



The Breakthrough
INTERCESSOR
Spring 2017

You Hold My
Right Hand

The Magazine About Prayer

Remembering what intercessory prayer is
all about | p. 12

Discouraging news, distressing world
events: will God's justice prevail? | p. 16

A person is walking away from the camera down a long, sunlit hallway. They are carrying a large, round, woven basket over their shoulder. The hallway has high windows on the right side, and the floor is polished and reflective. The person is wearing dark pants and a dark top. The overall atmosphere is warm and hopeful, with strong backlighting from the windows.

The Promised Way

by Nancy McCleaff

I devoutly pray to God
Each and every day,
Hoping He will guide us
To the promised way.

I pray that we will enter His kingdom,
And not be led astray,
To share in his wisdom,
And be shown the promised way.

I pray to follow God's path
During our earthly stay,
Hoping to resist temptation,
And be led to the promised way.

Ma
Edit

*When my soul was embittered, when I
was pricked in heart, I was brutish and
ignorant, I was like a beast toward you.*

*Nevertheless, I am continually with
you; you hold my right hand. You guide
me with your counsel, and afterward
you will receive me to glory.*

*Whom have I in heaven but you? And
there is nothing on earth that I desire
besides you.*

*My flesh and my heart may fail, but
God is the strength of my heart and my
portion forever.*

Psalm 73:21-26 (ESV)

ABOUT BREAKTHROUGH

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

- 5 From the Chairman**
By Brian K. Wells
- 6 God to the Rescue**
By Arlene Lila
- 10 The Winding Road to
Answered Prayer**
By Fay Yoder
- 12 The Ministry of
Intercessory Prayer**
By Jean Roach
- 14 Adopted**
By Erin Kaschub
- 16 Justice: Is It Possible?**
By Walter Maris
- 20 A Prayer from Confine-
ment**
By Roy Borges
- 22 Short Stories**
Featuring Various Authors
- 26 Why Do We Have
To Ask?**
By Catherine Marshall
- 28 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 nearly 40 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.



chosen for fellowship

Hello Beloved,

It is a privilege to be ushered into the presence of the God of the Universe, to know that He desires to commune with you. "Blessed is the man You choose, and cause to approach You, that he may dwell in Your courts" (Psalm 65:4a, NKJV). Submit to Him and He will draw closer to you. God becomes intimate with those who desire his intimacy.

It is always good to recall and reflect on significant times when He has met with you. In my early days, I remember becoming concerned that my habit of sudden drowsiness during times of worship was displeasing to God. One Saturday morning, something special happened. I planned to spend the morning in worship, just God and me; but as I began to pray, that familiar sluggish feeling began to envelop me. I repented for feeling tired but then remembered that I was fully rested, having just woken up from a full night's sleep. So why was I feeling drowsy? I realized it was the manifest presence of God that was surrounding me. I went back to worshipping and sensed it thicken and increase. For the first time in my life, I could sense the presence of God. What joy that was for me! God had chosen me, caused me to approach Him and moved me into His presence.

Are you taking time in your personal devotions to position yourself for God to draw you to approach Him? Worship Him, praise Him, sing to Him, seek Him, listen to what He has to say, draw from the deep wells and Heaven will manifest on earth. Every decree and strategy needed for our breakthrough is found in His presence.

Thank you for sending in prayer requests and testimonials, thank you for interceding, and thank you for your support of Breakthrough ministry operations. Together we accomplish much, and great is your reward in heaven!

God bless you all,



Brian K. Wells, Chairman of the Board



Breakthrough's statement for financial accountability is available upon written request from the Office of Charitable and Regulatory Programs: P.O. Box 526, Richmond, VA 23218



God to the Rescue

by Arlene Lila

The three hikers in our group stopped ahead of me. They were looking at a trail map. What's up? I wondered, as I ran to join them.

"We can't be more than five miles from the parking lot," my husband Jerry was reassuring everyone.

The day was warm and sunny, a perfect day for a hike. My husband and I, with my sister and her husband, were in the White Tank Mountains near Buckeye, Arizona. We planned to start on one trail and return on another.

We had lingered over our breakfast, resulting in a late start. It was after 11 A.M. when we arrived at the trailhead. Being February, we knew the sun would set sooner than it did on our summer hikes.

