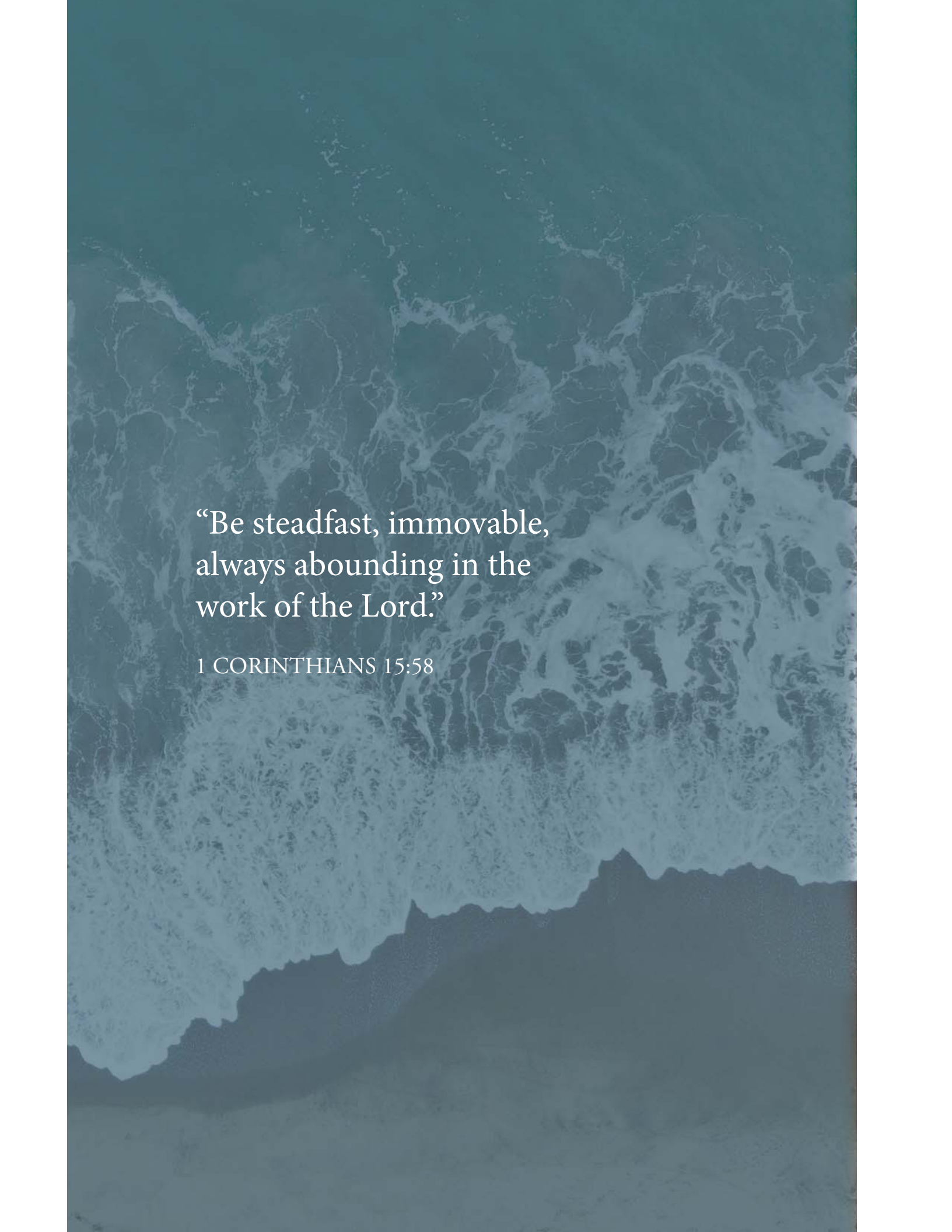


The Breakthrough
INTERCESSOR
Summer 2021

Standing In Him

The Magazine About Prayer



“Be steadfast, immovable,
always abounding in the
work of the Lord.”

1 CORINTHIANS 15:58

The Breakthrough
INTERCESSOR

SUMMER 2021
Vol. 42, Issue 2

Founders Catherine Marshall
Leonard LeSourd

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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.



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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. (Prayer requests are identified by first name only, and are never sent to intercessors in the same geographic location as the prayer requester.) 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 over 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.

The 21-day prayer period was chosen based on the story in Daniel 10. Daniel prayed 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 greatly 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 and joy to pray for you.





Several years ago, the organization I work for went through a very difficult audit by the IRS that took over five years to resolve. I was assigned the responsibility of resolving the audit. At times, it was very scary and I feared the outcome. I spent many hours answering questions from the IRS agent who was assigned to our case.

During our first meeting, the agent shared that she believed we had improperly been given a tax-exempt status, even though we are a 501C3 membership organization. She intended to legally revoke our status. This would result in a significant payment of money to the IRS and have meant the end of our organization, resulting in upheaval and uncertainty for many of our member families.

Through God's grace, we were assigned a new agent who was a supervisor. After one visit, he closed our case telling me, "I don't find any problem with your organization and we are closing our investigation."

Praise the Lord, right?

Not more than two weeks later, I received a sharp blow to the gut. In my mail was a letter from the IRS saying they were going to audit our sister organization. I was shaken and fearful. As I walked down the hall to share the letter with our Chief Administrative Officer, the Lord reminded me of a Bible verse, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6).

Before I reached my destination, I stopped to pray for God's help and even thanked Him for the audit, not because I was happy about it, but because I wanted to be obedient to the Word.

The second audit worked out favorably, and was concluded in a short amount of time. The agent approved our organization and made suggestions on how we could be more efficient. Praying according to the Word of God, especially during scary, difficult times, invites God to demonstrate His power and love on our behalf.

Thank you for faithfully supporting our ministry!

J. Michael Smith, Esq
Chairman of the Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Michael Smith".

Breakthrough's financial statement is available upon your written request to
The Office of Charitable and Regulatory Programs,
P.O. Box 526, Richmond, VA 23218

The Rain

BY SUSAN PARR

The day will come and you will see
His glory manifest, magnificently
Like you have desired, wished you could see
He is all and more you thought He could be

The mighty King, the King of glory
Great and mighty, you'll tell the story
You'll see His plan, His mercy unfold
Pouring before you as has been foretold

The Rain, the Rain, His Spirit descend
Like never before 'til His manifested end

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Susan has authored 18 books, ranging from children's literature to books on prayer. She has owned and operated her own business, Word Productions LLC, for over 30 years, and has experience in design, publishing, writing, and editing. She

has also worked in other capacities as a Chaplain for a Rapid Response Team with the Billy Graham Association, and has done other crisis response work with Baptist Disaster Relief.

WAYS TO GIVE

Thank you
for your
support!

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

A **Your support.**

Gifts of Stock

Maximize tax-deductible contributions by making a charitable stock donation with an account you have owned for at least one year. You won't pay capital gains tax and will receive an income tax deduction for the asset's full fair market value.

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If you would like to make a stock gift, please contact our office for directions.

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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 wording: "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."



Great Faith

BY ROY BORGES

Great faith means believing that God can accomplish the impossible. I believe that God can get me out of prison. He opened the prison doors for many people in the Bible. I have been in prison for 30

“I know He could get me out if He wanted to.

years, and I know God can accomplish the impossible. But sometimes I wonder if I am capable of great faith.

Sometimes, I think that God doesn't want me to get out of prison. He has some things He still wants to teach me, things that I still need to do. I know He could get me out if He wanted too.

He is omniscient and omnipotent. He knows what's best for me, and I trust Him completely. I cannot lose with Him on my side. So no matter what happens, He will always be my God.

In the meantime, I am taking advantage of all the opportunities to become a better person here in prison. I want to be better equipped to serve Him. The Bible says that “faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1) When I look back at what God has done in my life I can see the evidence that gives me hope for the future.

