed in prayer, no matter their political affiliation.

One of the many prayer movements that focuses on prayer for our government is, “Move the Earth,” led by Glennys Hyland.⁴ Through prayer calls, onsite prayer, and in-person gatherings, she helps fulfill 1 Timothy 2:2, “Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity” (NLT).

In addition to the key areas of prayer already mentioned, other prayer movements that I believe portray God’s heart in this season focus on intercession for the family, business, arts and entertainment, higher education, worship, and biblical social justice. Still more concentrate on prayer for the godly transformation of cities, specific people groups (Hindus, Muslims, etc.), and the salvation of entire nations.

Releasing God’s Power

Prayer movements are weapons in God’s arsenal against the enemy. Satan hates them because they’re the vehicle God uses to release His power on the earth.

When our prayers go up, God’s power comes down! However, if we’re willing to live without seeing God’s greater purposes accomplished on earth, we will. God forbid that is said of us!

The Church doesn’t need new styles or methods, but people who unite in prayer to see God move. Prayer movements are the powerhouse of the Church. Each of our prayer assignments, though different, are equally needed because each carry a piece of God’s heart. Together, every movement of prayer reflects the heart of the Father.

Which prayer movement is God laying on your heart to join? Or perhaps He is calling you to launch one, like He did me. Ask God to unveil your prayer assignment and strategically connect you with other intercessors to achieve His plans. Stay true to what He shows you, letting nothing discourage or distract, regardless of your prayer mission field.

God’s heart is beating loud and clear. Can you hear it? Will you answer His clarion call to align with a prayer movement to see God move in power and might on the earth? **PC**

¹Covered: The Largest Online Back-to-School Prayer Gathering, prayer leader: Donna Martin, mygirltruth@gmail.com.

²Barna Group, “Pastors Share Top Reasons They’ve Considered Quitting Ministry in the Past Year,” <https://www.barna.com/research/pastors-quitting-ministry/>.

³Pastors Need Prayer—The Movement, prayer leader: JoAnn Kates, joannkates@hotmail.com.

⁴Move the Earth, prayer leader: Glennys Hyland, glennishyland@movetheearth.org.



JAMIE MORGAN is an ordained minister, revivalist, and founder of Trailblazer Mentoring Network, a mentoring movement for women in ministry (jamiemorgan.com). Her book *Thirsty: A 31-Day Personal Journey to Revival* is available at prayershop.org or wherever you buy Christian books.

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Lessons of Hopeful and Strategic Prayer

A Sustained and Contending Movement for Life

By Matt Lockett

I was standing in front of the U.S. Supreme Court on June 24, 2022. At precisely 10:10 a.m., the Court released its opinion in the case of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. Screaming and cursing from an angry crowd filled the air in the passing minute as a stark reality became known.

Roe v. Wade was overturned.

I wasn't just passing by right at the moment when the Court released the opinion. On the contrary, I had been standing in prayer in front of the U.S. Supreme Court since 2005, when God called me to leave my career

in the marketplace to become a full-time missionary on Capitol Hill.

My journey to that moment began with a dream from God that I received in 2004. That dream was about day and night prayer and the end of abortion. Though neither of those things was important to me at the time, God made it known that they were very important to Him. He initiated something in me that pointed to that

moment. After almost 18 years of contending prayer, a big part of my dream dramatically came to pass.

Rees Howells, the notable man of prayer used powerfully by God during WW2, wisely observed:

A prayer warrior can pray for a thing to be done without necessarily being willing for the answer to come through himself; and he is not even bound to continue in the prayer until it is answered. But an intercessor is responsible to gain his objective, and he can never be free till he has gained it.¹

From the beginning, God made it clear to my team and me that success in this epic battle to shift the nation from death to life would require more than prayer—we would have to become intercessors.

A Sustained Presence

I direct the Justice House of Prayer

It has been a high honor to draw close to God in this process while pursuing the righting of the grievous wrong of abortion.

DC (*jhopdc.com*), which has a special emphasis on prayer and intercession for governmental matters and revival in America. I also lead a nationwide pro-life prayer mobilization called Bound4LIFE (*bound4life.com*), widely recognized by the red tape worn over the mouth with “LIFE” handwritten on it.

“It’s not a protest. It’s a prayer meeting,” has been our response since God showed us the Life Tape through a dream and directed us to take a silent, prayerful stand in front of the U.S. Supreme Court. That “Silent Siege” began on October 4, 2004, and lasted for 17 years, eight months, and 21 days. That’s 6,473 days, but who’s counting?

In that time, we had the privilege to preside in prayer over ten nominations and eight confirmations to the U.S. Supreme Court—almost a complete turnover of the nine seats. It has been a high honor to draw close to God in this process while pursuing the righting of the grievous wrong of abortion.

I have attempted to distill years of prayer to end the injustice of abortion into some essential lessons we have learned through experience. Principles emerge that I believe are vital to establishing sustained, focused prayer. Here are a few:

Feel Deeply and Don’t Become Callous

If you want to make a difference, you must allow yourself to feel things deeply. Repeating buzz words or using hashtags won’t suffice. Unfortunately, when you’re dealing closely with dark, violent, oppressive, or unjust things, you risk being affected by them in unexpected ways.

The natural tendency is to put in place barriers and safeguards to protect yourself. That urge will sometimes disguise itself as “self-care.” Friends will

encourage you not to take things too far, which can sound like wisdom.

The truth is that we live in a pain-averse culture. We go to great lengths to ensure that we don’t feel bad things, and that mindset spills over into our prayer life if we let it. Think of it as spiritual anesthesia that we secretly hope will allow us to undergo a procedure without feeling the impact.

Jesus invited Peter, James, and John to go a little further with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane when He was experiencing deep sorrow. The point was that Jesus wanted them there to witness and participate in it, but they missed that opportunity.

It should come as no surprise that God would allow us to experience elements of disappointment, frustration, and discouragement as we pray because it serves a purpose. To go through those experiences makes us more effective intercessors by allowing us to identify with the subject of our prayers. It shrinks the gap between you and them.

The Greek word for *intercession* is partly defined as “a falling in with” or “a coming together.” Jesus powerfully modeled this act of identification:

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15, esv).

Identification is more of an art than a science; it can take many forms. For us, God gave us the dream of the Life Tape. We felt so foolish when we first stepped out in obedience to “do the dream,” but God made it clear that it was His wisdom.

In our forced silence, we understood that God had us identify with the silence of the babies in the womb, who have no voice to defend themselves. Bearing the public reproach of that silence for all these years crafted us into more effective intercessors.

When dealing with matters of injustice, one of the biggest challenges is not to become callous and jaded over time. When there is a long delay for justice, it will take a toll on you emotionally, spiritually, and sometimes physically.

The test is to keep your heart tender for the long haul—toward God and people, even your enemies. The

only way to do that is through prayer.

The more callous you become, the less ability you have to feel things. Allowing callous thoughts and attitudes to creep in is a one-way ticket to cynicism, which is the opposite of faith.

I am so thankful that God has given us grace over many years to maintain softness in our hearts even though we were dealing with the ultra-violence of abortion. It resulted from daily and continually returning to the Lord in prayer to encounter His heart on the matter. Our hearts remained tender because He gave us the tenderness of His heart.

Learn How to Lose

The Church needs to learn how to lose. Does that statement offend you? We indeed win in the end, but the question remains how we get there. I'm convinced that surviving disappointment and discouragement is one of our most significant obstacles.

Please read Daniel 7 carefully:

“As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them, until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom” (Daniel 7:21–22, *ESV*).

Here is a sweet and precious promise from Scripture: We lose before we win.

Jesus expounded on the time Daniel described, saying, “Many will fall away,” and, “The love of most will grow cold” (Matt. 24:10–12). That thought should trouble us. I believe it points, in part, to how we respond when we lose. We need to have the ability to suffer loss without turning against God in blame.

Learning how to lose invites into your prayer life an important principle presented by Jesus:

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if

it dies, it bears much fruit” (John 12:24, *ESV*).

There must be death before resurrection, and we are not spared that reality in our intercession. The agony of defeat is an essential part of the life of an intercessor.

Never was this more clear to me than when, after a long string of losses, a pivotal pro-life case came before the Supreme Court in 2016. We were faith-filled and hopeful. Much prayer and fasting went into that court case, and we felt at the time that an overdue win was coming.

We were distraught when it did not go our way in June that year. *USA Today* featured a photo of me in Life Tape on their front page, depicting my team and me as the national poster children of losers in America. Ouch!

Another newspaper made it even more explicit on their front page with the headline: “Pro-choice Victory, Pro-life Agony.” Under the word agony was a close-up picture of Life Tape.

Agony is a necessary part of being an intercessor.

What Did God Say?

Over and over, we must go back to what God has said. That always revolves around the infallible truth of Scripture but also hinges on specific words and promises God gives in a particular situation. God showed me the end of abortion through a dream in 2004 and how it would come about through day and night prayer. That word—that promise—has been a light to me in many dark times.

Sometimes those periods were long stretches when nothing seemed to happen with the abortion topic. At other times, much was happening, but we repeatedly felt crushing defeat. When everything seemed to fail, I could go back to the Lord in prayer, declaring, “But You said!”

His loving and encouraging response would inevitably come, “You’re

right. I did.”

My faith and will became fixed upon an unrealized outcome because, somehow, I had already seen it as a reality. Present circumstances and opposing forces pale compared to an intercessor who has laid hold of God’s will in a matter.

It Is Finished

The victory over *Roe v. Wade* belongs to no one except Jesus Christ. It is because of His victory over death that any would-be intercessor can stand.

Every time we prayed with Life Tape in front of the Supreme Court, we applied the blood of Christ by receiving communion. In this moment of victory over abortion, we can say that the blood has accomplished its work.

“It is finished” is not a proud statement about the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* so much as it’s a joyful acknowledgment of the finished work of the cross.

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem . . . and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel (Heb. 12:22–24, *ESV*).

I’m thankful that we have a blood that speaks a better word than the blood of 63 million aborted babies. The work continues in earnest in states all around the nation. God is looking for intercessors to take their stands. Intercession is the supreme vocation.

Will you answer the call? 

¹Norman Grubb, *Rees Howells, Intercessor* (Fort Washington, PA: CLC Publications, 2016), p. 121-122



MATT LOCKETT is executive director of Justice House of Prayer DC and leads Bound4LIFE, a prayer movement targeting the end of abortion and the sending of revival to reform government and culture. He is coauthor of *The Dream King* and a member of America’s National Prayer Committee.



The Convergence of Prayer and Missions Movements

Because Jesus is Worthy!

By Dr. Jason Hubbard

What will

it take to see the Great Commission fulfilled in our generation?

In 2033, we will mark the 2,000th anniversary of the Great Commission and the birthday of the Church. The good news is that we are seeing gospel movements exploding across the earth!

We are also seeing the convergence of the prayer movements and missions movements. Since COVID began, we have seen millions of believers committed in united prayer, from Indonesia to South Africa, from India to Brazil, from North Africa to the Middle East—all asking the Father to give His Son the nations as His inheritance (Ps. 2:8)!

One of the largest house church networks reported that during this same season they have grown from two million house churches to close to three million, adding 20 million new Jesus followers over the last few years!

However, the remaining task of the fulfillment of the Great Commission is massive. Even after 2,000 years

of Church history, today 80 percent of Muslims do not know a single Christian, and 1,708 people groups are yet to have a Bible in their own language. If we continue to do what we have been doing, 500 million Chinese may never have a chance to hear the good news of Jesus.

According to the Joshua Project, of the 100 largest remaining unreached people groups (less than one percent Christian), 1.8 billion people are yet to be reached with the gospel, with the vast majority in India/South Asia.

Plead Desperately

Jesus shared this tension with His disciples in Matthew 9:36–38 (ESV, emphasis added):

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is *plentiful*, but the *laborers are few*; therefore *pray earnestly* to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

“The degree to which prayer is mobilized is the degree to which the world will be evangelized.”

The harvest is ripe, but the laborers are few. Jesus gives us the solution to this problem—*pray earnestly!* The command in the Great Commission to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:18) is preceded 19 chapters earlier with the command “pray therefore.” As Dick Eastman says, “The degree to which prayer is mobilized is the degree to which the world will be evangelized.”

Jesus didn’t use the common word for prayer. He used the Greek word *deomai*,

a much stronger word meaning to “plead desperately.” Also, Jesus didn’t simply tell His disciples to pray for laborers to be “sent” out to the harvest fields. Jesus used a much stronger word for sent—*ekballo*, meaning to “drive out or hurl forth.” This same Greek word *ekballo* is used when Jesus casts out demons!

In both Matthew 9:38 and Luke 10:2, Jesus commands us to *deomai* (plead desperately) to the Lord of the Harvest to *ekballo* laborers (thrust them forcefully) into His harvest!