We had hiked for a couple hours

when we passed a sign that read: "Dangerous Trail. Travel At Your Own Risk." We decided to keep going. Soon we were climbing up and over rocks with our hands and feet, hanging on for dear life. But we pressed on, hoping that the trail would improve.

Later, we met another couple going the opposite direction, and we asked what was ahead.

"We've been walking four hours since we left the parking lot," they said.

Our faces fell.

"We have to get going," I said. "No more rest stops."

After two more hours of fast-paced hiking, we were weary. Taking one bad step, I twisted my ankle; and from then on, I had trouble keeping up.



Eventually, we realized that since we didn't have any cell phone reception where we were between two mountain peaks, someone needed to report that we couldn't make it back to the trailhead before dark .

"Why don't you go ahead?" Jerry said to my sister and her husband.

We watched them disappear around a bend, and suddenly we felt very alone. Our water was almost gone, and we had finished our food hours ago. We didn't even have matches to light a fire if we had to spend the night in the frigid desert air.

The sun was setting. For as long as we could, we followed the footprints my sister and her husband had left on the sandy path. But soon, darkness fell. The moon was just a sliver in the sky. We began to shiver in the cold as

both of us were wearing shorts and sleeveless tops. My jacket is in the car, I chided myself silently. We left three bottles of water there, too. Why, oh why didn't we bring them?

Jerry spotted the lights of Phoenix in the distance. "Just keep moving toward the city lights," he called to me. But just a few minutes later, we reached a sixty-foot drop-off with no way around it.

We couldn't go any farther. The only option was to turn back.

"The best thing to do," I insisted, "is to stay here and wait for help. These boulders are a good wind break. And the sand is still warm from the day's sun. Let's cover our legs and arms with it to stay warm."

An hour later, though, the sand no longer felt warm. I was frozen to the



The helicopter that arrived for Arlene and Jerry.

bone. We lay close together, hugging each other for warmth. At one point, I heard an unfamiliar sound, and I wondered, Was that a mountain lion?

As time dragged on, we began to hear the sound of something like loud fans spinning. It was a helicopter! Its spotlight shined down on every area around us---except where we were. We stood and waved a white handkerchief. But, still, they didn't see us.

The helicopter circled for about 45 minutes, but we had no way to summon it. After a while, they gave up; and we lay down, hugging one another again. We began to pray.

"Lord, let them find us," Jerry prayed. "Put it in their hearts to bring help back. We put this situation in your hands. We are grateful for the help you will send." After Jerry finished praying, we felt peace for the first time that night. We soon

became quiet, and our eyes closed in exhaustion.

At 3 o'clock in the morning, we heard voices calling our names.

"Arlene and Jerry! Arlene and Jerry!"

I was so tired, I thought I was dreaming. Did I really hear voices?

"Here we are!" I called. "We're over here! Do you have water?"

"We have lots of water, and are we ever glad to see you two!"

"Well, we're glad to see you, too," I managed to say.

"Are you two angels?" Jerry called out.

"Yes, we are, here just for you."

Suddenly, our 'angels' appeared --- a rescue party of four men. Were we ever glad to see them!

Our rescuers gave us food and water, took our vital signs, and re-



From left: volunteer, Arlene, volunteer, Jerry. Images courtesy of Arlene Lila.

ported back to their command post. They cut wood and started a fire. In no time, a huge bonfire was burning brightly. They had extra clothing for us, and one of the men took off his own jacket and insisted that I put it on. I will never forget him.

Because of the rough mountain terrain, a helicopter couldn't land until daylight. We were well cared-for as we waited for the sun to rise. The chopper had to make a dangerous landing, one skid on a rocky ledge and the other in mid-air. We had to step into the cabin carefully, so that we didn't unbalance the helicopter.

We lifted into the air, and a few minutes later we landed at the command post in the parking lot, where my sister and her husband were waiting for us. We learned that they had been able to hike back to the parking lot and make a phone call from there.

They also reached out to our church family and friends, all of whom were praying for us.

We thank God for our good fortune and His protective hand. Our misadventure didn't deter me from hiking again. But you can be sure that from then on, I took an emergency kit with me!

Arlene Lila is a retired registered nurse who enjoys writing to encourage Christians in their walk of faith. She belongs to the Christian Writers Group in Fountain Hills, AZ, and she is a member of the Fountain Hills Christian Center (Assembly of God) in her town.





The Winding Road to *Answered Prayer*

by Fay Yoder

Let's eat breakfast at Eat 'n' Park today," I said to my husband as we began our monthly 20-mile drive to Oncology for my injections. I wondered why I had suggested it. We had been eating at another restaurant each month where we knew the waiter and waitress well and enjoyed joking with them, but I could not bring myself to change our destination.

The meal was good, the waitress friendly. Although my husband and I chattered continuously most of the time, we always grew quiet as our mealtimes absorbed our thoughts. My mind drifted to the up-coming treatment. It had been postponed for a week as my doctor tried to alter my medications to a stronger dosage. His request had been denied by my insurance, and I wondered if this change in days between injections would make a difference.

Soon my husband's eyes rose from his plate and widened as he looked over my shoulder.

"Is that your old pastor and his family?" he said, and I turned to see the thick white hair of the man who had encouraged me when I was young to come back to my childhood church and work with the youth. His leadership had steered me into teaching a teenage Sunday school class, starting a youth choir, and leading a mid-week service all of which grew me spiritually.

Tears were burning my eyes as I slid from the booth and rushed toward the departing figure. A year earlier this man, who now lives in Florida, had sat in my home as he

did on each yearly trip. On that occasion, his parting words had surprised me as he chided his daughter when she said she was praying to be able to buy a summer home in our area near her sister.

“Oh, you always do that,” he said. “If it’s going to happen it will happen. She prays about everything,” he added to me.

Stunned, I looked into his clear blue eyes and retorted, “Prayer does change things. When I was looking for a house, I told God I needed one I could afford with three bedrooms, one for my daughter, one for me, and one for my mother when she would someday come to live with me. I even asked for a bath and a half knowing how hectic mornings can be; and as an after-thought, a house near enough to water to hear the young frogs in the spring. And he gave it all to me!”

He had no response, but when I walked him to the car he gave me a parting hug.

Now here he was again, and this time he had not come for that yearly visit to my house. But the joy on his face as I called out his name in the crowded restaurant told me it was not from anger.

His arms opened, I rushed toward him and was engulfed in his frail embrace as the crowd leaving and entering the restaurant flowed around us.

“I prayed I would see you!” he shouted. “We drove up from Florida two days ago, and I kept saying I wanted to come over to see you; but we were so busy. I kept praying all night and now we’re on our way back. We just stopped here for breakfast. If we hadn’t, I would have missed you, and

I know this will be my last trip here.” As he caught me in his embrace my heart leaped with joy. He said, “Prayer does change things! I know it does.”

Hellos mingled with goodbyes and soon we were entering our cars to go our separate ways.

As my husband and I headed toward my appointment, he began to count the ways our journey had been changed to make this happen. If my appointment hadn’t been changed; if “Someone” had not nudged me to eat at that particular restaurant; if my former pastor’s family had not eaten there; if we had not been seated at that table where they had to pass; or if I had asked to be moved, we could have missed seeing them and I would not have heard a man who had led me closer to God years ago say, “Prayer does change things. I know it does!”

“We missed a very important link in the chain,” I told my husband. “If you had not finished your meal at that exact time, a herd of elephants could have passed behind me, and you would not have looked up.”

As laughter filled the car, we headed toward Oncology knowing the prayers of those we love were going with us.

Fay Yoder worked as editor of *The New Republic* for nearly 18 years, among other diverse positions in writing and editing.



She is now retired, but continues to freelance articles and short stories. She and her husband, Richard have three grown children and five (soon to be six) grandchildren.



The Ministry of Intercessory Prayer

by Jean Roach

What do you want me to bring you?" My dad was planning his trip to Rome to visit my brother and sister in law.

"Dad, there's nothing that I really want."

"There has to be something," he pressed.

"Well, I guess there is something," I said.

"When you get to Rome, I want you to go to St. Peters Cathedral and say a prayer for me."

Months later, when my dad was showing me the photos from the trip, I asked, "Did you remember to go to St. Peters and pray for me?"

"I sure did!" he responded enthusiastically. "In fact, I spent one whole afternoon in St. Peters. I prayed for you. Then I prayed for each member of

our family. Then I prayed for all of Yorktown. Finally, I prayed for the whole world.”

We are all destined to be intercessors. As we follow Jesus, we become as He is. Scripture tells us that Jesus “... lives forever to make intercession.” (Hebrews 7:25).

We are the ones who stand in the gap for the ones who cannot, will not, or do not know how to pray for themselves. Intercessory prayer is the most exciting ministry. Our little group of four has been meeting every week for almost 25 years. We never cease to be awe-struck watching God work all things together for the good of everyone. We still shed tears of joy as He displays His mercy, forgiveness, loving-kindness, and healing to all those we bring to Him through intercession.

We intercede for our children who are in trouble, like the man in the crowd who brought his son to Jesus. “Teacher, I have brought you my son... if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” (Mark 9:17, 22).

And like the synagogue official who sought Jesus on behalf of his daughter, “Jarius came forward. Seeing Him, he fell at His feet and pleaded earnestly with Him saying, ‘my daughter is at the point of death. Please, come lay hands on her so that she may get well and live.’” (Mark 5:22-23).

We lay hands on photographs of our children and their friends, asking God’s blessing. “And people were bringing children to Him that He

might touch them... He embraced them and blessed them, placing His hands on them.” (Mark 10:13, 16).

We intercede for our friends, like the four men who brought their friend to Jesus. And we don’t stop praying until there is a breakthrough. “They came bringing Him a paralytic carried by four men. Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above Him. After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying.” (Mark 2:3).

We intercede for our enemies. “...Pray for them which despitefully use you... and persecute you.” (Mark 5:44).

We intercede for our city. “Promote the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you; pray for it to the Lord. For upon its welfare depends on your own.” (Jeremiah 29:7).

We intercede for Jerusalem. “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! May those who love you prosper!” (Psalm 122:6)

Finally, we intercede for the whole world. “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

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



Adopted

by Erin Kaschub

Thank You, Lord.” I breathed when I read that a group of people had issued a call to conduct a prayer walk for every street across the nation. With enough people signing up to pray, they could certainly get each street in America adopted.

The area I live in lies in the heart of the Bible Belt, so it would seem as though my city would not need much revival. However, our local prayer network informed us that only twenty percent of our large county was churched. The concept of needed revival was easy for me

to understand since Sunday mornings were the only quiet mornings in my neighborhood. My neighborhood has approximately 200 houses, but on Sunday mornings I see only about four cars leaving for church. On the Sundays I stay home with a sick child or because I am sick, it

appears that most of the cars remain in their driveways. It is an eerie quiet on those mornings while so many people sleep in.

I wanted to adopt several streets outside my neighborhood to prayer walk, but was unsure of the safety of some of these streets. With two dogs, it was easy for me to prayer walk my own cul-de-sac and the two streets to the left of mine. Our quarter-mile walk could be completed in 30 minutes or less. I could joyfully pray for revival in my neighborhood while walking without fear of stray dogs. However, I was unsure if the streets outside my neighborhood had leash laws.

Other streets I was warned to avoid. Some of the neighborhoods had been tagged by gangs. Two miles from my house is a beautiful neighborhood that is not very old. The houses are larger than our homes and the neighborhood has more amenities. However, people's trash cans, power units, and even a few houses were spray painted with gang signs. The police said they used to repaint the people's siding, but finally gave up when the gangs returned every night to retag the houses that were freshly painted.

How could I adopt those houses, which were so close to my own, without walking through streets the police advised me against? An idea was birthed in me. I could simply write down their names and put them next to my communion cup. When I took communion, I could pray for those streets as well as my own. I wanted

to be intentional without distractions about praying for the streets I knew.

I could pray for the streets while driving past them. In the privacy of my kitchen, I could pray over their names and even anoint their names with oil. More than anything I wanted to make sure God was the priority. To get my mind in the right place, I began my prayer along these lines:

Dear God, please quiet my mind. I have many things I want to do today but those are not my priority. For now, I want to come to You with my entire focus. Lord, please clear my mind of all my plans and agendas so I can truly intercede for the people around me. Father, their salvation and the revival of these areas is far more important than anything else I could come up with. Help me to stay focused during my prayer time.

If I got distracted, I would write out my prayer. I did not want to adopt an animal without the full commitment to care for it, but I also did not want to adopt a street and then give it half-hearted attention in prayer. God cares for these people, their souls, and their heavenly futures. Even if I never meet most of them, God has a plan for them and I want to be a part of His plan through prayer.

Erin Kaschub *has been an intercessor for over a dozen years. She lives outside of Atlanta, Georgia, where she facilitates a support group for caregivers and teaches Sunday School.*





I stabbed at the “off” button of the television set to separate myself from the continual reporting of the world in conflict and the resulting tragedy being manifested in the lives of people. The repetitive daily news of terrorism, wars, and corporate deception was just too depressing.

Studying the Bible a little later I was reminded that my reaction to the news was due in part to my human nature, as peace is the natural desire of the majority of the world’s peoples. The suffering and the pain of innocent victims in areas of conflict are naturally saddening and repulsive to the normal person. However, we cannot ignore or hide ourselves from the tribulation that is on-going in the world by simply turning off the world news. God has called us to be involved

and to minister and pray for the victims of loss and tragedy, and to be a peacemaker seeking justice whenever possible.

It is crucial to keep in mind that God is in control and that we have security in Him. Why then, we ask, does God allow suffering and injustice to pervade our world in the interchanges of individual and national life? The Bible reveals that God has given us the right to choose, laying out the benefits of righteous living



Justice: Is it Possible?

by Walter Maris

and the consequences of sinful living (See Deuteronomy 30:15-16, Psalm 34, Psalm 37:3-13). The Bible also reveals that the suffering conditions that exist today are primarily the result of choices made throughout history by the peoples of the world. However, God provides a message of hope regardless of what may be occurring in this world of chaos. While the Christian can rightfully take comfort that God is a God of love, no one should ignore that God is also a God of judgment. All prophecy will be fulfilled according to His Word, so we know that tribulation will continue until His coming. How then do we live a righteous life, pursuing justice when the world is filled with injustice? The answer is in His Word.

From the very beginning God

emphasized righteousness, choosing to bless Noah (Genesis 6:9) and Abraham (Genesis 15:6) for their righteousness in the midst of uncertainty. Scripture reveals that justice is a pursuit of the righteous; and when it is accomplished, it brings peace and joy, resulting in more righteousness.

“When justice is done, it is a joy to the righteous....” (Proverbs 21:15)

“And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.” (James 3:18)

While we are to seek righteousness in all that we do, the Bible tells us that any true righteousness in us is the result of God’s grace responding and working through our faith in Him.

For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, “The one who is righteous

e world's greenhouse gas emissions, is pollution from fertilizers, habitat soil degradation. Under our current tem, farmers use lights, ventilation, midifying technologies to create an indoor environment to grow cannabis, duces a lot of greenhouse emissions. It on the precipice of a similar fate al agriculture in Canada, it's time to ow we can shift marijuana cultivation vironmentally friendly path. n B.C., growers have already begun heir concerns about the large-scale of pot, envisioning an alternative ary model, similar to craft breweries. lieve that consumers will appreciate mentally friendly product for a higher he fact that many British Columbians

abandoned vessels.

Transport Canada has abandoned or derelict vess waters, undoubtedly an under. Each is, at least, an eyesore al. source of environmental contamin. navigational hazard.

The cost to remove an aban vessel ranges from small change to sever. hundred thousand dollars, depending on complexity. As many old boats near their life end, owners are tempted to dump unwanted vessels in public waters. As litterbugs on land found at the dawn of anti-litter laws, penalties for abandoning vessels are needed to discourage the practice.

But many government agencies are involved: Transport Canada, the Coast Guard,

so it wou worked for from a wide with Opposit Minister Lisa R

The bill mad and was popular. r in confident sessed. But Parliament was app

will live by faith.” (Romans 1:17)

He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. (1 Corinthians 1:30)

As I meditate on the above scriptures, I find myself woefully inadequate on my own to contribute to justice in our culture. So what must we do to personally make a difference in the pursuit of justice? Since we have God's Word that the righteous must live by faith, we need to prayerfully seek the leading of the Holy Spirit. He promises that “If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. James 1:5.” God is not calling us to perform superhuman

work, but to make ourselves available in service to Him. Some of our assignments of service may appear insignificant to the world, such as being a peacemaker in our neighborhood or workplace, but scripture reveals that God cares about justice even in the ordinary business of life. “Thus says the LORD of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another.” (Zechariah 7:9)

The Bible contains considerable teaching on God's desire and instruction for righteousness and in the pursuit of justice in all that we do. One can find in the concordance of study Bibles over 130 references to justice, and over 200 references combined for righteous and righteousness. Woven into the gospel is the promise that



RUNNING SUPPORTS FOOD BANK

Christine Suter from C2Skymultisport and Dave Clark from the Whistler Half Marathon would like to thank all of the walkers, runners, and volunteers who came out and participated in the Whistler Food Bank Run for money to help

whatever fee they... shows what kind of traffic one... with gas, time and... you are probably looking at \$50... to dispose of a mattress and, more importantly, guess what, our back country and logging roads will just become dumping grounds.

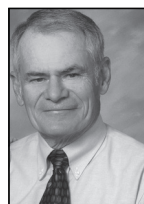
I guess then we can thank the bean counters at the SLRD for screwing up our environment!

Len Ritchie
Pemberton

righteousness brings joy, blessing, and fulfillment through our faith in God regardless of a world aflame. An active person may be confronted with injustice and privileged to impart justice to life's situations multiple times in a day. Given in love, the message is direct and cannot be misunderstood by anyone seeking truth: "He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8 NRSV) It would be misleading to infer that one's sincere efforts will always bring peace and justice to a situation. However, God has given us his clear directive that will help each of us to make a difference in efforts for the achievement of justice. Justice


is possible in our relationships and in our circle of influence when we prayerfully and faithfully follow the leading of our LORD.

Walter Maris is a freelance author of articles and devotionals. He is in his 55th year of teaching the Bible in church Sunday School and small group Bible studies. He and his wife live in rural Missouri on an acreage and gardening is one of his favorite hobbies.



A Prayer from Confinement

by Roy Borges



Heavenly Father, I know I am not alone in this cell. You are here with me and I praise You, for You are good. You are the almighty, powerful God who brings justice to the oppressed and keeps Your eyes on the righteous.

Your concern for me reaches beyond this earthly existence. When others despise and ridicule me and treat me as less than human, You hear my prayer.

Forgive me, Father, and cleanse me from all my sins. Remove my guilt from me and fill me with the joy of Your forgiveness. Give me a new heart to make a new start. Help me, Father, to see myself as You do: clay in the hands of a Potter, molded and shaped according to Your will, for there is none like You.

You are greater than anything that

happens to me and I look forward to whatever the future might bring because I know you will be there with me.

Guide my steps, Father, and give me the wisdom to be wiser so that I will walk the path You have chosen for me. Please help me to keep my heart pure and to acknowledge You in all my ways for I desire to obey You. Use me to be a light in this dark world that surrounds me. May the love that You pour into my heart flow out to others.

Open my eyes that I might see You. Open my ears that I may hear You. Open my mouth that I might praise You. For You alone are worthy.

Show me God how I can be an encouragement to others with my words. Lift up my head and teach me Your ways; help me to find blessings



in the things I complain about and to have an attitude of gratitude. For You sent Your only Son to the cross so I can live with You forever.

You know everything, Father. You know when I lie down and when I rise up. You count every hair on my head. You are aware of every struggle I face --- including the ones where I fail. Yet because of Your great love for me, You long to redeem every sin I confess. Help me, Lord, to make pleasing You more important in my life than pleasing myself.

Thank You, Father, for all my family and friends who have supported me during this time in confinement. Thank You, Father, for not giving up on me when I ignored You and went my own way.

Father God, You are the one who

sets prisoners free. I wait on Your timing for You know what is best. Father, give me the strength to endure and to be all that You call me to be.

Thank You for Your faithfulness, for You alone have the keys to the future. I praise You, Lord my God, with all my heart and will glorify Your name forevermore. Let the whole earth be filled with Your glory. Amen and amen.

Roy Borges's stories have appeared in many Christian publications. He won AMY Foundation awards in 1998, 2002, and 2003. Roy's book *"Faith and Love Behind Prison Fences"* was published in 2002.



short s

The battle of righteousness is a never-ending war. I am a small pawn on a grand chess board. My soul and spirit are tired. I feel as if I've died many times, and each time I'm brought back. I awake, lying on top of the ruins of my own destruction. As I look around, there amongst the rubble is the bound, worn leather book: the Word. Divine intervention? Angels? The Grand Architect? No matter how many times I fall, You make Your presence known. And no matter how many times I look away, You have never forsaken me. Underneath all of my pain, my suffering, and my selfishness, I pray that it does not take me until I breathe my last breath to ask my Father, who has walked with me every day of my life, for His help.

— Tyreise D. Swain

Excerpt from "One of God's Many Lost Children"

"Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of His understanding."

James 1:17 KJV

stories

After my second child was born, I fell into a deep, dark pit of depression. My family doctor sent me to another doctor who sent me to the hospital. My Bible, which I read every morning for my daily devotions, was taken from me. As soon as I got to my room, I opened my end table's drawer, hoping to find a Gideon's Bible. However, the drawer only had a box of Kleenex. I was surprised, disappointed and discouraged.

With each passing day I missed God's word more and more. I felt only God could help me now. When I felt like I couldn't stand it another day, I started pacing the hallway and praying for heavenly help. One day, I met a cleaning lady with her supplies. I couldn't believe what my eyes were telling me. There was a Bible on her cart.

"Is that your Bible?" I asked. "May I have it?"

She gave it to me. Once again, my faithful Father had supplied my needs.

— Loretta Wadsworth

"And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you."

Luke 12: 29-31 ESV

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A wooden desk with a laptop, a white mug, and a yellow pencil.

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Why Do We Have to Ask?

by Catherine Marshall

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 sightseeing 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.

Catherine Marshall (1914-1983) was a bestselling author and founder of Breakthrough, Inc. Article used with permission.



Answers to Prayer

GOD'S PROVISION

Blanche is thankful for the blessings and opportunities that are opening “in beautiful ways” for her daughter. Her daughter will be working at a Christian organization in the city and living with three Christian women in a good location not far from her job. God has not only provided her with Christian fellowship but also monetary provision to pay off her loans.

SPIRITUAL VICTORY

Cecily writes that her neighbor, a single lady, has been set free from chronic depression and satanic attacks. Praise God for victory over the enemy!

GROWING STRONG

Joan had asked for prayers for her one-year-old granddaughter who was sent to various specialists for being underweight. A year later, she is living a normal life with no sign of health problems!



A NEW BEGINNING

Julia had prayed for healing, salvation, and deliverance for her nephew from heroin addiction. Despite overdosing twice, he was able to be revived. Recently, he was miraculously offered a job with good pay and encouraging opportunities. During a conversation with him, she asked if he would like to make Jesus his Lord and Savior, and he accepted. She was able to pray with him, give him a Bible, and Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose Driven Life*. Praise God! Pray that he would continue to stay away from drugs, develop solid friendships, and grow in his relationship with God.

HEALING FOR A LITTLE ONE

Jeanette asked for prayers when a baby was born with her hips out of the socket.

The doctors are amazed with how quickly she has been healing in her body brace and expect that she will not need to be in it as long as they anticipated! Thank God for a quick healing process!

continued on next page



JOY IN LOSS

Mildred writes that the Lord has “kept me calmer in dealing with being a widowed parent. Things I enjoyed seem new.” Through her church activities she is finding opportunities to bless others even in the midst of this tough season.

LOVE RESTORED

Helen writes that she and her son were “at odds” for a few months, but God has restored their relationship and she can see that he is making things work together for good.

FAMILY WITNESS

One of our prayer requesters gave us a praise report that all her siblings had attended a recent family reunion. “We had a wonderful reunion,” she writes. “I was able to have awesome conversations with some family members about our Lord.”

Answers to Prayer are edited for publication.

A photograph of several white daisy flowers with green stems and leaves, set against a dark, textured background. The flowers are arranged in a way that some are in sharp focus while others are slightly blurred, creating a sense of depth.

A BURDEN LIFTED

Ilona was concerned for her mother and praises God for the answered prayer. Her mother has been provided with a home nurse and a doctor who can make house calls and be in touch with her if she needs anything. Ilona thanks God for repeatedly lightening her load, writing that “another burden [is] gone from me. Amen.”

PAVING THE WAY

Miriam thanks God for providing a way for her to finish a book in Israel that she believes He called her to write. Not only has a believer in Israel agreed to publish the book, but a huge secular publisher has also agreed to print and market it! Continue to pray that a believer will be able to help finish the timeline and map of the twelve tribes, so that the book will be ready soon.

GIFTS

*A gift from Martha Bruton in honor of
Bill & Margaret Randall*

*A gift from Martha Bruton in honor of
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