

The Breakthrough
INTERCESSOR

Fall 2018

*Caregivers &
Prayer-Warriors*



The Magazine About Prayer

Read about the struggles of other
prayer warriors and be encouraged.
You are not alone. | p. 8

Read about the testimony of a woman
who was personally mentored by
Catherine Marshall. | p. 20



The Spirit Finds Tomorrow

By Jane Stuart

Inside a minute wrapped in heaven's light,
What was becomes far less lost in the flight
Of white birds soaring on through endless night,
Across a planet now so boldly quiet
That nothing can be heard; and even sight
Is limited-but this is earth's delight,
And the soul reaches far beyond its plight
To find what is eternal, fair and bright.
All that was, never is; our hearts excite
The world that can't be held but is finite.
Buried inside its womb, a trilobite
Cries to be heard! It moves into the light...
You turn - no longer here but not yet gone.
Night wanders on, the stars come back at dawn.

Psalm 23:6

Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.



ABOUT BREAKTHROUGH

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Managing Editor Claudette Ammons
Editor & Designer Megan McEwen
Editorial
Committee Jami Dittmeier
Anna Soltis

Contact

Office Address P.O. Box 121
Lincoln, VA 20160
Phone (540) 338-5522
Prayer fax line (540) 338-1934
Email breakthrough@
intercessors.org



Our Mission: 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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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.



From the Chairman

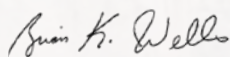
Goliath was the biggest, baddest warrior around, and he did not like Israel's army. He hated Israel and taunted them for 40 days, asking for someone to come out and fight. All of Israel's army was shaking in their shoes, knowing no one from within their own ranks was brave enough to go up against Goliath in battle... no one, that is, until a little shepherd boy, armed with God's Word and five smooth stones, stepped up to the plate.

Goliath represents any mountain in your life, especially one that inflicts the fear of defeat upon you. This could include cancer (or any other form of sickness and disease), homelessness (or any other type of financial ruin), or any type of failure at a time when losing would be a fate almost worse than death! The question regarding the Goliath in your life right now, is, "Where is he?"

Is this the beginning stage of your enemy confronting you? Is he across the field, hurling insults at you and letting you know that if you dare come after him, he will kill you and feed you to the birds? Or, are you preparing to engage him in battle, selecting carefully the five smooth stones which represent the Word of God, scriptures that God has given you for this particular battle? Have you successfully engaged him in battle, cutting off his head, and are now showing it as a testimony of God's love, grace, protection and faithfulness? Or... are you paralyzed in fear, having listened to his taunts, shaking in your shoes like the rest of King Saul's army? Where is your Goliath? Below are several smooth (well worn and used) stones that are available for use against your Goliath:

God says, "He will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus!" (Philippians 4:19) God says, "He has not given me a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind!" (2 Timothy 1:7) God says that He has given us power and authority over all devils, and the cure of diseases in Luke 9:1! God says, "We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us!" (Romans 8:37)

Will you continuously stand on God's promise as you engage your enemy, declaring boldly that you have a covenant with the Almighty God? If so, you will undoubtedly be found holding Goliath's head in your hand Today.



Brian K. Wells, Chairman of the Board
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A moment of RECOGNITION

By Kathleen Fessler

Our son, Peter, was three years old when we moved into our new home. He was such a fun-loving and sociable little guy. As we settled into our surroundings, Peter made the rounds and introduced himself to our new neighbors. He announced that his name was Petey Foo. We couldn't understand why he identified himself in this way, but we thought it was amusing. He soon became friends with the neighborhood children. He was Petey Foo, their friend.

As the years flew by, Peter no longer used his silly name. In fact, it was almost forgotten. Only once in a while my husband, Dick, would remember our earlier years and our son's meeting of the neighbors, using his made-up name. Our lives went along smoothly as we later were blessed with two daughters.

After the kids grew up and were

married, we moved to Arizona. We enjoyed years of hiking and enjoying the desert, but we saw our children less often. When Dick was in his seventies, dark clouds enveloped our lives. He developed dementia, and we traveled down that sad road of forgetfulness. He always remembered me, but when the children came to visit I always prayed that he would remember them.



Most times he did, but the disease was taking him farther and farther away from us. The time came when he had to be placed in a group nursing home.

One day, Peter came from Texas to see his Dad. As we drove to the group home, I was anxious as to how Dick would respond to Peter. I hoped that Dick would remember his son.

When we arrived at the home, Dick was happy to see us. He smiled and greeted us, but I felt that there wasn't any recognition of his son, Peter. After a time, Peter suggested he take his Dad for a stroll outdoors. As Peter supported Dick's frail frame, I walked behind them.