He has done many things during this time in prison, and I am truly grateful. He gave my life meaning and purpose beyond my expectations. I will continue to thank Him for prison, because prison is where I had the most difficult times of my life and it is where God has taught me the most important things in my life: to love my enemies, to be kind to others, to forgive, and to trust God in difficult circumstances.

Although it is difficult to accept being in prison, I know God can turn my tragedy into something good (Romans 8:28). He did it for Joseph and many others, and I believe He can do it for me. I may not understand all of His methods, but I know He will never forsake me.

Confidence and certainty are two words that describe my faith. They are where I begin and end with trusting in God. He is who He says He is—that's

my confidence. He will do what He says. He will keep His promises—that’s my certainty. Great faith is when we believe that God will fulfill His promises even though we don’t see those promises materializing. Jesus said,

“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe” (John 20:29).

I believe that God will make a way in His timing for me to get out and just as He has used my experience in prison to bless me and to accomplish His purposes.

“*Great faith is when we believe that God will fulfill His promises even though we don’t see those promises materializing.*”

He will use my experience out in the world to bless me and to accomplish His will. Prison has prepared me to do the Lord’s work just like it prepared Joseph to do Pharaoh’s work.

However, doubtful thoughts still cloud my mind. In God I place my

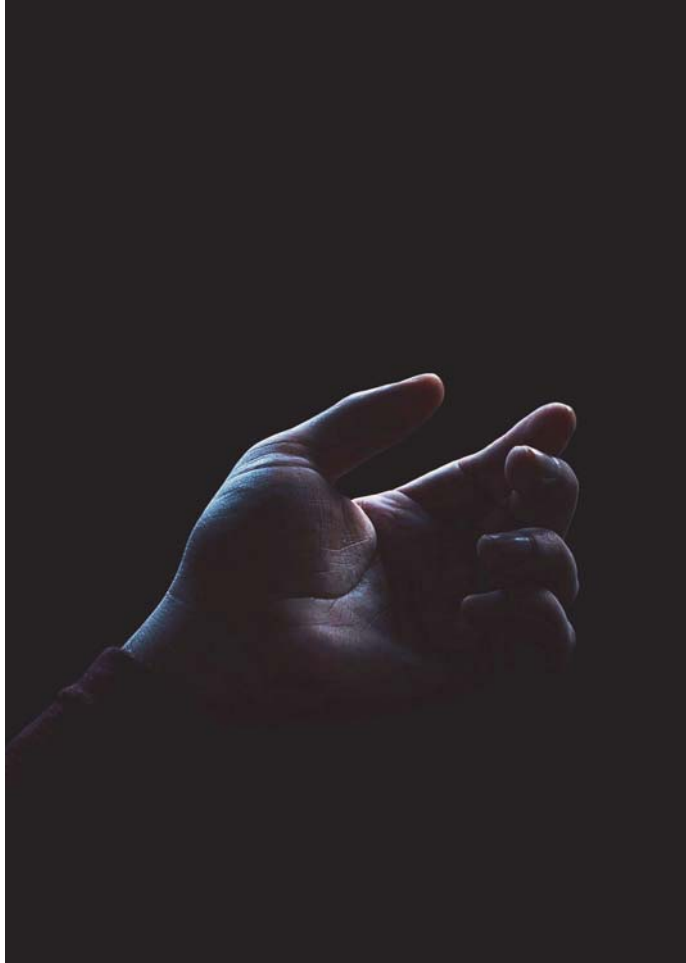
trust; He will see me through.

Great faith grows with certainty and it will build confidence, so I can continue to do His will wherever I am.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

After over 30 years in prison, Roy’s prayers were answered, and he was released in 2021. He wrote, “God got me out of prison so I could be used out here. I am writing stories and articles. I plan to go to many churches and tell them about the things He did for me in prison and what He is doing now.”



365 Day Invitation

BY ERIN KASCHUB

past I had occasionally prayed for an overworked store employee, homeless person, or downtrodden pedestrian; but, this was a mandate to be intentional and I was ready to take on the task.

Day one was an ordinary Saturday filled with errands. Normally, I would have hurried through the tasks as quickly as possible, in an effort to arrive home early enough to cook dinner and do some laundry. I would not have given other fellow shoppers a glance, much less a prayer. However, this Saturday was different. I was intentional to look around for those who needed prayer.

One simple look at the market found many people in need. There was a man hobbling around on a crooked leg. He needed prayers for health. The woman who brushed against me smelled of urine. I prayed for her health as well.

I saw a couple fighting over what they could afford to buy. I also saw rebellious children who scoffed at their parents. Some of the cashiers were cranky and others were looking at their phones, rather than at the customers.

Prior trips to the market would have found me so self-focused that I would not have noticed the concerns of others. Or, if I had noticed before,

The brief book synopsis garnered my attention. A prolific writer about prayer was summing up a new way to pray. Her method of praying became my launching point for the next 12 months.

Although I do not remember the name of the book's author, nor do I remember its exact title, the invitation to join her experiment riveted me. She issued a call to pray a specific way for an entire year. Even though January had come and gone, I was excited to begin the specified prayer. I reasoned that I could easily start in my current month and carry it through to the corresponding month the following year.

What was the daring prayer that caught my attention and jump-started this new way of praying? It was a challenge to pray for one stranger every day for an entire year. In the

I would have made a quick judgment. But today, God had called me specifically to pray. He had, after all, allowed these particular individuals to be in the same store at the exact same time as I. There are no coincidences with God.

The people around me were children of God, to whom He directed me to for a reason. It was not my assignment to judge who needed salvation. It was simply to pray. I prayed health for the man with a serious limp, peace in the families with conflict, open eyes for the individuals who wore t-shirts with anti-biblical messages, and salvation for the ones whose mouths were full of profanity.

Throughout the trip to three stores that day, I only saw one person with whom I was slightly familiar, a man who worked the produce although he did not know who I was. I struck up a very brief conversation with him so as not to impede his job.

“How are you today?” I asked. I followed up by asking about his wife and girls. Although he returned the nicety by inquiring about me, I quickly returned the conversation to him. “Thank you for all you do.”

He seemed appreciative. Perhaps I was the only one to thank him that particular day. But, the compliment was not the reason God sent me to the store. God sent me to pray. In obedience, I sent up a quick prayer.

A few days later, I mentally tallied how many strangers I had prayed for since the challenge began. It surprised me to realize that the number had exceeded the number of days in the current year. Even though I had begun the 365 day challenge late into

the year, I had “caught up.”

There are so many strangers who need our prayers. The news beckons 000000000prayers. Ambulances that speed past us certainly need our prayers. Christian teachers who are taking a biblical stand need prayer. Police officers, firemen, and our military need prayer. Hurting people around the world, including Christians in communist countries, need our prayers.

During the pandemic, I was amazed to read about the “Yellow Angels.” These were underground Chinese Christians. When the virus initially broke out, they were more concerned about the millions of people in their country who did not know Christ. Rather than continuing to hide as Christians in a communist nation, they came out of hiding.

This courageous group of people dressed in yellow Hazmat suits purposefully stood near major subways, intersections, and crowded areas of China. They handed out tracts and offered prayers to all who passed by.





They knew they could be imprisoned, tortured, and killed for exposing themselves as Christians. But, they were more concerned for the lost souls in their country.

If heroic Christians in other countries are willing to risk their jobs, families, health, and lives to daily give out the Gospel, how can we sit idly by without praying for the world around us? And now, dear reader, I would like to extend the challenge to you. The gauntlet has been thrown down.

You can start today and pray for one person each day until this same time next year.

Even if you cannot currently leave your home, you can pray for the people on your Breakthrough prayer list, impoverished people in Third-World countries, missionaries, people in church newsletters, and Christians who are persecuted worldwide. Precious prayer warrior, will you accept the invitation to pray for one stranger each day?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



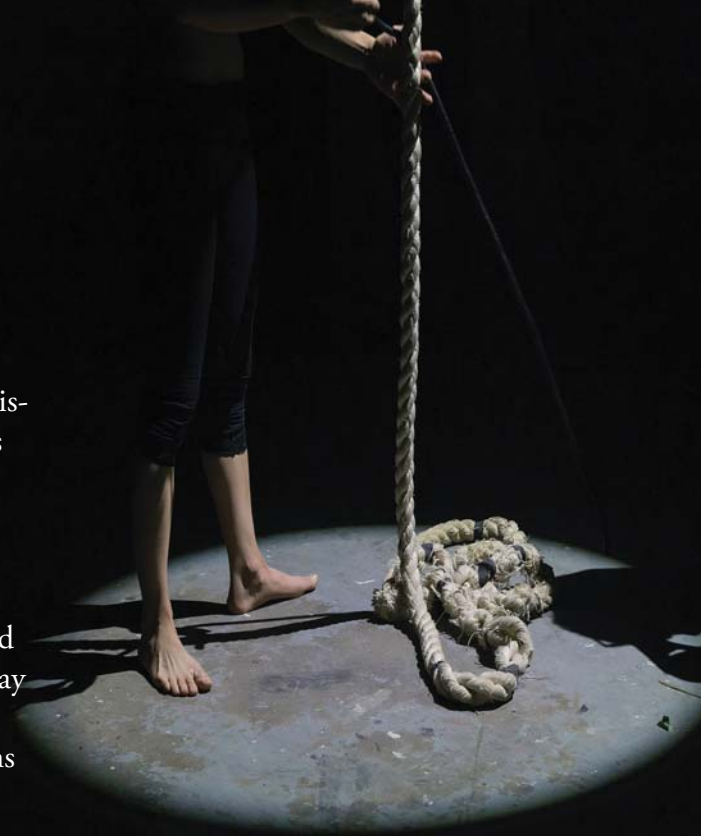
Erin enjoys teaching Sunday School to forth grade girls at her church, as well as talking about all the wonderful things God has done.

Erin Kaschub has been an intercessor for over ten years. She lives with her family outside of Atlanta, where she enjoys teaching Sunday School to fourth-grade girls.

Someday...

BY JAMES BRYANT III

'Shame you've got to hear this from a Christian who broke all Ten Commandments
My life may end, but now
My fate is in His hands
Someday the killing will end
Death will cease, we're on the brink
We reap what we sow, God is not mocked
Thou shalt not murder, a heavy price to pay
Yet His grace He will bestow
Someday, he will forgive us for all our sins
Believe and trust
Receive eternity from our upmost and
highest Friend
Obedience makes us the allies of
Christ Jesus
His word we obey again and again
Someday, the killing will end
Death will cease
We're on the brink
We reap what we sow, God is not mocked
Thou shalt not murder, a heavy price to pay
Yet His grace He will bestow
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall
Be called the sons of God
No matter what it looks like, walk by faith
And with grace
Let your feet be shod
Someday, the only Just Judge will balance
the scales
"Vengeance is mine," says the Lord
Whenever all of the shouting is done,
There'll be Death and the Grave on a horse
That is pale
Someday, the killing will end.
Death will cease, we're on the brink
We reap what we sow, God is not mocked
Thou shalt not murder, a heavy price to pay
Yet His grace He will bestow



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



James Nate Bryant III is currently incarcerated on South Carolina Death Row for armed robbery and murder. He is a

native of South Carolina and came to a personal relationship with Jesus while in prison. He has been a Breakthrough Intercessor for over five years. He considers writing, editing and publishing his own book, *To God Be the Glory*, his personal breakthrough. His book is available on Amazon. James wrote this song before celebrating his 50th birthday in February. He hopes that readers will prayerfully consider his song, as he drew inspiration from Revelation 6:8.

A Fresh Perspective on Prophetic Intercession

BY BRIGETTE BLAIR

Prayer is one of the most beautiful expressions of our partnership with God, and connects us with His heart to move mountains. Prayer is a fulfilling sentiment of relationship, love, and trust.

Prophetic intercessory prayer is a type of expression to offer our petitions to the Lord. It is like a guided movie script played out in front of our spiritual eyes. It flows directly through the Holy Spirit, and your plan may be thrown out once it begins. Hearing and releasing are key to prophetic intercession. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus teaches us to pray: "thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread..." Prophetic intercession is aligning with the will of the Father and receiving the daily bread of His heart to release over the earth, specific situations, our leaders, and mankind. We are filled to release.

During prophetic intercession, we put our agenda and plan aside. Confidence and courage are key. We work our confidence and courage muscles by taking risks when we are novices. I remember when I first joined corporate prophetic intercession. I was nervous. I thought I was going to say the wrong thing and people would think I was not hearing God. I was afraid to make a mistake. With a shaky voice and butterflies in my stomach, I started speaking to declare how I felt led to pray. I prayed through pictures I saw, words I heard, and scriptures that came to mind. I began to gain confidence with every word I spoke and continued to grow as an intercessor.

To develop a gift of prophetic intercession, it is important to declare or pray through what you hear and see. Sometimes, you will receive a sense of how to pray but may not have clear direction for the entire prayer. You may hear one word, phrase, or you may see an image. The entire picture may not be complete at first. As you release the first word or image you receive and continue praying what you see and hear, your confidence will increase. Taking a risk to speak the first piece in faith will suddenly fling the door of prayer wide open, and you will be guided through images and scripture, releasing the heart to God as you pray.

When the images, scriptures, or words stop, close the prayer. If you continue, you may begin to pray in your flesh and not be led by the Spirit. Discipline is required to gracefully close and wait on the Lord again for His direction. Wanting to pray our way isn't the goal.

Our goal is to pray for the will of the Father, so we are aligned with His strategies and plans. Second Corinthians 10:4 says, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for the pulling down of strongholds." Stepping out of the carnal mind and into the mind of Christ is key to the victory and freedom we pray for our loved ones, communities, and world. The goal of prophetic intercession is to pray what is on the Father's heart and to leave our flesh out of it. When we do this, we know we are moving mountains in the Spirit and change is happening, prayers are being fulfilled, and breakthrough is on its way.

Here are 10 keys to developing your gift...

1. **Know what God says about prayer.** Second Chronicles 7:14 promises that if we humble ourselves and pray and turn from our wicked ways, God will forgive and heal our land.
2. **Be a lover of the Word and read daily.** Second Timothy 3:17 says the Word of God is given that we may be thoroughly equipped.
3. **Be open to how God can speak to you.** If you are praying and suddenly you see a picture in your mind, begin to pray and see where the Holy Spirit leads you.
4. **Pray out loud, always.** In Genesis chapter 1, God spoke to create. Embrace His example to speak and partner with His heart to heal, restore, and save.
5. **Write crafted prayers** (strategic and filled with the Word of God to declare and decree with divine strategy). Ephesians 6:17 says the sword of the spirit is the Word of God, so let's use it.
6. **Join a corporate prayer group.** Matthew 18:19-20 promises that when we gather and pray in unity, God will hear our prayers and answer them. Jesus promises to be with us.
7. **Pray out loud during corporate prayer** to follow God's example to speak. Partner with God and declare your prayers.
8. **Pray that what you hear lines up with God's heart, will, and Word.** Jeremiah 33:3 says to call to God, and He will answer you.
9. **Pray through pictures you see.** God spoke to Daniel and Paul and many others through visions. When you have a vision or a picture pray it through.
10. **Pray the Word.** The Word is the best weapon and if you line it up strategically to release God's truth, perspective, and promises, you will be spot-on 100% of the time.

Each one of us has a unique way of communicating with God. Develop your God language and work your courage muscles to release what you see and hear. If you do, you will change the world as a prophetic intercessor.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Brigitte is a passionate lover of Jesus who releases the expectancy and hope of living a life through Jesus Christ. Overcoming years of childhood adversity, she uses her voice to equip the church by releasing the testimony of God's faithfulness and power to break through the struggles that keep believers silent and stuck in their pain. Brigitte lives in Hollister, CA and has two children. She is the current CEO of Hollister Pregnancy Center and can be followed on Instagram at [@blairbrigitte](#) and receive encouragement through her blog at [teawithbrigitte.com](#) .

Are you a writer?

*The Intercessor welcomes
submissions!*



**Has God taught you about prayer?
Do you want to share your
story of answered prayer?
Do you write poetry about prayer?**

Send in your submissions for
consideration!

Guidelines...

Articles should be 500 to 1,000 words. Poems should be at least 12 lines.

Topic must focus on prayer: an experience or teaching supported in Scripture.

Authors give Breakthrough permission to edit material for length and content.



Send to...

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

MEMORIALS

Wayne and Gaye Edwards
In Loving Memory of

REV. W.A. CRAWFORD
and
JANICE CRAWFORD

“We were a newly married couple in the 60's.
They encouraged us greatly and discipled us
as good friends.”



Overcoming Discouragement in Prayer

BY CAROLYN RICE

I dropped from the anguish to the floor in my bedroom. My tears felt like an ocean that day, more bad news, more discouragement. When would this ever end?

The situation I'd been praying about for years seemed to be a mountain that would never go away. There was a natural way over it. Would this prayer ever be answered?

I lay on the floor, letting the tears and sobs escape from my heart. As I cried out to God, I told Him how discouraged I was. I asked Him how long He was going to let this continue?

Finally, I came to the place where my tears subsided and my sobs turned into sighs.

I sat up.

I knew I had a decision to make; I could quit, or I could decide to continue in prayer regardless if anything changed.

Sometimes, we've persevered so long that when we see nothing moving, it's tempting to give up and to lose hope. There are days when the thing we've been praying about has more bad news added to it rather than good, and it seems as if things are moving backward rather than forward.

How are we to keep standing when discouragement gives us a wallop that just about knocks us over? What are we to do when we don't even know how to pray anymore?

Here are some things we can do...

1. Decide not to quit

That day, I made an intentional decision that I would sit down and pray about this request on my heart whether or not I saw anything change. I had to decide that I wouldn't let my emotions or discouragement trip me up, but I would remember God hears my prayers and is working behind the scenes even when things might look worse.

"In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried out to my God,

He heard my voice from His temple. My cry came before Him, even to His ears” (Psalm 18:6).

2. Think on God’s promises

This difficult season in prayer came while attending Bible college. One day while people from the college surrounded me in prayer, a woman who was on staff looked up and said, “I feel you need to ask God to give you a scripture about this situation. (And you need to keep that scripture in front of your eyes every day.)”

I asked the Lord for that scripture and soon remembered a promise in the Bible that spoke to my heart about this situation.

In asking for this scripture, looking at it, praying it, and reminding myself of this promise, I found hope and the courage to keep praying. “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You” (Isaiah 26:3).

3. Thank Him

I learned to thank God that His promises are true and asked Him to move according to His word. I opened my Bible and prayed as I read, letting the Truth of God’s word guide my prayers, while also finding encouragement from the scriptures.

Over time, I saw the situation progress, sometimes only slightly. After a while, the mountain fell. The Lord had the victory, and I learned to continue to stand in prayer even when I was weary and discouraged. Our prayers mean so much to God. They are making a difference in this world. Keep praying. Keep remembering God’s promises, and keep thanking Him for the answer.

Do not give up, but continue, knowing that even when we don’t see anything get better around us, God is still moving behind the scenes. “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart” (Galatians 6:9).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carolyn Rice holds an Associate Degree from Seattle Bible College and has authored four books, including *Loved by the Father* and *God Sees Your Tears*. Find out more at CarolynBooks.com



Saint Paul From the Jail

BY PETER CALIGIURI

Be anxious for nothing
Wrote Saint Paul from the jail
Give God every worry, each
fear, and detail
Remember to thank Him and
praise from your heart
For He has been watching our
life from the start

And He answers with peace
Greater than we can know
His love gives us rest
And in Christ we have hope

So if you are passing through
sorrows and tests
Put it all in His hands
Only God knows what's best

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter and his wife Nancy have been married for 47 years and have two sons, six grandsons, and one wonderful grand-daughter! Recently, they retired and moved to the Gulf Coast of Florida and are members at Generations Christian Church.

Reviving the Tradition of Breath Prayers

BY KAREN FERGUSEN

“The earnest prayer of a righteous man has great power and wonderful results” (James 5:16).

There is power in prayer. Do you believe that? I mean, do you really believe that? If you're like most people, prayer may be your last resort. Maybe it's because we live in a world that praises independence and self-sufficiency. Maybe it's because we don't really believe God cares enough to listen. Whatever the reason, for most of us, our default is to worry.

When faced with a problem, we ask advice from others, weigh all our options, and perhaps read the latest self-help book. Then we worry.

Only when we are overwhelmed do we finally get on our knees before the Lord, literally or figuratively.

Can you relate?

I'm getting better at praying first, but it took a struggle with anxiety before I began moving toward what the Apostle Paul called “Praying without ceasing,” in 1 Thessalonians 5:17. For the longest time that threw me because who had the time to always pray? I used to think this was impossible, and that it must only apply to the first century Christians, who just didn't have that much to do back then. In hindsight, I know my error in thinking had to do with a faulty view of what prayer really is.

For years, I thought prayer was something done in church, in a group, or on my knees—but only when the house was quiet. Enter two rambunctious young daughters with their friends, and our house was hardly ever quiet. So, what's a frazzled mom to do? Ask for advice. Weigh the options. Read a book. Worry.

What I have uncovered is that God doesn't expect us to wait for the perfect time to pray. There is not one. He wants to talk with us throughout the day, everyday.

Simply put, prayer is about growing a relationship with God. Just as our relationships with family and friends won't grow unless we spend time together, sometimes talking and sometimes sitting quietly, our relationship with God won't grow unless we spend time with Him in the same way.

I think we make prayer too complicated. Have you ever heard children pray? They use simple, honest, and occasional surprising words straight from the heart. We can learn from them in this respect because prayer is simply talking to God, like you would a friend. It's saying what's on your heart and not what you think you're supposed to say. It's

turning off the white noise to listen for His voice.

I've been amazed at how much my life has improved since I began doing this.

In fact, it was a simpler approach to prayer that helped me finally get a handle on my anxiety. I stumbled across an ancient spiritual practice used by Christians for centuries, called Breath prayers, and I eagerly adopted it because it is so simple yet so effective in combating worry.

It's about catching our anxious thoughts immediately and turning them into short prayers that begin our conversation with God. Simple prayers such as:

"I give you my worries, Lord."

"I depend on you, God."

"Make a way, Lord."

"I trust in you, Jesus."

And my very favorite:

"Help me, Lord!"

This practice quickly became an effective way to take my troubling thoughts and turn my mind back to the only One who could provide the peace I so desperately needed. It's really a perfect model for what prayer should be—natural like breathing.

If you're like I am, it's in the hectic moments of life that you forget to pray, and you hold your breath and worry instead. This only leads to stress and can quickly turn into anxiety if left unchecked. Once I began capturing my worries and turning them into breath prayers instead, I noticed a significant decrease in my stress levels. I started worrying less and experiencing God's peace more.

My circumstances didn't necessarily change right away, but I did.

The Bible says, "We can be sure of this that He will listen to us whenever we ask Him for anything in line with His will" (1 John 5:14).

Here's what I know: our prayers invite and ignite the presence of God in our lives, which is exactly what we need to realize His powerful promise of peace. Fortunately, prayer is not complicated. In fact, God made it so simple that a child can do it.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In addition to being a writer, Karen is also an Intercessor with Breakthrough.



Dare to Trust God

BY CATHERINE MARHSALL

“Now don’t push the term faith at me,” a lawyer told me bluntly at a dinner party recently. “The word is like a red flag.”

“Why such a violent reaction?” I asked.

“Well, because I object to the way Christianity uses faith as a theological gimmick to duck all rational problems. At every point where a man wants to understand, they say, ