

THE BREAKTHROUGH
SUMMER
2012
INTERCESSOR

The Lord
is preparing us
for a **GREAT**
Harvest!

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT PRAYER

Prayer and memories help heal
a damaged relationship | 6

While looking for directions, he
met her, looking for salvation | 28



photo by Gabrielle Ryan

heavenward by ken worrell bound

When it is time to give up life here,
I will, because of belief in Jesus, have no fear
The longer I live and welcome my Lord and Savior,
I know I am born again with a renewed behavior;
A behavior that once carried evil thoughts

Now carries love, joy and peace that can't be bought
It can only be acquired by belief in Jesus,
Who is our Rock and Redeemer, who loves us
When I turn all worries and woe over to the Lord,
I find a life worth living; love and peace that's been restored
I come to You, Father, in Jesus' name
Great praise, how great You are, my tongue will raise
You are awesome and wonderful, Creator of all life,
You have accepted all believers, taking all their strife
Without You, Jesus, we would be lost
And we'd be like ocean waves, crashing and tossed
Never finding love, joy or peace.
But in You, Lord Jesus, we find sweet release.
We'll reach our goals, goals of being assured
We're heaven bound
For in Jesus there is peace and our lives are sound

THE BREAKTHROUGH INTERCESSOR

Bringing together anonymously those needing prayer and Christians willing to pray for them; calling, equipping and encouraging people for this work.

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Leonard LeSourd

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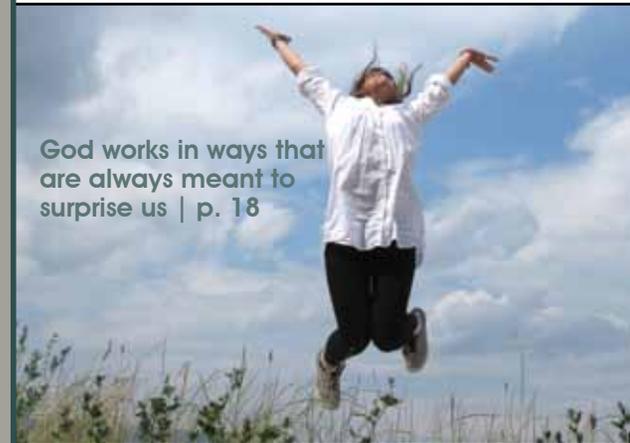
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God works in ways that
are always meant to
surprise us | p. 18

Volume 33
Issue 2

[6]
Mother's Closet
by Karin Paul

[10]
Imaginational
Intercession
by Laura Winship

[13]
Today's Prayer
by Roy Borges

[14]
Focus on Prayer
by Michelle Nance

[18]
Get Ready for a
Great Second Half
by Jean Roach

[20]
Out of the Muck
by Denise Irvine

[23]
The Patented Devil
Kung-Fu-Judo Flip
by Roberto Garcia

[24]
On Fire Insights
by James Howard

[28]
No Choir Girl
by ST Mann

cover photo by Gabrielle Ryan

Regulars:

- 5 From the Chairman
- 26 Catherine Marshall Meditations
- 32 Answers to Prayer

our mission

Breakthrough Intercessory Prayer Ministry is here for anyone who wants prayer. Prayer requests may be sent to us by mail, phone, email, fax, or through our website. Your prayer request is sent anonymously to six of our nearly 4,000 intercessors around the world who agree to pray for 21 days for each request they receive. You will have your own prayer team of dedicated intercessors holding your needs up before the Lord. People often report an increased sense of peace during the prayer period. As you read this magazine, you will learn about many prayers that have been answered.

Catherine Marshall was given the inspiration for Breakthrough 30 years ago. She was a best-selling Christian author who became concerned about the many prayer requests sent to her by her readers. At the same time, other readers were writing to tell her that they longed to be used by God but had no idea what they could do. God gave Catherine the vision of matching these two groups of people: those with prayer needs and those Christians who wanted to be part of a ministry. Thus Catherine and her husband, Leonard LeSourd, began the Breakthrough ministry.

Prayer requests are identified by first name only and are never sent to intercessors in the same geographic location as the prayer requester. The 21-day prayer period was arrived at based on the story in Daniel Chapter 10. Daniel was praying for three weeks before the angel of the Lord was able to come and help him. The angel had been detained by spiritual forces from the first day of Daniel's prayer. Our intercessors may receive scriptural insights from God for the prayer requester. Those messages, in the form of Scripture verses, are sent to the office and then forwarded to the person requesting prayer. In turn, prayer requesters send their answers to prayer to the staff which are then forwarded to the intercessors as encouragement for their faithfulness in praying.

We want to hear from you. Pray about becoming one of our intercessors. It is a small expenditure of time compared to how it will impact your life and change the lives of others. As you read this magazine, think of your own stories of answered prayer that you would like to share. Our editorial committee

will consider them for publication in *The Breakthrough Intercessor*. Remember also to send us your prayer requests. It is our privilege to pray for you.



power of prayer

As we know, there is power in prayer! Our 21 day commitment to pray for others is based upon Daniel's three week prayer vigil with the result, "Your words were heard..." (Daniel 10:12).

I have recently been touched by "the world" being committed to pray. During the 54th Annual Grammy Awards, LL Cool J began his opening remarks by saying, "The only thing that seems right is to start with prayer."

In reports from passengers of US Air Flight 1549 (Miracle on the Hudson), the Captain asked everyone to "brace yourself" and the passengers began to pray. Wolf Blitzer, on CNN, was interviewing a disaster victim and asked, "What can we do for you?" And the answer came back, "Please pray for us." And I recently saw a sign that read "ASAP - Always Say A Prayer."

A recent sermon at my church used Mark 7:32 to emphasize the love we show others when we pray for them: "and everyone begged Jesus to lay His hands on him (the deaf man) and heal him."

For those of you who are intercessors, thank you for continuing to pray for others and sharing your answers to prayer with us. They offer encouragement and hope to our intercessors and those who ask us for prayer support.

For those of you who are in need of prayer, always know that we care about you and want to pray for you. You can contact us by phone, email, or on our website to request prayer. Stay tuned for new features on our web site that will provide more prayer support information and additional ways to reach us by the internet. Our e-newsletter, received by several thousand partners, is a great new way to communicate more often. We are also exploring the idea of establishing Breakthrough Prayer Groups in regions of the world where we have large numbers of partners.

Finally, we are blessed by your financial support for this ministry. Perhaps there are some of you that can give more this year as others struggle. It is also a blessing to have new partners join us. Let us know if we can provide you with brochures for your friends and family.

God bless you as we work together to fulfill His purpose in our lives!

Tom Myers
Breakthrough Chairman





Mother's Closet

by Karin Paul

I remember that closet. It was a freestanding closet with two doors. The left side had shelves and the right side had a rack for hanging clothes. It locked and my mother kept the key. She carried it in her apron pocket; if we needed anything we had to ask and then she would retrieve it.

The closet was not very big, but it had everything in it: our clothes, bed sheets, pillow cases, towels, washcloths, shoes, scarves, doilies, candy, and who knows what else.

As a child, I noticed how much time my mother spent at the closet. She was constantly arranging and rearranging its contents. She would sit on a chair in front of the closet and take out the sheets and rearrange them with the sweaters; she would refold the towels; she would take everything out and put everything back in. Soon, she would do it all over again.

I was born in Germany and when I turned 19 I moved to the United States where I got married. I never really thought about that closet again until many years later.

I was driving home from work one night in San Diego and was listening to one of my favorite pastors. He was talking about prayer and how we can

ask God to allow us to see a person through the eyes of Jesus. It made me think about my mother.

When I left home, I was still a rebellious teenager and the many years separated from my mother did not allow us to build a close relationship. My visits home were always short and busy.

As I was driving, I was thinking how sad that was because my mother was now almost 90 years old. We did spend time every week talking on the phone. She loved telling me stories about the war, her childhood, and her escape from Prussia during WWII with my brothers and sisters. I always enjoyed hearing these stories.

As I continued home, I started praying to God and told Him about my mom and that I never really understood her. As I was praying, I realized I had been a very selfish teenager and had never taken an interest in getting to know my mom. I had dreams and they were all I focused on. My trips home were always about visiting with old friends and buying things I couldn't get in the States. My mom waited on me hand and foot, and later also on my children when I brought them along. My heart was breaking as



God showed me the selfish condition of my heart.

Suddenly, I saw a vision of my mom's closet and the Lord showed me its real contents. There under all the things were the emotions she had collected over the years. I guess she did not know how to handle them. She just arranged and rearranged them in that closet and then locked them up once more.

There in the pockets of clothing were her fears; fears as she narrowly escaped the bombs as she was dragging five children towards safety. Fears for my father's safety as well when he was stationed in Africa during WWII.

Tucked under the bed sheets were the dreams she had for my two brothers who died in infancy. My sister's twin died of a stomach disorder and

my other little brother died of pneumonia. My mother would also never see her only brother again. He died right after the war, a "mysterious" death.

Inside the pillowcases she hid her memories of the home she had to leave in Prussia when she had to pick up my brothers and sisters to escape from the approaching Russians.

Under the towels I saw where she hid her anger when my father would come home drunk from work each day. As she lifted the washcloths, her tears of loneliness fell to the ground as one daughter after another moved to America, leaving a big ocean between them.

At the bottom of the closet, the shoes were lined up neatly. They had never taken her to nice places, or on

a well deserved vacation. Mother had a lot of memories bundled up in the scarves. There were the memories of her father and mother who both died when she was just a little girl. The doilies were all stuffed with the pretty things she never had and those she gave up because she gave them to us children instead.

And there in the corner were a few candies left. Those were the happy moments of her life. The rest of them she shared with us, her children and grandchildren when we would come to visit her.

When I got home that night, I told my husband that we needed to go visit my mom. A few months later, we flew to Germany. We devoted all the time to just be with her. For the first time, I was able to tell my mom that I loved

her and she told me she loved me. She was not able to go anywhere with us because she could not walk, so we just watched TV and talked a lot.

When I left, I knew that our relationship had been healed. God had opened my eyes and I was able to see her through the eyes of Jesus. Seven months later, my mom passed away. She is with Jesus now and I am so happy to say that I know I will see her again someday.

Karin has been a Breakthrough intercessor for several years. She is retired and lives with her husband in Temecula, California. She enjoys spending time with her five grandchildren.





Imaginational Intercession

by Laura Winship

I have found praying frustrating. I have read books about prayer. And I have always prayed—haphazardly and inconsistently. On early morning walks I held my children and grandchildren before the Lord. But the sheer volume of need in the world overwhelmed me. My file drawer was crammed with prayer lists, prayer reminders, missionary letters and names of the sick and struggling. I complained guiltily to God, “There is so much to pray for.” I asked, “How shall I bring to you the needs of the whole world?”

My prayer time was often so boring that it was difficult to remain centered for more than 15 minutes. My mind flew constantly to more active pursuits. The most spiritual attitude I could muster was, “Time to pray. I have to do it.” I persisted perfunctorily with no sense of power.

I knew that if God required this of me, He would surely provide instruction. “Lord, teach me to pray,” I pleaded. “I desire to commune with you.”

“...Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way,” His word seemed to respond. (1 Corinthians 14:40) My praying definitely lacked order.

Beginning with a baby step of obedience, I organized prayer topics in a three-ring binder, asking God to show me what requests He desired me to include. I punched holes in prayer letters, the church directory, e-mailed prayer requests and photos. I was ready for the next step—“powerful and effective” prayer. (James 5:16)

Oswald Chambers addressed ineffective prayer in his February 10 reading in *My Utmost for His Highest*:

One of the reasons of stultification in prayer is that there is no imagination, no power of putting ourselves deliberately before God... Imagination is the power God gives a saint to position himself out of himself into relationships he never was in.

Stultification is uselessness or futility. I spread my prayer notebook before the Lord and confessed, “Lord, my prayers are stultified.”

Chambers’ assertion that God has given us imagination for the purpose of bringing us into His presence was the secret for me! I asked the Holy Spirit to guide my thoughts and images that would place me before the throne of God. He has answered my heart’s plea.

Imagination transports me to heaven where I meet my Savior. I praise and thank Him for the blood that has redeemed me. I confess my sin and unworthiness. I ask Him to wash from my feet the dirt of walking in the world. In my imagination I see Him take my hand. In the righteous authority of His sonship, He presents me to His Father; I am prostrate before Him. God bids me rise and ask what I will.

I turn the notebook pages and bear before Him those He has entrusted to my intercession. I imagine that I am accompanying each person. My heart is burdened for some who do not know the Savior. I envision bringing these to the cross. I ask the Holy Spirit to open their hearts to receive His sacrifice for them. I speak to God from His own word. He is “...not wanting anyone to perish.” (2 Peter 3:9)

I bring individuals, families or groups into the holy throne room. The presence of God enlightens my



petitions as I ask His provision for each need.

By faith I observe a sick one well, a sad one joyful, a burdened one leaving the burden at God's feet. I hold onto one too weak to stand and sense she will not recover; I see Jesus take her into His arms in heaven.

Humor enlivens these visits, along with tears. I bring a rambunctious group of children to Him and ask for discipline in that family as they tumble about.

I spread a map at his feet, chuckling as I acknowledge that the Creator knows every grain of sand and drop of water. I point to the countries of the world and beg Him to send laborers and to keep them open to the Good News. I present tiny Israel to Him and plead for peace for His beloved land.

I walk respectfully behind our President as I accompany him to the throne. I envision him humble before the majesty of the Lord. I join him in requesting divine wisdom, courage

and strength.

Time stands still in the holy Presence. I thank the Lord for allowing me to come, for listening to me and for granting those petitions that are according to His will. As I turn to leave, Jesus assures me that He is coming with me. He will never leave, and by His sacrificial death He has provided eternal access to His Father.