Massive Wave of Prayer

One of the recent stories of nationwide desperate prayer is found in Indonesia. After experiencing great persecution in the 1990s and the tragic devastation of the tsunami in 2004 (250,000 lives lost), the Church in Indonesia came together in united, desperate prayer.

In 2012, 9,500 leaders from 86 nations gathered in Jakarta for the World Prayer Assembly. These prayer and missions leaders came together with the Indonesians and filled up the city soccer stadium with 120,000 people—including 20,000 children ages 4–14, and 20,000 young adults, 18–30 years old. This was combined with 385 other stadiums filled with Indonesians praying together for a fresh wave of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord to cover the earth as the waters cover the seas (Hab. 2:14).

Today, Indonesia has 567 citywide prayer networks united across denominations and generations. Recently they celebrated the ten-year anniversary by coming together in a virtual World Prayer Assembly (worldprayerassembly.org). Thousands of believers gathered in watch parties across Indonesia, with others joining from 101 nations.

Under this canopy of united, strategic, and sustainable prayer, the Church in Indonesia—the largest Muslim nation in the world—has been growing at an explosive rate.

Millions of Hours of Prayer

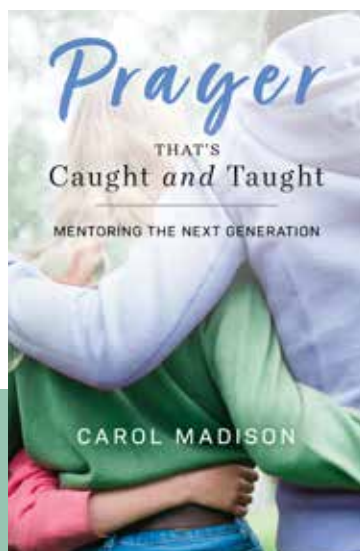
These last three years we have witnessed a powerful move of the Spirit amongst the children and youth in West Africa. This new initiative, called Last Quarter Evangelism, has been mobilizing millions of children ages 4–14 to pray and share their faith.

Candy Marballi describes “a student-designed, student-led outreach running from October 1 through December 31 in partnership with All Africa Baptist Fellowship (AABF), All Africa Baptist

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Youth Fellowship (AABYF), and The Prayer Covenant.” She says, “We rejoice over the one million conversions to Jesus through the witness and testimony of these young people in the first two years of this massive outreach initiative.”¹

During Ramadan in 2022, intercessors logged 43,000 hours of committed prayer (people committing to 15 minutes each day) with specific Bible-based prayer points on behalf of the unreached Muslim cities throughout the Middle East. We culminated this time by praying for 24 of the most unreached cities on the Muslim night of power called One Miracle Night.

The RUN family joined together with the Jesus Film global leadership team and partners and the International Prayer Council to host the global family 24/7 virtual prayer room. Together we saw *50 million hours of prayer offered*, praying for Christ to be exalted and

gospel movements to emerge throughout the Middle East!

In one of these villages, a group of Jesus followers was searching for a people hidden up in the mountains. They wanted to give them a Bible translated in the people’s heart language. The believers prayed for an opportunity to share the good news of Jesus but couldn’t find the hidden group.

One day they discovered that this Bible was missing when they woke up in the morning and then would reappear when they came home from work each day. After several nights of watching this pattern, they decided to stay up one night and see what was happening to the Bible. During the night a dog came, picked up the Bible, and took off running.

They thought to themselves, *Let’s follow the dog*—and sure enough, this dog led them to the very people they were searching for. They had a chance to share

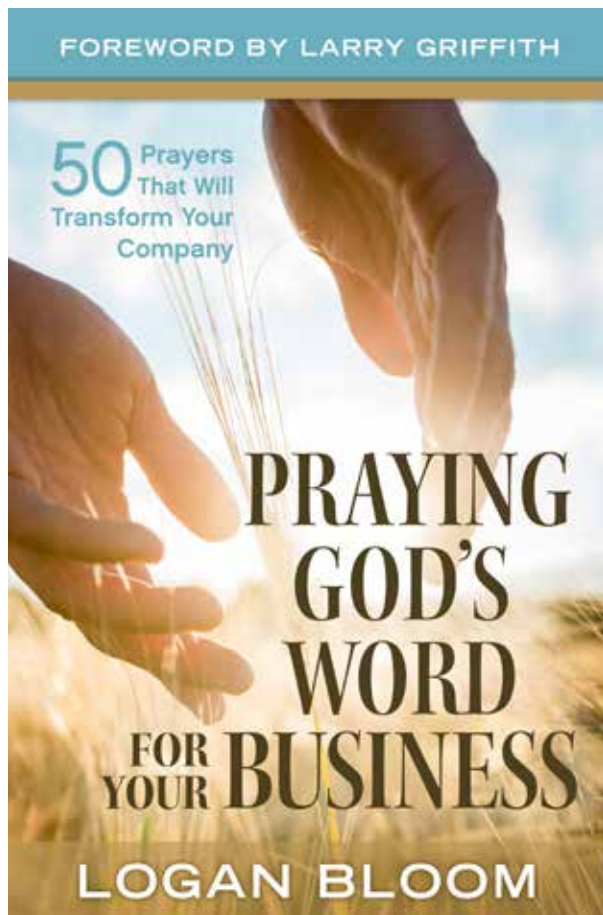
Jesus with them, and the village came to Christ!

Listen, if God can use a dog to accomplish His work, He can use any of us. As Hudson Taylor said, “When we work, we work, but when we pray, God works.”

Raising Up 100 Million Intercessors

One of the exciting collaborative prayer and evangelism efforts emerging over the last several years is called the Go Movement—calling every believer to be a witness, with a vision to raise up 100 million intercessors for a billion-soul harvest. Everyone can reach someone. And together we can reach the world for Christ.

In 2021, thousands of churches were mobilized in prayer and evangelism, resulting in millions of people coming to faith in Africa in May 2022. If these numbers are true, they are comparable to



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any of the great revivals/spiritual awakenings throughout church history!

God has invited us into a “decade of harvest,” where the human cooperation in prayer and the empowered proclamation of the gospel has begun to intersect with the Divine Sovereignty of God—a God-breathed Christ awakening has begun to emerge in the nations of the earth!

In 2022, Global Voice of Prayer (formerly Global Day of Prayer) partnered together with several other global prayer movements around the world to produce a powerful and inspiring one-hour documentary called *Come to the Table*, documenting the prayer and missions movements over the last few decades.²

Restoring Historic Prayer Movement

I believe today we are seeing the restoration of the Moravian prayer and missions movement of the 1700s. Last year marked the 300th anniversary of the founding of the Moravian community in Herrnhut, Germany.

Back in 1722, a group of 300 Bohemian Moravians, fleeing persecution, arrived in East Germany and were blessed by a wealthy aristocrat named Count Zinzendorf, who allowed them to build a small community on his estate. Zinzendorf named this community Herrnhut, which means “the watch of the Lord.”

This is truly one of the greatest stories of the impact of night and day prayer—100 years of prayer—that led to the sending of missionaries to the ends of the earth. On August 13, 1727, the Moravians experienced a powerful visitation of the Holy Spirit during a communion service. It was a baptism of love where God’s love was shed abroad in their hearts and poured out in love for one another.

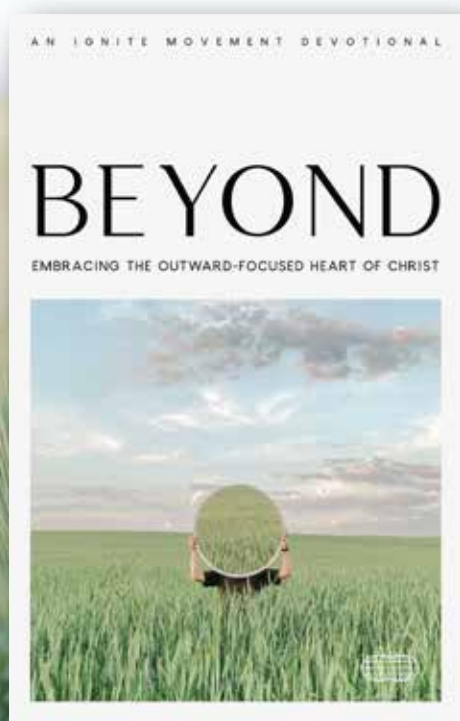
Following this, the Holy Spirit compelled them to build a canopy of united, strategic, and sustainable prayer that continued for 100 years. As they prayed night and day, including men, women, and children, God began to mark missionaries and send them to the nations of the earth. Three hundred-plus missionaries responded and helped to establish more than 5,000 missionary settlements around the world.

It was the worth of Jesus that compelled them to pray night and day and go on gospel mission. Their mandate was to “win for the Lamb who was slain, the due reward for His sufferings.” They continuously cried out, “Our Lamb has conquered, let us follow Him.”

Acceleration for the Unreached

Inspired by the story of the Moravians, we launched a new prayer initiative called Pray 110 (110cities.com). During the

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summer of 2021, we received insight and research from several of the largest and most effective house church movements around the world. They identified 110 cities that are “ripe for the harvest.”

Ninety-seven percent of the remaining unreached people groups on the earth live in these 110 cities. Believers are ready to launch movements with house church leaders, teams, and families in these cities between 2022–2025.

This is just the beginning, but these leaders sense it is time for massive multiplication and acceleration in these next three years. Our prayer strategy is to:

- prayerwalk each of these cities in the next three years, praying onsite with insight
- raise up 110 million people to pray daily for the peoples living in these 110 unreached mega cities
- establish on-going 24/7 prayer in each of these cities, building a canopy of night and day prayer, one prayer meeting at a time.

I invite you to sign up (110cities.com) and join us in praying for these cities. We will track the measurable results of the number of disciples made, Bibles translated, and churches planted in the next three years.

Prayer Is the Key


We have a phrase in our house of prayer: “Little keys open big doors.”

Let’s take this little key called prayer, put it in God’s hand, and believe God will open a big door called revival and awakening in the nations of the earth!

God releases His power in response to the prayers of His people. I believe He is so much better than we think He is and doing more than we think He is doing in response to our prayers.

Jesus must have the supremacy, the predominance, preeminence, central focus, exaltation, visibility, and *raison d’être*! It all belongs to Him! Because of His sacrifice on the cross, we declare

with the 24 elders and the four living creatures, “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!” (Rev. 5:12).

May God do immeasurably more than all we ever ask or even imagine—all for His glory, for our joy, and for the salvation of the multitudes in the nations! 

¹Video recap: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUj3mXX6hxw>

²Video recap: <https://www.globalvoiceofprayer.com/about-us/>



JASON HUBBARD is the director of the International Prayer Council (ipcprayer.org) and author of *Moravian Miracle* (moravianmiracle.org). He is also a member of America’s National Prayer Committee.

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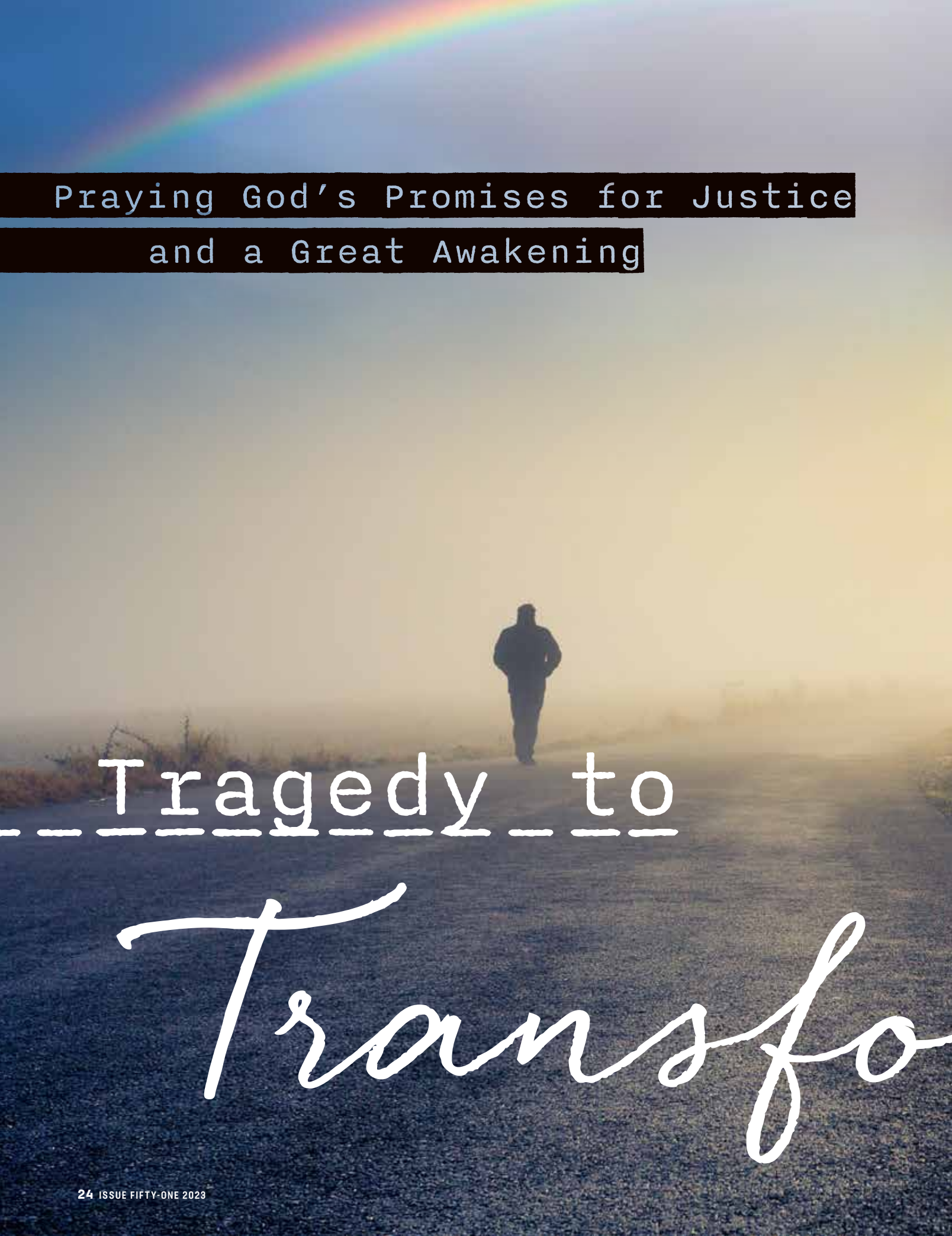
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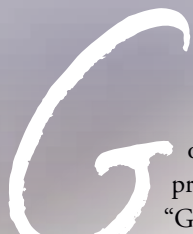
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A person is walking away from the viewer on a paved path that leads towards a bright, hazy horizon. In the upper left corner, a vibrant rainbow is visible against a clear blue sky. The overall atmosphere is one of hope and journey.

Praying God's Promises for Justice
and a Great Awakening

Tragedy to

Transfo



God wants us to be desperate and bold in our prayers—to pray like John Knox who said, “Give me Scotland, or I die.”

I learned to pray this way following a vicious attack by Satan on our family. He had attacked us over several months, but the all-out assault occurred after our beloved youngest son Alex took some marijuana with a boy he was trying to help at school. He had a bad reaction to the drug and became delusional and paranoid. Satan deceived him into committing suicide!

We had served God with all our hearts for 24 years, and now this.

My wife Jeannie nearly died of a broken heart. Suicide brings great grief, but it can also cause terrible “blame and shame.” Jeannie hated herself, me, and God. She lost her faith for a season and looked for a way to leave me.

We were totally broken. I used to get up in the middle of the night and cry from the bottom of my heart, asking God to help me. And He did—with the tragedy of my son’s death and other tragedies to come in our lives.

But more about that later.

Out of the Darkness

The Psalmist said, “It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees” (Ps. 119:71).

I can’t yet say that it was good that I suffered, but I do know it was in my deepest pain that I received epiphanies from God and a way to pray to drive out the darkness over the land.

Many Scriptures teach that God wants His people to earnestly pray for justice against our adversary, Satan. We long to see him and his schemes crushed, turning every evil act around for God’s glory and the extension of His Kingdom.

The key passage in the New Testament for this type of prayer is Luke 18:1–8:

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that *they should always pray and not give up*. He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘*Grant me justice against my adversary.*’

“For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she

By Gerard Long

formation

The Lord wants us to give Him no rest until He establishes His Kingdom

on earth.

gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!"

And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. *And will not God bring justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly.* However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" (emphasis added).

What are the key things we can learn from this passage?

1. This is not a casual, one-off prayer. No, this is a prayer that you continue day and night until you receive your answer.
2. The answer for the prayer is "justice against my adversary [Satan]."
3. Jesus assures us that we, as "His chosen ones," will have these prayers answered—and quickly.
4. You need faith to pray this way.
5. God expects His disciples to pray this way.

There are several other Scriptures that emphasize this type of prayer, including:

- "No one calls for justice; no one pleads a case with integrity" (Isa. 59:4).
- "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. 11:12, NKJV).
- "I have posted watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. *You who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest* till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth" (Isa. 62:6–7, emphasis added).

The Lord wants us to give Him no rest until He establishes His Kingdom

on earth. We're called to cry out to Him to establish His Kingdom.

Justice Against Evil

Soon after Alex passed, the Lord quickened me to Romans 16:20: "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you."

I realized that everyone God used in the Bible, and through history, had great suffering. And, of course, at the center of our faith is the most terrible suffering—the perfect Son of God tortured to death in front of His mother.

I noticed how God always wants to turn the evil that has happened to us into something good for His glory and His eternal plan and purpose. Joseph understood God's providence, and he said to his brothers, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (Gen. 50:20).

What happened to Alex was evil, and I stood on Jesus' promise in Luke 18:7–8 and cried out to God to give me justice against Satan: "Oh God, turn the pain and suffering of Alex's suicide into something for Your glory and the extension of Your Kingdom. Use it to do serious damage to Satan's kingdom on earth. Amen."

Shortly after Alex went home to heaven, my heart—so broken—was humbled to be appointed the national director of Alpha USA. In the eight years I served with Alpha, it was a great joy to know that God used that wonderful course to share the gospel of Jesus Christ and save thousands of precious souls for eternity.

God answered my prayer for justice against our adversary, and we triumphed

in every area that Satan had attacked us. God poured out His amazing grace on us, enabling Jeannie's faith to reignite and our love to be restored.

More Tragedy and Transformation

Rebecca, our beautiful daughter, also received God's grace and she gave up what could have been a powerful corporate career by coming to work with me in Alpha USA. As the national director of Alpha Youth, she had a huge impact across America and overseas.

And then the unimaginable happened. On May 8, 2014, in a terrible accident on Lake Michigan, Rebecca went home to heaven!

There are no words to describe the pain, suffering, and brokenness. Jeannie, knowing she couldn't go on, decided to take her life. But God was merciful, and at the last moment Jeannie had an unbelievable encounter with God. She was completely transformed.

The Lord said to Jeannie in her encounter, "Your grief is not your own!" Out of that, He led us to start a non-profit called Awakening to God Ministries.

Based on Isaiah 61:1–4, for the last several years we have been humbled to comfort and give hope to the poor, the brokenhearted, the captives, and the prisoners. We've also provided clean water, mosquito nets, medical aid, and food to the poorest of the poor in India. Last year we reached 57 million people on social media with messages of comfort and hope.

Adversity to a Great Awakening

Ever since I had a powerful encounter

with God in 1980, He has laid it on my heart to pray for another Great Awakening. The Holy Spirit then put a greater burden on me in early 2019 to take this prayer deeper still. In the middle of the night, I wept deeply as I cried out to God for justice against my adversary, for all the pain he had caused us.

I turned the pain into a prayer for a Great Awakening in America and around the world. What had happened to us was not right. God had promised to give us justice—and quickly!

After several weeks the Lord answered me.

“Gerard, your prayer has been heard,” He said, “and it will be answered at the right time.”

Later that year, Satan attacked me again in my health and my finances. I suffered a massive cardiac arrest and flatlined for 30 minutes. God intervened, bringing me back to life with no brain damage!

And then, when we were back in the United Kingdom, we received the call to serve with Prayer at the Heart—to ignite a Great Awakening through a national movement of humble, unified, desperate prayer and action.

I believe all that has happened to Jeannie and me has prepared us for this latest assignment. This is “the big one” and we are expectant that during these dark times, God will once again visit us with a great spiritual awakening over America and around the world.

Our vision is for 63 million souls to be saved and for prayer to be at the heart of every individual, family, church, business, and community. We long for Jesus to have His rightful place, and for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matt. 6:10).

Sixty-three million is the number of precious babies that have been aborted since *Roe v. Wade* was passed. For

anyone involved with abortion, there is mercy, grace, and forgiveness available in Christ. Our hearts and prayers are with them.

However, this evil has happened on our watch and, according to Jesus’ words, He is expecting us to cry out to God for justice against Satan: “Lord, turn every abortion around for the saving of 63 million souls for eternity. Amen.”

That desperation in our prayer—despite any tragedy and pain we face—is the kind of prayer that will change the destiny of a nation. 📖



GERARD LONG is an author, pastor, businessman (30 years with banking giant HSBC), former national director of Alpha USA, and founder and CEO of Prayer at the Heart and founder and CEO of Awakening to God Ministries. You can read more of his story in his book, *Living Hope*.

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.

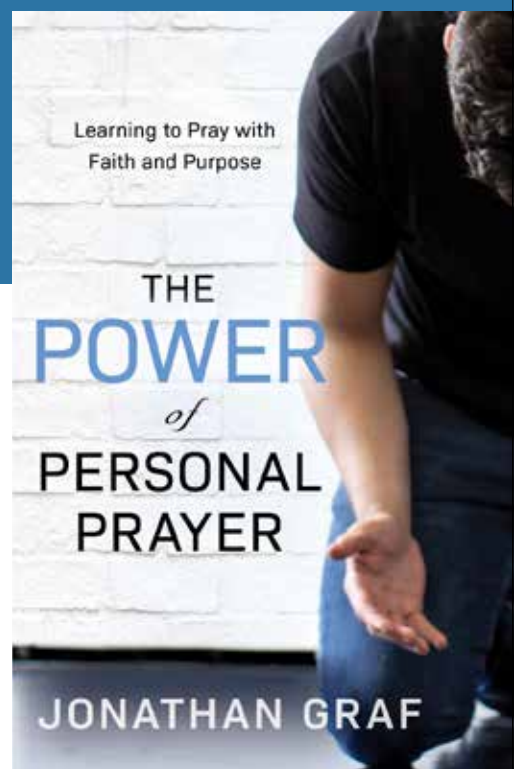
“Whether you are experiencing a new interest in prayer or have devoted yourself to intercession for many years, this book is filled with helpful insights.” —PHIL MIGLIORATTI, THE REIMAGINE NETWORK

“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.”

—DAVID BRYANT, PROCLAIM HOPE! AND CHRISTNOW.COM



The new, revised edition of this practical book is now available wherever you purchase your Christian books.



Strategic Prayer for Work in Sensitive Areas

There are nearly 7,000 languages spoken around the world today, and more than 1,700 languages—including sign languages—that still need Bible translation to begin.

Much of this remaining work of Bible translation is happening in countries where the gospel isn't welcome. Because of this, precautions must be taken about what information can be shared, particularly online. The work is sensitive, and we need to be careful to protect missionaries who are faithfully serving God by bringing His Word to people living in these hard-to-reach areas.

As prayer partners, we can cover these missionaries and their work in prayer. It's a significant part of Bible translation! But how can you pray when you often don't know specific details—the actual language name, or maybe even the country that they live in? The important thing is that God knows exactly who you're praying for, where they live, and what's happening in their community.

Here are a few tips to get you started as you pray for work happening in sensitive areas of the world:

1 Pray for what you do know. If possible, Wycliffe and other Bible translation organizations share details related to translation projects, teams, and communities that are being reached with the gospel. That way you can pray specifically and intentionally for what is happening around the world.

But sometimes names—whether of individuals, languages, or even countries—must be changed to protect the missionaries and their work. Even if an alternative name needs to be used, God knows who you're talking about! Simply

pray for the language, the people, and the work with whatever information you have available.

2 Pray for what you don't know. Ask the Holy Spirit to pray on your behalf and trust that God will accomplish His will as He deems best.

The remaining 1,700 languages that still need translation work to begin are often in some of the most sensitive, hard-to-reach places that translation partner organizations have worked in. As a result, there may be significant obstacles to relaying information about projects starting, progressing, and even finishing. Often this information is so sensitive that it can't be shared in any online platform. But these projects still need to be covered in prayer!

Ask the Holy Spirit to pray on your behalf and trust that God will accomplish His will. Even if you pray in generalities, your prayers still make a difference.

3 Pray for Bible translation in general. Bible translation can't happen without the faithful prayers of God's people. We've seen doors open, obstacles overcome, and lives changed because of people interceding on behalf of the work of Bible translation all around the world.

When you pray for God's name to be made known among the nations, He listens—and He's answering in tangible ways every day! Whether you know specifically what's happening in a project, what people group is being reached, or what language is being translated, your prayers are fueling this life-transforming work.

4 Pray for those awaiting Scripture. Whether it's a portion, the New Testament,

or all of Scripture, pray for the hearts of those waiting for the Word in their own language. Some have been waiting years for translation to begin and others are expecting more Scriptures to gain a deeper understanding of God's plan for their lives. Pray for communities and governments (even if you don't know them by name) to be prepared to welcome and receive translation work and, ultimately, the gospel. Pray for mother-tongue translators, exegetical consultants, and other critical workers to be raised up and strengthened for the task.

As you pray, join with the psalmist when he declares, "I am praying to you because I know you will answer, O God. Bend down and listen as I pray" (Ps. 17:6, NLT). God hears your prayers, and He's answering them. Whether you know who exactly you're praying for or not, He's at work.

There are several Bible translation ministries working in partnership to translate God's Word into every language in the next several years, including Wycliffe, Pioneer Bible Translators, SIL Translation, American Bible Society, JAARS, and others. The Seed Company (seedcompany.com) offers a prayer guide to help accelerate the translation of Scripture into every heart language by 2025. Their goal is to see 3.22 billion people freed from darkness—zero prisoners—through access to God's Word.

As you lift up the work of Bible translation and the lives that are impacted when they hear God's Word in their own language for the very first time, you can trust that God will answer.

—Adapted from Wycliffe Bible Translators blog (wycliffe.org/prayer).

Lost and Found During a Holy Time

It is Passover. Twenty-one years earlier than the one you're thinking of. Jesus is twelve. A boy becoming a young man.

And from Luke's account (Luke 2:41–51), it would seem year 12 is significant. Beyond the physical milestone, perhaps it marks a heightened yearning in the boy Jesus. An intensified hunger for revelation, for the interlocking of the bits and pieces of His Father's redemptive plan that must have been unfolding to Him as He grew.

My Soul Yearns

And maybe Jesus has been primed for this Passover along the journey to Jerusalem. Psalm 84 was quite possibly a song sung on just such a trek to worship at the Temple. Had He heard it this year, maybe sung along?

“How lovely is your dwelling place, LORD Almighty!
My soul yearns, even faints
for the courts of the LORD;
My heart and my flesh cry out
for the living God. . . .
Blessed are those who dwell in
your house. . . .
Better is one day in your
courts than a thousand elsewhere”
(Ps. 84:1-2, 4, 10).

By the time Jesus arrives at the Temple in Jerusalem, it's likely His mind is stretching Godward and His spirit craving communion with His Father. The way ahead that He's been groping for, finally begins to take shape and clarity. Here in the majestic Temple, the symbolic Passover, the sweet odor of incense, and the imminence of His Father's Presence in the nearby Holy of Holies so resonate in the boy Jesus that He *has* to linger in the midst of it (Lk. 2:49). He *has* to ask the parents who'd been searching for days for Him, “Didn't you know I had to be in My Father's house?”

The Temple in Us

By His Holy Spirit, Jesus still lingers in His temple. Not in Jerusalem's Temple, but in each believer. In *us*. “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?” (1 Cor. 6:19).

Passover 2023 is April 5–13. Easter is Sunday, April 9. So, during this Holy Week, let's ask ourselves:

- Like the boy Jesus, are we drawn to God's Presence, hungry to be with Him, giving Him our full attention?
- Do we, like Him, ask questions of the Most Learned One?
- Do we sit in worshipful silence before the Almighty, listening?

Let's intentionally pursue a more intimate communion with God. Wider



understanding. Deeper surrender. Increased love. Broader understanding of His calling on each of us.

Let's come simply and sit lowly, setting everything else aside, letting time pass unheeded, asking questions, listening to His Spirit's still small voice.

Lost to the world.

Found where we just *have* to be—
In His Presence.

SANDY MAYLE is a freelance writer and a frequent contributor to *Prayer Connect*.

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Rallying Cry to Prayer for 50 Years

The first Friday of each month has long been a day designated by churches and ministries to fast and pray for revival and spiritual awakening. Intercessors for America (IFA) rallies thousands of intercessors every First Friday in prayer for a national Christ awakening.

Intercessors for America has been leading the nation in that hopeful prayer for 50 years—and the ministry continues to expand with a vision for national transformation. When IFA puts out a call for prayer, the organization has the potential of rallying 300,000 citizens in unified intercession.

Its roots include purposeful prayer for the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, which has been an IFA prayer focus for five decades. Located near the Washington, D.C. area, staff and IFA intercessors have sustained a faithful presence in various venues around D.C., including Congress and at the Supreme Court.

Call to Fasting and Prayer

The organization was founded in 1973 when God impressed the necessity of fasting and prayer on the hearts of a group of godly men. The nation was experiencing a plethora of problems. The Watergate scandal, Vietnam War, Arab oil embargo, *Roe v. Wade*, a growing acceptance of drug use, and other challenges were changing the way Americans lived and thought.

Christians gathered in Florida for a conference during that founding year were impressed by the teachings of Derek Prince and Ern Baxter. Out of that, a dozen men were chosen to steward a fasting and prayer movement for the nation.

In the 50 years since, IFA has rallied millions of prayer touchpoints by mobi-

lizing intercession based on the vision “to see God’s purposes for America fulfilled through sustained prayer and Spirit-led obedience.”

David Kubal, IFA president and CEO, says, “This is our time to rise and be the people of prayer and action that America needs. The darkness we see now isn’t something we haven’t seen before, so let us meet that darkness with the same fervent prayer and the same selfless action that we have seen in defining moments of our nation’s history.”

Critical to Our Nation

According to Kubal, prayer was the key to breaking a five-week stalemate in the writing of our founding documents and the creation of our nation’s framework.

In response to the floundering efforts and disagreement, Benjamin Franklin challenged his fellow founders in the Continental Convention of 1787, declaring,


“And have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? Or do we imagine we no longer need His assistance? I have lived, sir, a long time and the longer I live, the more convincing proof I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?”

After prayer and fasting, our Constitution was authored—an inspired document that is the longest ongoing Constitution in the history of the world.

Multiple Connection Points

Intercessors for America offers multiple ways to fast, pray, and stay informed and engaged with national concerns. You can

find the following prayer initiatives on their website (ifapray.org):

- Pray and Act: Pray and take action on concerns such as immigration, identity crisis, and protection of life.
- State news: Pray for your state based on current local news.
- Interactive map: Click on a map and pray for fellow intercessors.
- Government leaders: An interactive website allows you to pray and post a written prayer for leaders.
- Webcasts: Video content produced on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and First Friday, features guests with expertise on current national prayer concerns.
- Prayer guides: Multiple prayer guides are free to download on topics such as praying for Israel or the elections.
- *Roe v. Wade*: IFA asks the question, “Now that we are out from under the curse of *Roe v. Wade*, what do we do next to proactively protect life?” The website has a page devoted to continued engagement and prayer on the state level.
- Monthly prayer letters: A First Friday prayer letter contains timely national reports, accounts of revival and answered prayer, and a prayer focus.
- Weekly prayer alerts: *The Informer* email is sent three times weekly with critical issues for our nation’s capital, on foreign fronts, and with national emergency matters.
- Podcast: “On Watch in Washington” tackles current issues with input from leaders and difference-makers in our nation. 

INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA fosters a movement that reflects “prayerful, truthful, generous, hopeful, and relational” values. All their initiatives can be found at ifapray.org.

Benefits and Discipline of Fasting | By Sherry Schumann

If your heart is like mine, it's heavy. It's saddled by the uncertainties of the times. It's encumbered by concerns for our adult children as they worry about job security and whether to keep their children in the public classroom. It's riddled by fears for our grandchildren's health and well-being.

One of the best ways to lighten our hearts is to turn to the Lord in prayer and release our burdens into His trustworthy arms. Many of us are looking for ways to enhance our prayer life.

Prayer is a spiritual discipline that draws us into a closer relationship with Christ. We can make our prayers more powerful and effective by praying in conjunction with one of the other disciplines, such as worship, fellowship, Bible study, and fasting. The most unfamiliar of these disciplines is the ancient tradition of fasting or abstaining from physical nourishment for a specified amount of time.

I recently began to fast once or twice a month. I admit I am still a novice, however, I have already discovered that the benefits of fasting far outweigh the hunger pangs. As we enter a new year, here are ways to include fasting as a consistent part of your prayer life, including common and biblical fasts.

Types of Fasts

Regular or normal fast is when we abstain from all food and drink, except water. Jesus observed a regular fast during His 40 days in the wilderness. He ate "nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry" (Luke 4:2). Theologians assume that our Lord drank water; otherwise, Scripture would tell us that He was thirsty, too.

Partial fast is when we abstain from a particular type of food such as meat or high-caloric foods. Daniel observed this type of fast after receiving the devastating news that the first wave of Babylonian exiles to return to Jerusalem had abandoned the work of rebuilding the Temple because of the intense conflict and spiritual warfare they encountered. Grieved by this news, Daniel abstained from meats, delicacies, and wine. (Another popular partial fast is to drink only liquids such as juices and smoothies.)

Absolute, austere, or complete fast is when we abstain from all food and drink including water. Esther instructed the Jews in Susa to join her in an absolute fast for three days while she prepared herself to approach the king about his misguided mandate for the annihilation of the Jews. (Note: We can only last without water for three days; therefore, the fast prescribed by Esther lasted for this specific amount of time.)

Fasting Recommendations

Although my experience in fasting is limited, I see how easy it is to push through the hunger pangs with my own willpower. When this happens, the fast becomes about me and not God.


I have a dear friend who has made fasting a part of her lifestyle for 20 years. When I asked her how to keep God first in my fast, she made the following recommendations:

- Start small. (Giving up one meal alone honors and delights our Lord.)
- Define a specific reason for the fast. (Are you fasting for repentance, healing, guidance, renewal, anointing, strength against spiritual warfare, etc.?)

- Determine the type and length of the fast.
- Sanctify the day by approaching God's throne of grace the night before the fast.
- Don't schedule any meetings, doctor's appointments, shopping trips or salon visits during the time you have allotted to fast. Spend the time reading the Bible and praying.
- Start a journal by recording the date, type of fast, and reason for the fast.
- Avoid legalism. (If you cave in and eat the bag of Cheetos in your pantry, forgive yourself and begin right where you left off.)
- Unless you are observing an absolute fast, drinks lots of water. (You may want to add some herbal tea or a squeeze of lemon juice to help you through the hunger pains.)
- Be aware of any existing medical conditions, such as diabetes. Consult with your physician before you begin a fast.
- Approach the fast with enthusiasm and joy!

One Last Thought

Grandparents' Day of Prayer is on the second Sunday of September. Although it is several months away, I plan to observe a partial fast that day by eating only fruits and vegetables in conjunction with my prayers for our grandchildren.

For more information about joining our 30-Day Prayer Challenge (through the Christian Grandparenting Network) or ways to observe a Virtual Fast, please visit our website at christiangrandparenting.com. 

—Reprinted with permission from Sherry's blog at sherryschumann.com.

A Simple Way to Support a Pastor!

 **ChurchPrayer**
LEADERS NETWORK
2800 Poplar St, Ste. 43L
Terre Haute, IN 47803

The Pastors Resource Project

Pastors Need Our Help! A pastor is the key to growing prayer in the local church. But with all the things that demand a pastor's attention, it becomes hard to grow a church into a praying church without support and encouragement.

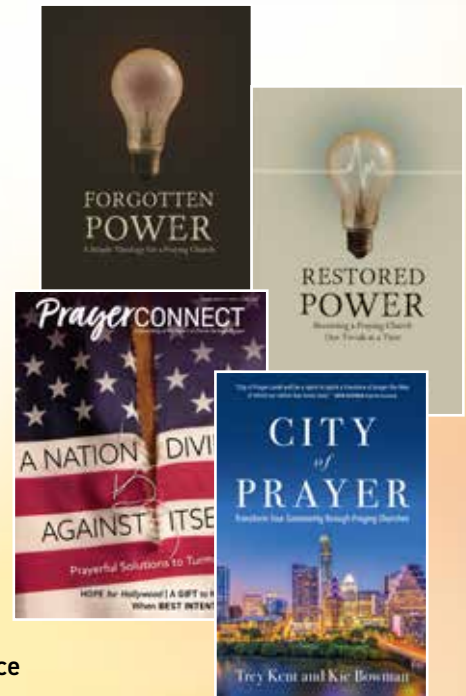
The Church Prayer Leaders Network and PrayerShop Publishing have launched the Pastors Resource Project to do just that. We are raising funds to put a FREE prayer resource pack into the hands of pastors.

Each pack includes 4 key prayer resources that can equip and encourage pastors to become champions of prayer in their churches. The packs include:

- **City of Prayer:** Transform Your Community through Praying Churches
- **Forgotten Power:** A Simple Theology for a Praying Church
- **Restored Power:** Becoming a Praying Church One Tweak at a Time
- A copy of **Prayer Connect magazine**, and a coupon for a free one-year subscription

How Can You Support Pastors?

By giving a gift to the Pastors Resource Project! Every \$40 raised puts a resource pack into the hands of a local church pastor. A gift of any amount will help.



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Indicate that you desire your gift to go to the Pastors Resource Project