"Don't you remember me, Dad?" Peter asked as they ambled along.

It was then that Dick stopped walking, focused his eyes on Peter, and was silent for a few seconds. Then he

smiled and declared in a soft voice, "I know you, yes I do. You are Petey Foo, and I love you!"

It was a precious moment of recognition. Tears poured down Peter's face as father and son clung to one another.

"Yes Dad," Peter mumbled, "Oh yes, I'm Petey Foo, and I love you too."

The Lord was merciful. He gave us a victory.

Kathleen Fessler is a member of the Christian Writers Group in Arizona. She enjoys writing articles to encourage Christians in their faith. She loves doing the ministry of providing meals for shut-ins from her church.

Bruised & Extinguished



By Erin Kaschub

“I just got home from visiting my dad. I am so worn out. I never have time to do anything I want since I started taking care of dad. I need to find some time to relax.”

My friend said this to me late one night. We were talking on the phone, and my heart went out to her.

My friend is in the prime of her life, watching all the other people her age who can enjoy moments of rest and relaxation. The only thing my friend has time to do is work and take care of her aging father.

She is not alone. I have another friend who balances caring for her aging parents while she simultaneously cares for a special needs child, a friend who is watching his wife die of stage four cancer, and another friend who had her first stroke in her early forties. So many Christian brothers and sisters are worn down right now.

Prayer warrior, do you feel bruised, like your light has almost gone out? Isaiah 42:3 is the perfect scripture for you. It says, “A bruised reed He will not break and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish.”

You may feel burnt-out, spent, washed up, exhausted, and used. Your candle of hope might be on the brink of going out. Your mind may be overwhelmed and your body physically worn out. Now is not the time to give up.

In the New Testament, Paul knew what it was like to be beaten, ship-

wrecked, and imprisoned. Yet, Paul admonishes us to never give up.

Galatians 6:9 (NLT) tells us, “So let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up.”

Paul was not the only one who encouraged people to never give up. Jesus Himself talks about this very subject throughout the gospels.

If you feel as though your candle is about to be extinguished, remember that God can open doors you never fathomed. When you have little or no strength left, God can open a door that had previously been shut.

Revelation 3:8 (NLT) tells us, “I

know all the things you do, and I have opened a door for you that no one can shut. You have little strength, yet you obeyed My word and did not deny Me.”

Prayer warrior, when you think you cannot handle anything else, remind yourself that God is still on the throne. Let the image of God opening a door always be at the forefront of your mind. He has opened doors before and He can do it again. God has proved over the course of history that He can make a way where there is no way. When He commands the skies

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to open, He will rain down blessings.

When the King of glory comes in, no one can stop His matchless power. Psalm 24:9-10 says, “Open up, ancient gates! Open up, ancient doors, and let the King of glory enter. Who is this King of glory? The LORD Almighty—He is the King of glory.”

One day, the whole world will see Jesus riding triumphantly again. Even doubters will bow before the King of Kings. When we pray, we are not just praying to a magic genie or to a pretend figure. We are speaking with the LORD Almighty and the King of glory.

God has a plan for even the most horrific of atrocities. He is not causing the calamities that weigh us down, but He wants to be with us and comfort us through them. 1 Peter 5:7 tells us that He cares for us. That is a scripture we can hold on to when we are worn out and feeling as though there is no end to our dilemmas.

You are not the only bruised and weary prayer warrior. Christians worldwide are walking the same path as you. You may feel alone at this moment, but you are not alone in your feelings. To close, let me leave you with two

challenges:

1. Keep reminding yourself of God’s goodness and His faithfulness in the past. If He opened doors for others, He can do it for you. You may have been waiting much longer than others, but this is not the time to give up. God has not fallen off of the throne. His position is still secure.

2. After you have prayed, leave your requests with God and go do something for another prayer warrior. Make a quick phone call, send an encouraging letter or text, or buy a small gift for a weary fellow sojourner. In lifting up others, you will be refreshed yourself.



Erin Kaschub enjoys teaching Sunday school to fourth-grade girls at her church, as well as talking about all the wonderful things God has done.

“You are not the only bruised and weary prayer warrior. Christians worldwide are walking the same path as you. You may feel alone at this moment, but you are not alone in your feelings.”

Paul's Prescription For Prayer

By Barbara Gordon



When I opened the back door for my mother-in-law, a frigid blast of air invaded the kitchen. Her frail body shivered as she massaged her purple hands.

“Where’s your coat?”

Her teeth chattered. “Sh-sh-she just left, v-v-v-vanished into thin air!”

Many questions later, my husband and I deduced that his Mom imagined she was babysitting her great-granddaughter, who abruptly disappeared. In reality, the little girl was at home, asleep in her own bed.

My mother-in-law’s fifteen-year battle with Parkinson’s disease represented an arduous time in our family’s life. Even before the onset of the dementia associated with Parkinson’s, we questioned her safety. Frustration clouded our minds and it felt like our prayers went unheard. Discouragement and fear squeezed the joy from our hearts.

Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians to a group of relatively new Christians who knew frustration. They were facing strong opposition and the threat of persecution. In the second and third chapters of his letter, Paul speaks of their hardships and Satan’s schemes to keep him from returning to encourage them.

Paul offered advice to the believers that helped me pray through my struggles involved with care-giving. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 says, “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

Rejoice always? Surely Paul didn’t mean always. Sometimes or most of the time worked for me, but always? I equate rejoicing with joy and worship

and those words did not describe my life. When my mother-in-law moved in with us, spills, bathroom dilemmas and the lack of privacy became our norm. Gladness was not the theme of my prayers.

My rejoicing questions were answered in Luke 10. Jesus sent seventy followers to various cities to preach the gospel and granted them the ability to perform miracles on their journey. The men came back filled with joy, announcing, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name” (Luke 10: 17 NIV).

Jesus’s reply caught my attention. “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:18-20).

The Lord told his disciples not to rejoice over their circumstances, but rather celebrate what God has accomplished for them. Rejoicing is not the result of what we do for God; our joy comes from what God has done for us. Taking my mind off my daily routine and focusing on the majesty of God, furnished ample opportunity for rejoicing. The source of my joy and delight was not dependent on perfect circumstances, but rather the reality of a perfect God.

Next, I tackled Paul’s directive to pray without ceasing. I believed in the power of prayer and for many years my habit included a scheduled quiet time with God. The disruptive routine of care-giving essentially eliminated that practice. While I still believed

in intentionally scheduled times of prayer, I discovered certain seasons of life call for other methods of prayer.

Praying without ceasing took on many patterns for me. I discovered praying without ceasing was not so much nonstop talking as it was recurring prayer throughout the day and night. Continual prayer rendered an awareness that God is always with me and desires communication with me. Romans 8:26 brought comfort with the realization that when I am overcome by anxiety and do not know what to pray, the Holy Spirit intercedes for me.

Remaining in an attitude of prayer resembled breathing; it was automatic, something I did not have to think about. The practice of praying without ceasing reminded me of playing background music. While not always conscious of the melodies, the music provides a peaceful feeling. A prayerful attitude sets the stage for sweet communion with God, even when not actively or audibly praying.

Like rejoicing and praying without ceasing, giving thanks in all circumstances did not come naturally. Unfortunately, Paul did not say to give thanks, “Unless your circumstances are really crummy.” He said to give thanks in all circumstances. Although I was learning to rejoice amid the trial by focusing on God’s wondrous attributes, actually being thankful for this period of time was another story.

Again, the Word of God brought clarity. Philippians 4:8 says, “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything

is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” Thankfulness breaks through when we dwell on the positives. Though not an easy task during trials, encouraging thoughts provide the avenue to thankfulness.

My mother-in-law’s disease progressed to the point of her needing full-time care. At that time in our lives, we were able to move her into our home. The timing was cause for thanksgiving. Despite her Parkinson’s-induced dementia, this matriarch of our family never failed to recognize her children or grandchildren. She did not know what she ate for lunch twenty minutes before, but she remembered the names of her seven grandkids. Again, reason to celebrate. My husband’s mom loved and served the Lord all her adult life and her faith never wavered. I talked about those blessings with the Lord and discovered rejoicing does help ease the burden.

Welcoming our loved one into our home and becoming full time caregivers, though the right thing to do, was not easy. Change seldom is. Whether it’s a job change, relationship loss, health issue or other life adjustment, unexpected and unwanted transition creates grief. Through the ups-and-downs of life, there remains One who never changes—Jesus.

Barbara Gordon began freelance writing when she retired from public school teaching and administration. She lives in a small town in western Missouri with her husband of 40 years and enjoys family time with three sons, three daughters-in-law and six grandchildren.





Quiet Time

By Jean Roach

When I first gave my life to Jesus, I learned right away that it was very important to observe specific prayer time every day. Since I was a single mom of three young children, I saw immediately how starting my day off in prayer gave me strength and direction and prepared me for the busy day ahead.

I have always been a morning person, so it was not very hard for me to rise at 6am, an hour before it was time

to get my sons ready for school. My daughter was still a baby and stayed home with me.



This worked well for several years. I loved that time with the Lord, giving Him my worries and concerns of the day, growing in knowledge of the Scriptures, and listening for His still small voice.

“Cast all your cares on Him because He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7).

“Draw close to God, and He will draw close to you” (James 4:8).

However, there came a day when everything changed. My daughter was now in school. One morning I had just settled on the couch with my Bible and journal when she sleepily walked in and sat down next to me. I put aside my quiet time for later.

The next day, I got up at 5 a.m. to assure that my daughter would still be asleep. However, the same thing happened.

Finally, I got up at 4 a.m. and sat out on the driveway. It was so beautiful, and I wished that I had tried this time sooner.

I was listening to the sounds of the dawn when I heard, “Hi Mommy.”

I turned and saw my daughter standing in the door. I jumped up, turned around, and started yelling, “Leave me alone! Can’t you see that I’m praying?”

With these words ringing in my ears, I stood in shock—then I sat

down, ashamed of such an outburst at my little girl. It was then that I heard the still small voice within, “Who do you think woke her up? I want her to see you praying. I want her to see you leaning on Me.”

I rushed up to her, took her in my arms and asked her to forgive me.

From this point on, I noticed that the Holy Spirit moved my children on many occasions to interrupt my time no matter what time I decided to have it.

In reading the Gospels, I learned that Jesus lived a life of interruption. There was always a miracle at each interruption.

My miracle? Many years later when my daughter had graduated from college and was living in another city, I called her, “Hi, watcha up to?”

“Sitting outside with my Bible and books.” Laughingly, she added, “I

remind myself of you!”

I was to learn later that she had been making a life decision.

And today, when I walk into her house, there is a plaque over the French doors that reads:

“As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15) NAB.



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.*

As for me and my
household, we will
serve the Lord.

Joshua 24:15, NAB

A random act of

Kindness

By Hilda Dege



There was an unexpected knock upon my door the other day. As I went to answer it, I wondered, “Who can that be?”

A gray-haired gentleman was standing there.

“Are you Hilda?”

“Yes.”

“Do you remember me?”

I stared for a moment before I noticed that his wife was standing off to the side.

He said, “I came to look at your records a little while back.” I nodded. I had sorted out over two hundred LP’s and about two hundred and fifty 45’s.

I answered an ad in the paper, “Records wanted.” He had come over a week or two ago and glanced through the whole collection. He only found five little 45’s that he was interested in. He wasted his time and gasoline for that? I felt bad that my collection was such a disappointment to him; so when he offered to pay, I didn’t charge him anything.

Now, he was standing here staring at me. I was wondering, “What could he want? If one was scratched, what did it matter, since there was no charge? Perhaps he wanted to look again.”

“I was at a loss for words. Then he said, “I found five forty-fives, and since you were nice enough to give them to me without charging, I wanted to share this with you. I sold one of them for two-hundred dollars.

“Which one?”

He evaded the question and said, “Hold out your hand.”

Then, he proceeded to count “Twenty, forty, sixty, eighty, one hun-

dred. I sold one of them for two-hundred dollars, so I wanted to split this with you.”

I had initially thought that he was giving me twenty dollars—but five twenties? Wow! I was a little shocked as he walked away. “Thank you—have a nice day.”

He didn’t have to do that. I would have never known that he had profited on the deal. Perhaps he was an angel unawares.

I offer up the sacrifice of praise to God and thank Him for sending forth His angels. I pray that I will always be considerate of others, and that I will be able to put their needs above my own.

Even if this man was not an angel, I pray that God will bless him for his kindness and caring spirit. Hebrews 13:1-2 says, “Let brotherly love continue, be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”

Hilda Dege is a member of First Baptist Church in Newport, KY. She is a widow and enjoys devoting her time to writing. She has published a variety of articles and poems in other publications.

HOW CAN *BREAKTHROUGH* MAINTAIN A NETWORK OF NEARLY 4,000 INTERCESSORS WHO PRAY FAITHFULLY AND INDIVIDUALLY FOR EACH REQUEST THEY RECEIVE?

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**Has God taught you about prayer?
Has He answered prayer and you want to share it?
Do you write prayer poetry?
The Intercessor's editors welcome submissions!**

Some Guidelines:

- **Articles:** 500 to 1,000 words; **Poems:** 12 lines minimum
- **Topic must focus on prayer:** an experience or teaching supported in Scripture
- **Authors give Breakthrough permission to edit material for length and content**

Email: editor@intercessors.org Mail: Breakthrough Editor, P.O. Box 121, Lincoln, VA 20160



A Faithful Mentor

By Eleanor Shepherd

Eleanor Shepherd shares about the love and faithfulness shown to her by her mentor, Catherine Marshall, the founder of Breakthrough Intercessors.

Before that practice became common, I discovered what a boost having a mentor gave to my spiritual development.

It was not a textbook mentoring situation; I never even spoke with my mentor, Catherine Marshall, in person. I did exchange a few letters with her husband many years ago after someone sent him a published article that I wrote about her influence on me. Carrying on the intercessory prayer ministry she started, he encouraged me to become involved and eventually I became an intercessor.

From Catherine, I learned how faith impacts the diversity of situations that life brings our way. She shared principles she learned while traveling her own complex faith journey.

During her unique pilgrimage, she encountered fragile health that kept her in her bed for a few years, as well as the widowhood that rendered her a single mother. She shared the resources that sustained her and spurned easy answers. She persisted in searching Scripture until she found resolutions for the tough issues. At the same time, she learned that she must sometimes settle for living with contradiction.

Catherine came to see that God is always there, even when disappointment and unanswered prayer shouted otherwise. She shared the pain of losing her precious grandchild, her

namesake, who lived only six weeks before following her older brother to Heaven. Like the Psalmist, Catherine bravely explored the depths of emotion such an experience brought to her. She found that God could handle her emotional turmoil, even when she felt she could not.

Along her journey, she discovered the transformative power of praise in the most challenging circumstances. It released God's power in her life in a way that ignited tremendous creative energy. She modeled the joy of a grateful heart.

From the depth of her own experiences, Catherine learned the wisdom and power of forgiveness. She went beyond God's forgiveness to explore the importance of choosing to forgive others. Eventually, her example enabled me to apply her methods in my own intimate relationships. Then I realized what a wonderful gift she had given me.

The mentoring provided by Catherine on the difficult subject of obedience to the nudges of God's Spirit has been crucial in the development of my own prayer life. Her vast knowledge of the Scriptures, on this topic as well as on many others validated her teaching.

As a young adult, I naively believed that evil was some kind of nebulous

Following the pattern of the Lord Jesus, whom she loved so much, Catherine pointed to a mentor who would be available even after she was gone.

influence in our world. However, Catherine convinced me from the Scriptures and her own life adventures that we are living in a battleground where real forces for good and evil strive to control our lives. She helped me understand that the enemy of our souls likes nothing better than to lull us into thinking that he is harmless and not a threat to our faith. She awoke me to the reality of spiritual warfare.

A complex issue that Catherine was forced to grapple with was the question of healing. She outlined the sovereignty of God and the reality that sometimes He chooses to grant physical healing and sometimes He does not.

Her experience and intensive study of Scripture furnished benchmarks for my own explorations a few years later. What I learned from her, I had to apply when my son became a quadriplegic in a car accident fifteen years ago. People around the world have prayed for him from that day, yet still he remains paralyzed. Catherine's mentoring helped me hold on to faith when I could not understand God's silence.

Following the pattern of the Lord Jesus, whom she loved so much, Catherine pointed to a mentor, who would be available even after she was gone. He is the One whom Jesus promised, the Holy Spirit. As He was for Catherine He became my teacher. As through the years my faith has grown and stretched, I have been aware of His gentle prodding and the lessons He is teaching me. Even though I missed Catherine when she died, I knew I could keep learning from Someone even wiser than she was.

Catherine was a dreamer and a

dream catcher. From her I learned to value the dreams God planted in my heart, especially my dream of being a writer. Her encouragement has kept me writing, article after article until now more than one hundred of them have appeared in print. It has kept the dream going through the discouragement of rejections and through the publications of my own book and my contributions to several books written with others. Her example encourages me to help others to pursue their dreams as well, especially potential writers.

The day will come when at last my mentor and I will be able to talk together about all we have learned of God's faithfulness as we have seen our dreams fulfilled and how he has done for us more than we could ask or imagine. I look forward to telling her in person how much she has meant to me. It will be a joy to introduce myself to the author Catherine Marshall. Until then, I plan to continue to put into practice what she taught me and mentor those who follow.

Eleanor Shepherd *has been an Intercessor since 1997. In her book, More Questions than Answers: Sharing Faith*



by Listening, she shares ways prayer shaped her listening skills. She considers Catherine Marshall her spiritual mentor and intercession has done more than she ever dreamed.



The Greatest Gift Of All

By Roy Borges

Opportunities to show others God's love while I am incarcerated in a Florida prison come daily. God set the paradigm: "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have Eternal Life" (John 3:16).

For a long time, I focused on the part of this verse that promises us we won't perish. However, the primary purpose of Jesus coming to earth was to show us how much God loves us and how much we love Him.

God's love for us is His greatest gift. Jesus said, "To love the Lord Your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment" (Matthew 22:37, 38).

What did He mean by "First?" Put

first things first: love God, then love others. Loving God is the first priority. It's the most important commandment and, if you love God, you will love others.

"God so loved the world," is an amazing truth, not a slogan created to wear on a T-shirt. Jesus tells us in this verse who God is and how deeply He cares for us.

The Apostle John says, "We love because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). God's love is the source of all

human love, for “God is Love” (1 John 4:8).

The world, with its shallow and selfish view of love, has turned these words around and contaminated our understanding of love. The world thinks that love is what makes a person feel good and that it is all right to do whatever you want to obtain such love. But that isn’t real love. Real love is an action not a feeling. It produces selfless, sacrificial giving. Giving ourselves to others with no thought of getting anything in return.

Jesus goes on to say, “The second commandment is like the first: Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39).

The knowledge that God loved me so much that He gave His only Son for my salvation is what drives me to love those like me who society has condemned. We are still precious to Him, and I can express my love to Him in return by sharing His love with them. How we treat others will show God how much we love Him.

My roommate doesn’t have anyone left on the outside, so he has very little on the inside. Every morning I give him a cup of coffee. He doesn’t like to ask me for a cup so I just make him one when I make mine. But I wanted to do more. It meant I had to be unselfish. Instead of looking for excuses for not giving him something or for not doing something for him, I had to sacrifice something: time or money. This kind of love went against my natural inclinations. I needed God’s help to set aside my own desires and instincts. I could show my roommate love while expecting nothing in return. Thus, the more I showed my

roommate this kind of love the more I showed God how much I loved Him. Yes, Jesus came to forgive us of our sins, but He accomplished much more and gave us the greatest gift of all—LOVE.

Mother Teresa said it well in *No Greater Love, Commemorative Edition*: “Love has a hem to her garment that reaches the very dust. It sweeps the streets and lanes, and it because it can, it must.”

Without love, we produce very little. Love makes us useful and is available to all. It’s the greatest gift. The Apostle Paul learned the lesson well.

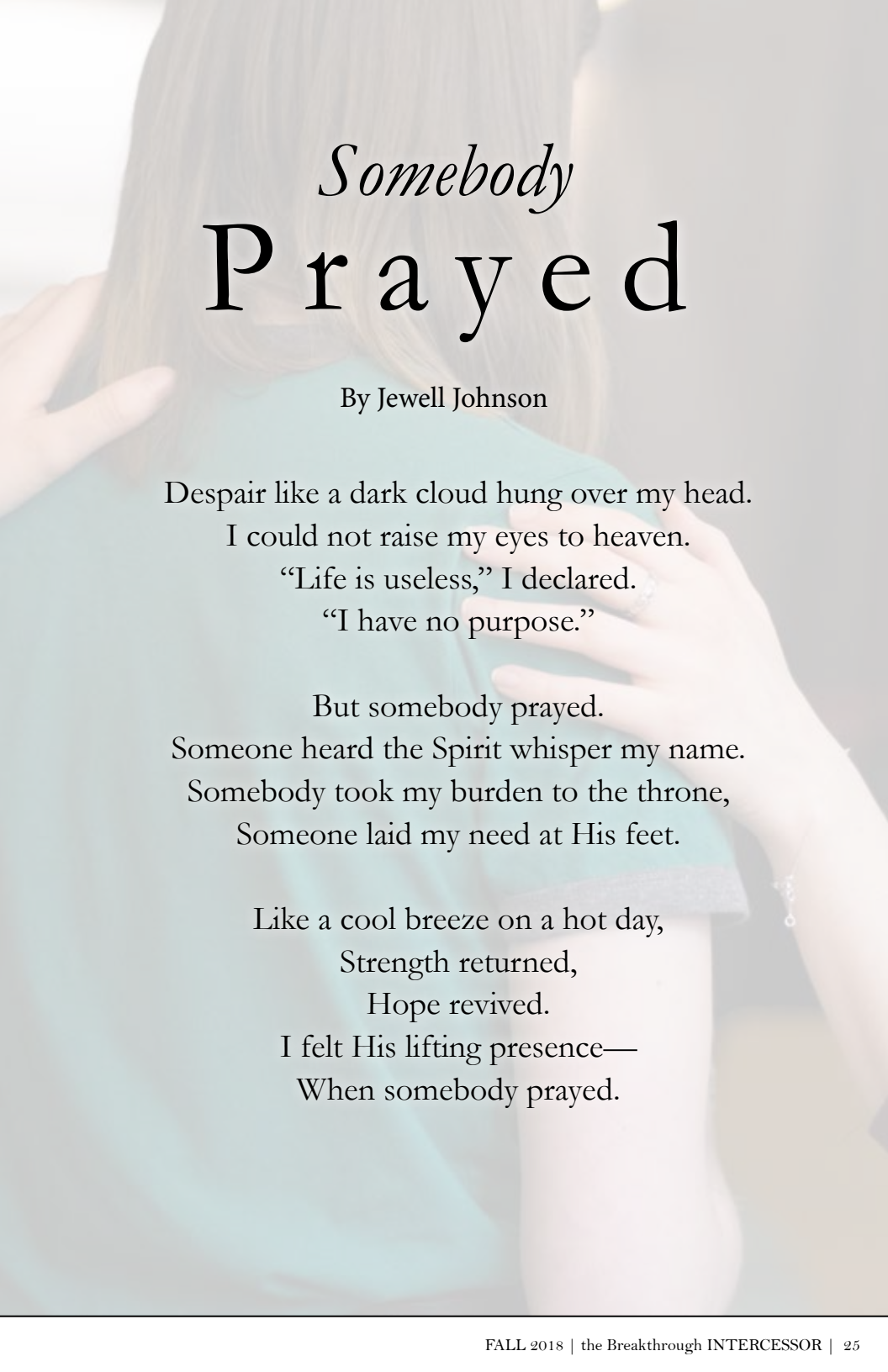
He writes, “Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law” (Romans 13:8).

Paul was a Pharisee and thought that keeping the law and following the rules and customs was more important than anything. But then he met Jesus on the road to Damascus and he wrote the greatest chapter on love ever written, which ends with this verse:

“And now abide Faith, Hope, Love, these three, but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13).

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.





Somebody Prayed

By Jewell Johnson

Despair like a dark cloud hung over my head.
I could not raise my eyes to heaven.
“Life is useless,” I declared.
“I have no purpose.”

But somebody prayed.
Someone heard the Spirit whisper my name.
Somebody took my burden to the throne,
Someone laid my need at His feet.

Like a cool breeze on a hot day,
Strength returned,
Hope revived.
I felt His lifting presence—
When somebody prayed.



God Holds the Key

By Roxie Olmstead

I never cease to be amazed by how God answers our prayers. He works in ways we could never imagine.

When my daughter Sherry took her nine-year-old twin granddaughters for their first visit to Yellowstone National Park, I accompanied them. We lived about four hours from the park and arrived early afternoon. That afternoon, we drove around to show the twins some points of interest.

We had a full, exciting day planned the next day. It was early August and never had we seen such a huge number of visitors on previous visits. On our first stop at North Geyser Basin, we drove through the parking lot four times, but could not find an empty parking spot. We thought, perhaps, we might back-track later and went on to the next site, Fountain Paint Pots. We encountered the same problem there—no empty parking spaces. At the third sight, we found a parking spot and showed the twins Gibbon's Falls. On our way back to the car, Sherry discovered her car key was missing

from her fanny-pack. When she had locked the car, she thought she had a spare key in the car, but we couldn't get into the car.

There was no park ranger at this point. Sherry had adjusted her fanny-pack as we began walking to the falls. She now discovered the pocket in which she had deposited the key was unzipped and reasoned it must have fallen out. We back-tracked looking for the key and calling out, "Anybody find a key?" To each group of visitors, but no response.

Sherry and I are both Christians and silently offered prayers up to God for help each in our own way. We were discussing what we should do next when a car parked near where we were standing. Two gentlemen got out and Sherry said, "I lost my car key." One of the gentlemen said, "I'm an off-duty park ranger and I can help." Hallelujah! Sherry felt like she witnessed when she



told him he was an answer to prayer and he seemed uncomfortable with that. He had a walkie-talkie, but the reception was bad, so he drove about five miles away and sent a forest ranger with equipment to break into the car. The ranger was able to get into the car in a matter of seconds. Sherry got the extra key and we were, once again, on our way.

Sherry and I compared our prayers and found out we both had prayed specifically for a forest ranger. Although we didn't ask for an off-duty one, God had supplied her need. Sherry had kept her "cool" through the whole ordeal. She witnessed to the twins through the situation, explaining there was no use in getting upset over an inconvenience—just be patient and pray. She told them we were delayed for some reason and something good would happen to us that day.

We went to see Old Faithful erupt, walking on the board walk where we safely saw many other geysers. Sherry pointed out the one known as Beehive, remarking that she had been fortunate

to see it erupt twice. She explained to the twins that it isn't dependable like Old Faithful. It is unpredictable and she just happened to be there at the right time to see it.

Later we were in the Visitors Center and Museum when a woman ran in yelling that Beehive was going off. We all ran out to watch it. Sherry reminded the twins that if we hadn't been delayed by an inconvenience we would have missed it.

As we were driving home the next day, Sherry asked the twins what they liked most about the park. I expected them to say, "Old Faithful." I knew Sherry handled her key loss correctly when one of them said, "Grandma losing her key."



Roxie Olmstead *took up writing in her late 50s and had her first poem published at 60. Today, in her 90s, she's published over 200 pieces and continues to write in a variety of genres.*

Answers to Prayer

A FRIENDSHIP REVIVED

Barbara shares that her friend, Jeanne, whom she has not seen in over 50 years, reconnected with her. She drove one and a half hours to visit Barbara!

share one house together and make it into a home. After eight months, she says that God provided—but in a different way. Still loving and sharing, they now have their own affordable apartments. “God’s way brought peace,” she says.

AN INVITATION

Ana’s daughter has not spoken to her for three years. She prayed about this everyday, and last week she received an invitation to visit her daughter and the grandchildren in November. It is only through God’s grace that this happened.

DELIVERY FROM DEPRESSION

Beverly’s granddaughter was delivered from deep depression. Praise the Lord!

GOD’S WAY

Shirley and her three sisters wanted to

ULTRASOUND MIRACLE

Karen’s friend, a young woman, was told that her baby had a 50% chance of surviving in utero. She recently had



another ultrasound, and her cervix has closed all the way and her baby gained three ounces. She has been taken off of bed rest and is now facing a more promising date of delivery. Praise God!

LIFE ON “RESET”

Virginia submitted a prayer request for her daughter, who was experiencing terrible bullying. Today, her daughter is healing emotionally and describes her life as being on “reset.” She is drawing closer to Christ.

STOP SIGN SAVIOR

Donna shares that her son was in an accident that could have taken his life. A man ran a stop sign and

totaled both of their cars. They could have easily been killed, but both men walked away with no critical injuries. Thank the Lord!

GOD’S FINGERPRINTS

Marie’s daughter has been searching for a job. The day that the intercessors began to pray for her daughter, three job openings presented themselves and she applied for all three. One resulted in an immediate interview two days later, and she was hired! According to Marie, the job has “God’s fingerprints” all over it. The hours are perfect, she is able to get her sons off to school and be at home when they return. Praise God!

continued on next page

A DOUBLE PORTION

Janelle requested prayers for her son to receive his law degree and successfully pass the bar. After three attempts, he succeeded, and received two job offers last month—one for a temporary law job and one for a permanent job this fall. She says, “God blessed us with a double portion!”

PERFECT TIMING

Mary was concerned about her aging, 90-year-old mother, who needed additional care. Her prayers were answered! An inheritance was released into Mary’s family, and the money is able to go towards her mother’s account for keeping up the house so that she can continue to live at home.

HEALING FROM THE LORD

Everlita requested prayer for her husband, David, who was diagnosed with stage two colon cancer in early 2018. After undergoing surgery to remove the tumor in his colon, they continued to trust in God’s faithfulness. After the surgery, the surgeon, oncologist, and gastroenterologist confirmed that David was cleared!

FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION

Pam endured an abusive marriage and subsequent divorce. She is overjoyed to know that her ex-husband explained to his children that he was not right with God when they were married, and his heart state resulted in their failed marriage. His daughter came over to her house last week in reconciliation, and she is now living for the Lord as a result.

A GODLY UNION AND GROWING FAMILY

Judy praises God for her son’s new wife, a Christian woman who he married almost two years ago. They come from similar situations, and she has three daughters and her son has two daughters who are all about the same age. Praise God for happily united families!

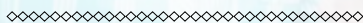
THE PERFECT CARETAKER

Jane requested prayer for a good caretaker for her husband, who was recently hospitalized. Not only did they find the perfect lady to help in the home, but she is also very organized and has multiple skills. Praise the Lord.

Answers to Prayer are edited for publication.



GIFTS



A gift from Major Darwin McAfee, Ret. in honor of his wife,

Edna McAfee

“Edna was promoted to glory on March 31, 2018. Praise God for over 63 years together serving him in combating world hunger and in various other ways.” - Major Darwin McAfee

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