Imagination brings joy, excitement and accomplishment in prayer. How I look forward to those blessed times. There is no boredom, no wish to hurry, no frustration, only pleasure and power in the presence of God.

Laura is a freelance writer with a B.A. in psychology and a M.A. in counseling. She and her husband of 54 years have five children and 18 grandchildren. She is very active in her local church.



Today's Prayer

by Roy Borges

What happened yesterday belongs to history
Tomorrow may come but it's not a guarantee
I cannot see the future, nor change the past
And only what I do for You today will last
Time is but a moment that will pass away
Destined to become part of yesterday
Today, I pray You make my life complete
And inspire me to help others to their feet
Turn my failures into adversities to be won
Forgive me Lord for the unkind things I have done
Help me today to use this moment to pray
And thank You, God, for another day



Focus on Prayer

by Michelle Nance

I've often heard it said that some of the most valuable life lessons we learn are taught to us by our kids. Personally I have found this to be very true, and somehow it seems to be one child in particular who does most of the 'teaching.'

My youngest son has a very determined disposition. When he was a toddler there were times, I have to admit, that I wondered what God was thinking when He gave me this particular little treasure. I remember one morning he asked me for a muesli bar before breakfast and the only muesli bars I had were chocolate coated. Of course the answer was no, and so the battle began. He needed to have breakfast; but because he wanted a muesli bar, breakfast did not exist. The next half hour consisted of my

son screaming, my throwing a muesli bar in the trash bin; my son screaming more; my throwing the whole box of muesli bars in the bin; and my son screaming uncontrollably. I put him in his room and held the door handle so he couldn't come out. He hit and kicked the door, and on and on it went. Finally (it felt like an hour) he started to calm down. He came out of his room and calmly said, "Mummy, I want a muesli bar." And so we started again!

I always stood firm; I always fol-

lowed through; I did everything the books said to do but nothing ever worked! I prayed; I read more books; I prayed; I went to mothers groups and listened to guest speakers; I prayed; I listened to advice; I desperately prayed and I just got more and more frustrated. Nothing worked and I wasn't even sure God was listening anymore. During this time in my life I was often depressed, exhausted and felt like a complete failure as a mother.

One day I reluctantly agreed to visit a friend's mothers group. I remember sitting there listening to this woman and just wanting to cry, convinced I was hearing more stuff that wouldn't work. I actually felt angry and jealous of this perfect mother of six children.

Do you know how amazing it is to meet someone who understands what

you're going through? She spoke to me about focus. She explained that a strong willed child is an extremely focused child and I needed to come up with strategies to change his focus. "Just start by putting him onto his bed when he won't accept "no" for an answer and tell him that his feet are not to touch the floor. Every time he so much as looks like he's getting off the bed say 'Don't let your feet touch the floor.'" That was all she gave me to work with. Here goes nothing... or so I thought.

It wasn't long at all before I had an opportunity to try it out. It was amazing! Shifting his focus enabled me to break his fixation. His focus turned from the issue at hand to his feet not touching the floor. He calmed down so much faster and didn't revisit the issue just moments later. It actually

Transformation is a process. I know I get it wrong sometimes and I lose my focus; but I also know that God loves me and nothing I do, or fail to do, will ever change that.

worked! I'm convinced to this day that God sent me an angel that day.

Sometime later, God used my strong-willed son to speak to me about my own focus. As I reflected on the times that I was in a desperate state with him and felt like God wasn't listening, I found myself asking God why He had given me a son with such a strong will that I could barely deal with him. He showed me that those desperate times were always when I was focusing on myself and my own problems. I realized that those times happened because my focus was on my child and on the problem. I had been praying desperately but not taking my eyes off my problems. You know the saying "If you keep looking at a problem you'll never see the solution." Not only could I NOT see a solution, I'd actually convinced myself over time that I didn't know how to be a good mum and that God wasn't listening. But let me assure you, it was I who wasn't listening.

In Romans 12:2 it says to let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. I wasn't changing the way I was thinking or changing my focus during those low

points in my life, so I wasn't allowing God to transform me and become the mum I needed to be.

I'd love to be able to say that I've learned this wonderful life lesson and have gotten it all together and that I'm always focused and have become a perfect mum with perfectly behaved children, but I can't. But I can say that I'm a work in progress! Transformation is a process. I know I get it wrong sometimes and I lose my focus; but I also know that God loves me, and nothing I do, or fail to do, will ever change that. When I'm wrong, God doesn't see me as a failure. He just sees me making life harder for myself. He never stops listening and if I ever feel as if He has, He usually finds a way to show me that I'm the one who's not listening and I need to change my focus.

Michelle lives in Sydney, Australia. She has been married to her husband Geoff for 16 years. They have two sons. She has been involved in intercessory prayer for many years and loves encouraging people.



Q How can Breakthrough maintain a network of nearly 4,000 intercessors who pray faithfully and individually for each request they receive?

ANSWER:
only through your partnership.

GIFTS OF STOCK

MAXIMIZE YOUR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE contributions to Breakthrough and save money by making a charitable stock donation. Charitable gifts to a nonprofit organization like Breakthrough provide us with essential funding and they may offer you significant tax savings. By giving an appreciated asset that you have owned for at least one year, you won't have to pay tax on the capital gain and you'll receive an income tax deduction for the asset's full fair market value. This benefits you and Breakthrough since you are able to contribute pre-tax, instead of post-tax, dollars to a prayer ministry that reaches around the globe.

LEAVE YOUR LEGACY

PLEASE CONSIDER LEAVING Breakthrough a gift in your will to ensure that our ministry can continue calling, equipping and encouraging people in the work of faithful intercession.

INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE in your will: "I give, devise, and bequeath to Breakthrough, Inc., tax identification number 23-7423474, P.O. Box 121, Lincoln, Virginia 20160 (insert amount, percentage, or nature of gift, or remainder of estate) to be used for its ministry purposes."

TRANSFERRING SECURITIES to Breakthrough can be accomplished by wiring securities to our broker at Fidelity Investments (1-800-544-6565), account ID number X37-243558, DTC 0226.

IF YOU CHOOSE to make a donation of securities by any means, please notify Breakthrough of your intentions so your gift can be tracked and properly receipted.



get **READY** for a great second half

by Jean Roach



I was about to enter my fortieth year and for the first time in my life, I thought about age and the fact that I was growing old. It dawned on me that I had probably already lived half of my life and it depressed me to think of how little time I actually had left on this earth.

What had I accomplished? What difference had I made in the world to make it a better place?

To make matters worse, I had just found my first clump – not strand – but clump of gray hair. I burst into tears and between sobs, yelled at God, “I’m not ready! I don’t want to grow old! I don’t want my hair to turn gray!”

When I had finished my little pity-party, I opened my Bible for my daily reading and found these words...

“Even to your old age I am the same, even when your hair is gray, I will bear you.” (Isaiah 46:4)

My crying turned to laughter. God had heard me and understood my fear of the future and was comforting me by reminding me that He is always the same: faithful.

Soon after, I received a very interesting birthday card. On the front it read, “Remember, God spoke to Moses after 40 years in the wilderness... He also brought Israel into the promised land after 40 years in the desert.”

The inside of the card read:

“GET READY FOR A GREAT SECOND HALF!”

I laughed again and asked God out loud, “What are You going to do?”

“It’s a surprise,” He seemed to whisper in my heart.

“Lord, I’ve told You over and over

again, I HATE surprises. If we are going to continue to walk together, one of us is going to have to change.”

Later, as I was reading in the book of Malachi, I found the Lord’s response to my ultimatum: “... I am the Lord – I do not change.” (Malachi 3:6)

In my heart I felt God reminding me of lessons I had learned in my youth: “We have walked together for a long time, you should know by now that I am the God of surprises. You should know by now I have only a good plan for your life. You should know by now that I will never leave or forsake you.”

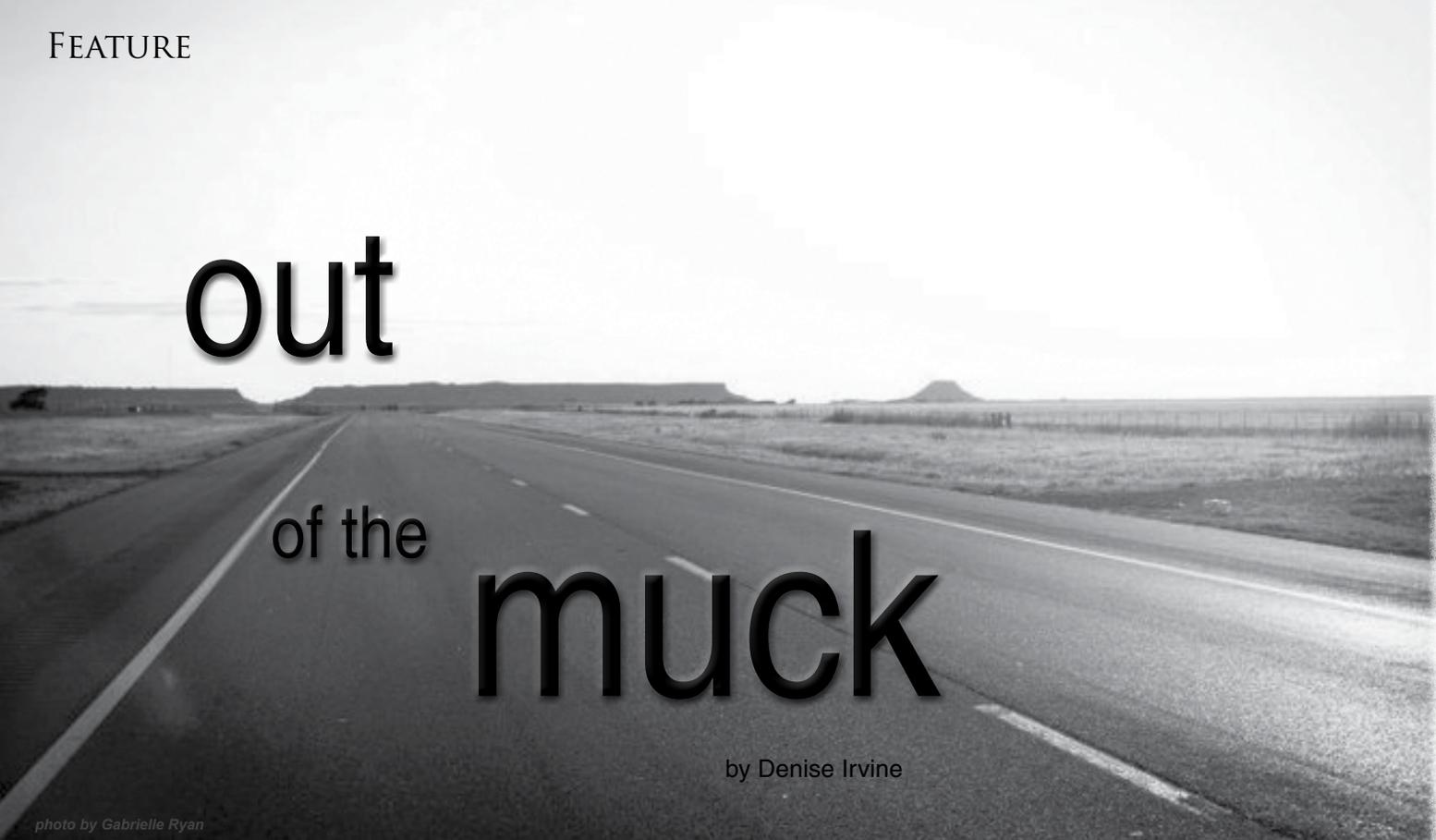
Now, 25 years later, we baby-boomers are turning 65 and the lessons we learned in our youth are still the same.

“Life is a surprise. Stop trying to figure it out!”

“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him.” (1 Corinthians 2:9)

Jean lives in Florida and has five grandchildren. She has been involved in intercessory prayer groups for 35 years. Jean believes the Holy Spirit is calling her to lift up the name of Jesus through her writing.





out of the muck

by Denise Irvine

photo by Gabrielle Ryan

Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25 - KJV)

One morning during my devotions, I found myself meditating on Matthew 18:12 (NIV) - “What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off?”

Suddenly, it struck me that many of my son’s teenage friends were lost or straying from the faith. They needed the Good Shepherd to bring them back to the fold. It became clear

to me that my personal “mission field” was right at my back door!

I continued reading Matthew 18, stopping at verses 19 and 20. “Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.” I decided praying with other believers who would “agree about” the salvation of these lost souls would be a good start.

I knew of a prayer group that met faithfully at 6:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. The church where they met was about 60 miles from my house, so praying with them would

mean spending a lot of extra money on gas. Despite my tight budget, I decided to drive the distance for as long as my money held out.

The next morning I arrived at the church just as the group leader was unlocking the front door. After explaining my desire to pray for lost lambs in my community, he eagerly agreed that the group would pray in agreement for their salvation.

After five days of diligent prayer, I began to see evidence of answered prayer. When I shared this with the prayer group, they rejoiced at what God was accomplishing and agreed to continue the prayer of agreement.

Payday was still three days away

when I put my last few dollars in the gas tank. “This is it, Lord,” I prayed, as the pump clicked to a stop. “No more money.” I replaced the nozzle and walked inside to pay. Handing over the last of my money, I continued my prayer. “Lord, if You want me to keep praying for these teens, please provide the gas money to do so. Thank you. Amen.”

I shared my money problem with the prayer group that morning and asked them to keep praying for the lost lambs even if I couldn’t make it back the next day. As I was leaving, one of the group members slipped a \$10 bill in my hand. “Keep coming,” he said with a nod, “and don’t stop praying.” His generosity touched my heart, especially since I knew he was on a tight budget too.

I thanked the Lord for the extra money, but later struggled with the issue of whether or not to spend it all on gas. What if we need milk or bread before payday?” I thought. This concerned me as I was the sole provider for our household.

That night I read about Gideon putting a fleece before the Lord when he needed confirmation of God’s will. (Judges 6:36-40) I got on my knees and prayed, “Lord, I need a sign like You gave Gideon. If You want me to spend this money on gas to keep praying, then please give me another \$10 tomorrow in case we need food. I won’t mention this request to anyone but You, Lord. I know I’m making it hard, but I need to know for sure if I’m supposed to spend all this money on gas. Thank You. Amen.”

The next morning I stepped out

in faith and pumped \$10 worth of gas into the tank before driving to the prayer meeting. I knew in my heart I could not stop praying for these lost souls.

As I walked through the door of the church, much to my surprise several people from the group started stuffing \$1 bills into my coat pockets and purse! I stood there amazed at how quickly God answered my prayer.

After the prayer meeting I found four more \$1 bills on the front seat of my car. Altogether I counted \$17; I only asked God for \$10. God made it abundantly clear He wanted me to keep praying.

After several weeks of this early morning routine, I needed a weekend of rest. I decided to make the three hour drive to visit Mom and Dad. Their house always offered a good place for a quiet retreat.

Once there, a good night's sleep followed by a nourishing breakfast quickly recharged my batteries. After a relaxing morning, Mom and I took their paddleboat out on the lake. Because the lake levels were low, we had to drag the paddleboat through a stretch of muck to reach water deep enough to sustain us and the paddleboat without touching bottom. As Mom finally lifted her leg to climb into the boat, she suddenly lost her balance and fell back into the water! Alarmed, I grabbed her arm, but it was too late. She was already under water. Luckily, she came up laughing even though she was covered with muck from head to toe.

Back in the house, Mom peeled off her muck-soaked clothing and quickly

showered. Afterward, she walked into the living room holding up a piece of muck-soaked clothing. "Look," she said, "the muck even soaked through to my underwear!"

I nodded, thinking about a parallel. "I guess that's how it is when someone falls into the muck spiritually, too."

"Yes," Mom agreed. "The sin soaks right into their souls."

Mom's tumble into the lake provided a good analogy. The lambs on my prayer list had lost their balance in life and fallen into the muck of drugs, alcohol and illicit sex. I realized it wasn't enough to get them out of the muck of their lifestyles. God would have to get the muck out of their souls, as well.

I then remembered a vision shared by a lady in my prayer group, in which she saw Jesus rising up out of the muck. I could now grasp the significance of her vision. Jesus descended into the muck of sin in order to conquer it. He then rose again in order to cleanse us from all our muck.

I marveled at the thoroughness of our Savior. He not only goes out looking for His lost lambs and pulls them out of the muck, but He then cleanses their muck-soaked souls with His own precious blood. What a privilege it is to partner in prayer with Him who "ever liveth to make intercession!"

Denise lives in Michigan with her husband, Alan. They have six children, eight grandchildren, and one greatgrandchild. She writes freelance articles for Christian magazines and is a Breakthrough intercessor.



The Patented Devil Kung-Fu-Judo Flip



by Roberto J. Garcia

I'm certainly no expert on how sin gains the upper hand in our lives; but after falling prey to the temptation to regularly act selfishly for the majority of my grownup life, I've got a pretty good idea. A revelation struck me one Saturday afternoon.

This was a notable day since I had been baptized the previous Sunday. I even fasted and prayed for three days prior to my baptism. Despite my hunger pangs, I behaved nicely toward my family the majority of the time. Being nice to strangers has never been a big accomplishment for me, but being nice to my family when I'm feeling a little distracted—now that takes godly intervention. Needless to say, I was feeling especially, uh, sanctified.

My wife suggested we go shopping at a nearby mall. As I got out of our car, I was careful not to undo the halo that gravitated around my newly sanctified and somewhat enlarged cranium. We entered a clothing store and approached a clearance rack. I picked up a vest and asked a clerk the price.

"You'll have to go ask over there—I'm busy," she said, pointing to the long checkout line.

"Ma'am, I was only curious." I said it condescendingly, then hung the vest where she was working, my nostrils flaring as I glared at her. I doubt others noticed this brief interaction, but that didn't make it any less important.

My wife motioned it was time to go. As we walked out, I asked if she

heard my discussion with the clerk. She was oblivious to the celestial battle that took place.

I proceeded to describe the situation—all 15 seconds of it—and concluded that I fell prey to the infamous "devil-kung-fu-judo-flip." In other words, the devil used my strength, my pride, and my own forward momentum—with minimal effort—to flip me flat on my back. At that moment, I knew I'd fallen to my sinful nature.

That aura of sanctification to which I'd recently grown accustomed dissipated into nothing more than a pleasant memory and later—once the rage left me—into a desire to be better. For despite my sudden fall, my goal remained: to be holy as our Father is holy (Leviticus 11:44).

I'd been flipped so often, I didn't even realize when it was happening. I made it a point to pay closer attention to the circumstances under which I was getting flipped so I could prepare more suitable defenses. I realized that I could not – and need not – fight these spiritual battles alone. Come, Lord Jesus.

Roberto is a freelance writer who has written fiction and non-fiction books on Christian topics. He is currently working on Cold Lentil Soup, a historic Christian novel.





On Fire Insights

by James Howard

The Lord has called me as an intercessor and that call has been upon me for some time. I was searching through magazines when *The Breakthrough Intercessor* caught my eye. As the Word says, man can have plans, but the Lord directs his steps.

I saw on the website the call for people to sign up as intercessors, so I did. A few days later I received the packet of information and was thrilled that God had chosen me to stand in the gap for others. When my list came I began interceding and the Lord began to reveal Scriptures for each person. Sometimes I was led to sing or speak blessing over the beloved. I learned that I needed to follow the Lord's instructions when sending in Scriptures.

I am also learning that sometimes I think I know how something ought

to be done, but ignore the instructions that tell me exactly how to do it. The Lord gave me an illustration by way of my garden. I had bought a spray for bugs and disease and thought I knew how to use it. When I read the instructions, however, I found that if I had used the product the way I thought I should, I would have killed the plants! In like manner, I must go to the ultimate manual to find out how to live this life of intercession.

When I completed my 21 days to pray for my list, I woke up with the thought that I must continue to pray for the people. The witness to my spirit was that God had given me a mantle of intercession and that I was to carry it for 21 days with him in prayer. Now He was teaching me to let it go and let Him have it back.

He was showing me that it isn't

my mantle; but His and when it is time to release it back to Him, I must do so. To carry something longer would be the works of the flesh. He was showing me that to continue on was an act of taking the responsibility for the answers to the people's requests; when, in fact, He is the only one who can answer. Instead, I was to offer thanksgiving to Him for allowing me the privilege of bringing the needs of others before Him.

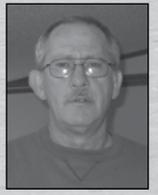
I haven't been a good person in my life; as with everyone, I too was a sinner when Jesus took me into fellowship. I was a chief sinner when the grace of God reached down to save me. I had been in prison and was an evil man; thereby I was given a number.

So when I was given the number as an intercessor it didn't thrill me at all, but oh what God has planned for His children! I was praying one morning and the revelation came. God impressed upon me that I had origi-

nally been given a number because of evil and rebellion. He was erasing that number that held me to my past. He gave me a new number that represented obedience and faithfulness, just as He gave Peter the chance to redeem himself for denying the Lord.

This revelation gave me extreme joy, for at that moment by revelation He was giving me the new life. I had always lived under condemnation for my past. Even though God forgave me, the evil one kept reminding me of it. So now after the revelation of my new status in heaven I am thrilled to have a number, for it is for the glory of God!

James recently returned to college after 32 years. He loves being part of the Breakthrough intercessors prayer group. He enjoys gardening, writing, reading and ministering to people about Jesus.





by Catherine Marshall

why do we have to ask?

The story in the newspaper yesterday lingers in my mind. A little girl, not yet completely toilet trained, was bludgeoned to death by her stepfather because she wet the floor. No, not because she wet the floor. She died because of the stepfather's hard as ironstone, sadistic heart.

I wondered upon reading this. Where was God during that scene? Jesus loves children. Why then did He not intervene in a sovereign way? I asked this question of the Holy Spirit, who has promised to lead us into all truth. A minute later, into my mind came the words of James, "You do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:2).

James had learned the necessity of asking from Jesus Himself. One day, the band of twelve traveling with the Master met two blind men who cried, "Oh Lord, Son of David, have pity on us!"

Jesus silenced the men's singsong chant with a blunt question, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

The directness of the question shocked the beggars out of their self-pitying, pious stance. "Lord, we want our eyes opened," they pleaded.

At such moments, it was the look of love and compassion on their Master's face that James and the others would remember afterwards. So Jesus touched the eyes of each beggar in turn, and immediately their eyes received sight.

This was Jesus' way. "Tell Me exactly what you want," he was always saying. "Talk to Me. Ask Me."

Since this family headed by the abusing stepfather probably had no knowledge of God, how could they ask? Perhaps more to the point, how many of us pray specifically for God's intervention into homes contaminated by child abuse?

A deeper question - what is the theology of this need for specific asking? Has God deliberately made Himself dependent on a partnership with us human beings before His creative work is done through answered

prayer? Why would He limit Himself that way?

Part of the answer must be that He was determined to give us a free will - a full free will - so that He might have real sons and daughters, not puppets.

So God wants a relationship with us. A two-way relationship with asking and receiving. The reason many of us retreat into vague generalities when we pray is not because we think too highly of God, but because we think too little of Him. If we pray for something definite and our request is not granted the way we want, we fear to lose the little faith we had.

So instead, we fall back on the "safe" route of highly "spiritual" prayers - the kind that Jesus brushed aside as not true prayer at all, just self-deceptive "talking to ourselves."

In order to make sure that we are not retreating from the tension of faith, it is helpful to ask ourselves as we pray, "Do I really expect anything to happen?" This will prevent us from

going window-shopping in prayer. At times, window-shopping can be enjoyable; but there it ends. It costs nothing. We are just looking, with no intention of buying anything; so we bring nothing home to show for the hours of browsing.

Too many of our prayers - private and public - are just browsing amongst possible petitions, not down to cases at all. We expect nothing from our prayers except, perhaps, a euphoric feeling.

One veteran prayer warrior, John R. Rich, has expressed it bluntly in *Asking and Receiving*: "Prayer is not a lovely sedan for a sight seeing trip around the city. Prayer is a truck that goes straight into the warehouse, backs up, loads and comes home with the goods..."

If we think we'll never be able to summon faith to seek specific answers to prayer, we're right.

However, those saints who have had the most experience here on earth tell us that God uses our most stumbling, faltering faith step as the open door to His doing for us more than we ask or think.

We first decide to ask His help with some small immediate need. Our asking is like stepping into a tiny anteroom. Taking a hesitant step forward, we discover that the anteroom leads to the King's spacious reception hall. To our astonishment, the King Himself comes forward to meet us, offering a gift so momentous as to be worthy of only a King: a lifetime of friendship with the Lord of Glory.

Reprinted from The Breakthrough Intercessor Volume 25, number 3 Summer 2004

I had just begun the routine of making monthly trips to visit my parents in northern Georgia, six hours away, leaving Fridays after work. Praying before leaving...seeking safety and for Him to direct my steps.

Not satisfied that I had discovered the best route, I tried a new short cut. It was late and it was dark. Before long I decided I better stop and ask directions. I very quickly found myself lost in the small town.

Acknowledge me in all your ways, and I will direct your steps... (Proverbs 3:6)

I had been told many times before that I was 'easy to talk to.' I don't know the exact formula, but being non-judgmental, open-minded and Spirit-filled help! And here it happened again - I was just an unknown person who struck up a conversation with another unknown person. It turns out, we were both seeking directions.

Almost immediately the conversation turned to spiritual matters and became a confession: Sexual abuse as a child, divorces, boyfriends, homelessness, hunger, drugs, prostitution, and finally jail. How friends from the street came to help when she was released from jail a few weeks earlier. This was no choir girl! She was more lost than I was. I needed a map; she needed a Savior!

...they tested and provoked the Most High God, and did not keep His testimonies, but turned back and acted unfaithfully like their fathers (Psalm 78:56-57)

She stopped speaking of her sorrowful past for a moment, realizing how free she felt to openly speak with me. Out of the blue, she said, "I think you were sent."

I asked, "By whom?" She looked

up toward the sky...toward heaven.

I agreed. "I think you're right." And truth be known, I knew she was right.

She told me how she knew she needed to get out of her current drug controlled lifestyle, how she had prayed... for help, for encouragement, for direction.

She stopped again to think for a moment. She asked if I was a preacher. I told her no I wasn't. More like a special agent. (Not secret, 'special,' as all believers are called to be!) I told her I had spent time low in the gutter too. In darkness. Not too long ago. But for too long.

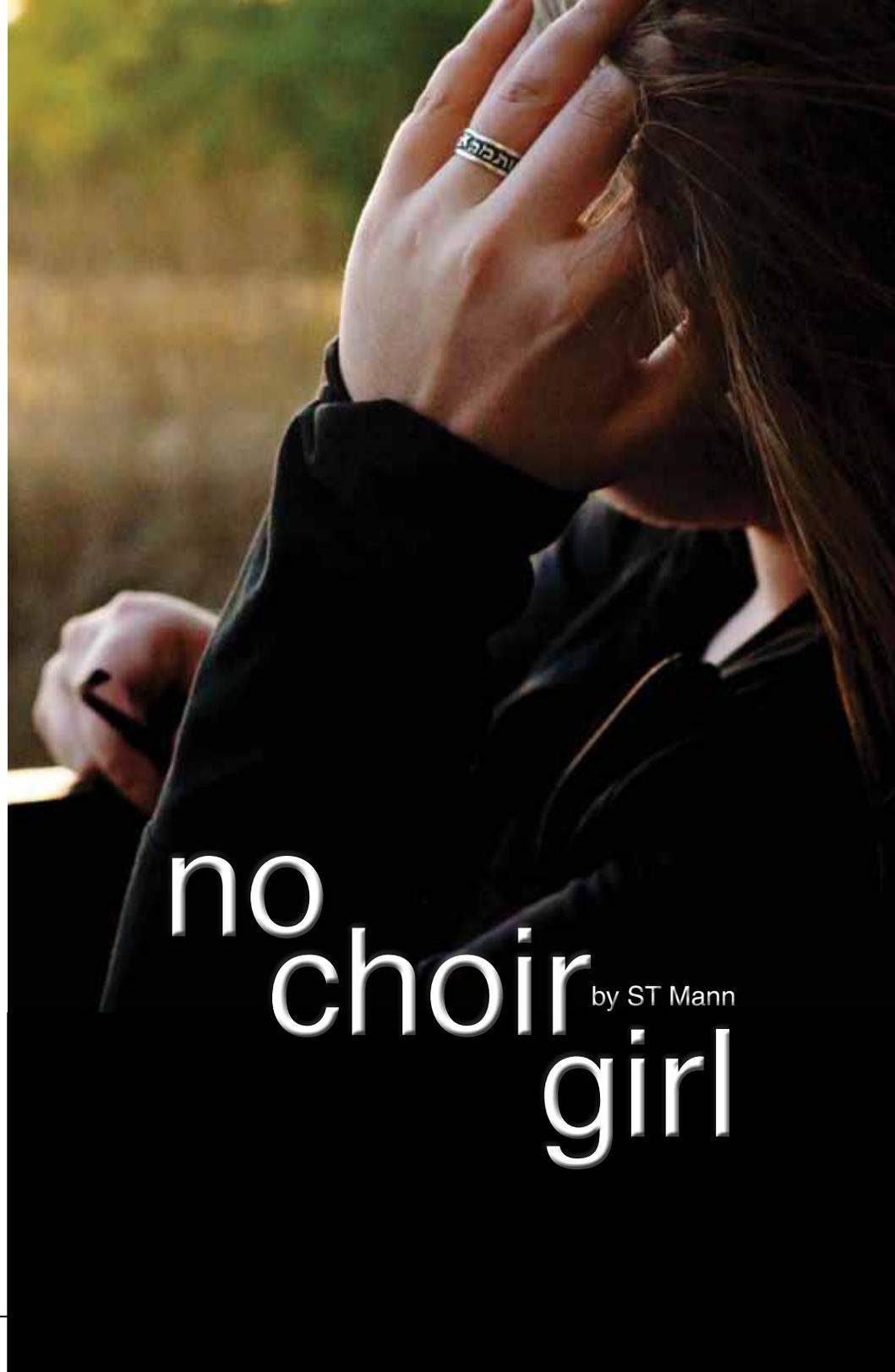
I told her how God these days had sent me many times to encourage other folks, still in their own gutter. At just the right time. In just the right place.

...if any of us is in Christ, he is a new creation... (2 Corinthians 5:17)

I asked her name so I could pray for her. Jackie! I encouraged her to read God's Word every day. I told her how she has a literal spiritual adversary, an enemy! Stalking her, out to ruin her and destroy her completely. I encouraged her that when he trips her up in the future, to get back up!

Be sober, be vigilant because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8)

I told her that when she senses the enemy stalking and seducing her, if she can't think of a prayer or words to bind the enemy, to sing! Godly, up-



no choir girl

by ST Mann

As I paused for a breath, Jackie prayed aloud her own words... Words that were neither unheard nor ignored by her heavenly Father.



beat music. The enemy can't stand it!

By wise counsel you will wage your own war... (Proverbs 24:6) *So I will sing praise to Your name forever; that I may daily perform my vows* (Psalm 61:8)

Jackie asked what song I might sing when under attack by the enemy. I started singing the doxology for her. 'Praise God from Whom all blessings flow...' Jackie joined in! She knew the words! And then she sang 'O Holy Night' from memory. Acappella. A truly lovely voice - alto, angelic, godly. She told me she had spent many years singing in a church choir! A little old country church in South Carolina.

I asked if I could hold her hand and pray with her. She obliged. And then she touched her forehead to mine as I prayed. Thanksgiving for His love. Confession for our foolishness. And for strength to get past our addictions. Our demons.

As I paused for a breath, Jackie prayed aloud her own words! Words that were not unheard nor ignored by her heavenly Father. In Jesus' name, amen!

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow... Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me (Psalm 51:7, 10-11)

Jackie's jail time had been long enough to pretty much get past her addictions. But she had gotten right back into the ill-advised lifestyle. When she was released, old 'friends' from the street came...to help her get her life going again. They gave her a place to stay. They gave her some clothes. They gave her some money. And they gave her some addictive chemicals and pipes and needles and stuff.

They wandered in the wilderness in a desolate way...hungry and thirsty... (Psalm 107:4-5)

Folks from the church choir she once sang in? Folks she knew the five years she was a paid church music minister? Her own dad, a long time prominent preacher? All no-shows.

Then He will say to those on the left hand,' Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was thirsty and you

gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

Then they also will answer Him saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'

Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' (Matthew 25:41-45)

And now, on this night, by this stranger sent by her loving Heavenly Father, she had been encouraged to get back on the road God had prepared for her. To walk with Jesus. To exercise her spiritual gifts, or risk being in a spiritual funk. And to fight her seemingly ever present evil and deceptive enemy.

...they cried out to the Lord in their trouble and He delivered them out of their distresses. (Psalm 107:19)

She asked me to pinch her...so she would know our 'encounter' was not a dream!

For I am confident of this very thing,

that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:6)

To this day, Jackie remains in my prayers, and remains 'clean.'

Deliver those who are drawn to death... (Proverbs 24:11)

Epilogue - 8 Years Later

I just received a DVD in the mail, a Christmas cantata recorded a month or two ago by the choir from a little old country church in South Carolina. I can't wait to listen to it, especially to see if I can pick out a familiar voice in the alto section!

Oh come let us sing to the Lord... oh sing to the lord a new song... (Psalm 95:1, 98:1)

ST is a 50's vintage so-journer for Jesus and has written dozens of inspirational true short stories from his adventures. His monthly devotional now reaches six continents. He lives on a farm in the Canadian Rockies can be reached at grate1@aol.com.



Answers to Prayer

FAMILY HEALING

Thank you so very much. I just want to add this note of praise. I had requested prayer on behalf of a child (three and a half years old) who was being beaten by her father every time she misbehaved. She is a perfectly normal, vivacious and highly intelligent little girl. The grandparents, on a recent visit, noticed that the father now sends the little one to her room for a "time out" instead of beating her with his belt. I praise God for this radical change in his discipline behavior and thank all the people who prayed for this request because only our great God could have performed such a miracle.

Thank you for being there... every day you mean more to me because as I age, my heart turns to the Savior and I realize the great power of prayer.

Jurema

PEACE AND BLESSING

Thank you for having others pray for me from time to time. It is such a faith-builder to receive a word from someone you don't know, who you didn't even know was praying for you, but is so obedient to the Lord to pray for others. God's family is awesome!

Nancy

LORD'S HEALING

I requested prayer for Nuha, who had a rapidly spreading abdominal infection, which could have been life-threatening. Thanks be to God and the doctors who figured out what it was and were able to give her the right antibiotic. She was released from the hospital and is recovering well.

John

A TIMELY ANSWER

I have a hunger for the Holy Spirit and was so excited to get the audio CD by Catherine Marshall! It was a timely answer to prayer!

Betsy

JOB BREAKTHROUGH

Within two weeks of requesting prayer, I had a job interview and within one month, I had a new job!

Bryan

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in PRAYER, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. // Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in PRAYER. // Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by PRAYER and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. // Devote yourselves to PRAYER, being watchful and thankful. // I always thank my God as I remember you in my PRAYERS.

BILLYE'S CANCER GONE

All of the cancer in Billye's abdomen and digestive tract have disappeared. That's wonderful news! But the primary tumor between her spine and colon seems to be the same size as it was in December. We are trusting for even more healing!

Genie

REFRESHED AND RENEWED

Thank you for your prayers. I feel so healed and refreshed and am ready to let God use me. My fears and doubts are gone and I am enjoying His presence. Your prayers are awesome and strong and are able to break through strongholds and bad habits. Thank you so much.

Sharda

SUCCESSFUL SURGERY

Thank you for your prayers for Henry. He has recovered very well and is back at work. He is beginning to get back the use of his hand. His surgery went very well. God's hand and your prayers definitely made the difference. Thank you.

Janice

HUSBAND'S HEALING

I wanted to let you know that my husband has been a different person this month. He has been kinder to me and to our children, and he is fasting for a few days to get all his "appetites under control," as he put it. This is amazing! We had a good trip up to our son's college graduation and he held his temper very well - no outbursts! It is like night and day when Breakthrough is praying for him. My prayer for him still is that he will fall in love with Jesus all over again.

Blanche

WORTHY OF PRAISE

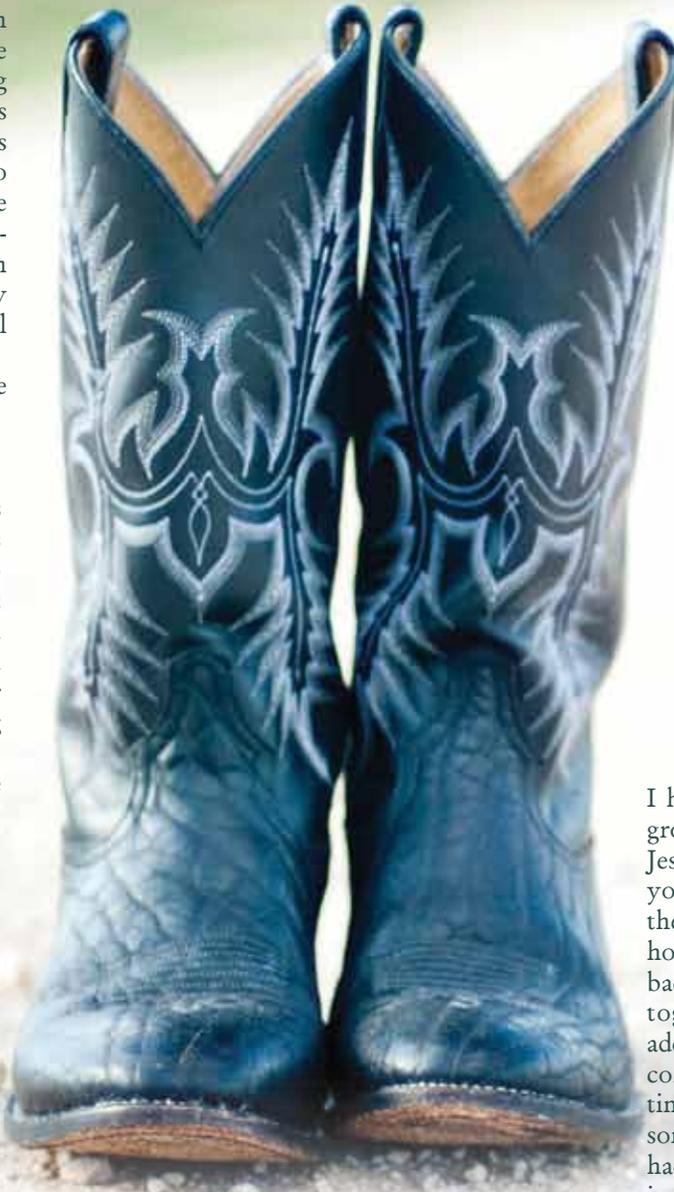
I'm writing to tell you the good things Jehovah God has done for me. He has answered our prayers! We are back to work and for that I feel humbled that I have a loving Father whom I can call and who can answer. Please join me in thanking Him. He truly deserves our praises and thanks to you for praying with us. May God bless you.

Rose

IMPROVEMENT

Thank you for praying for Christie. She has been so mentally tortured and sick for so long. She was anorexic and would rarely come out of her bedroom. She has made huge improvements, eating and socializing with the family, and listening to Christian messages. She has a job for the first time in years. Please pray for her success and for God's continued healing over her!

Cindy



Answers to Prayer are edited for publication.

SONS' RETURN

I had requested prayer for my two grown sons who were raised to know Jesus, but have become worldly. The younger son's wife had left him and they were both struggling with alcoholism. Now, my son's wife has come back to him and they go to church together. He still has the alcohol addiction, but keeps it under better control. He has gone to detox five times, but still needs prayer. My older son has gone back to church, and he hadn't gone in years and years. God is answering. Thank you for praying!

Karen

MEMORIALS

Lester and Carole Werling
in memory of
Dorothy Werling

We welcome gifts in honor of loved ones.

HEALING FROM LUPUS

You have been praying for our daughter, Cindy, and her husband, Robert. I have seen perseverance in Cindy's countenance and I know this has come from the Lord through your prayers. Secondly, she has no more symptoms of Lupus! How we thank the Lord for this. Since her thyroid removal in December 2009, she has had only one attack of the Lupus symptoms. The surgeon said he has seen the symptoms of Lupus disappear in a number of patients upon the removal of a malfunctioning thyroid.

Sandra

Oh, give thanks unto the Lord; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the people... talk ye of all His wondrous works.

Psalm 105:1-2

photo by Gabrielle Ryan

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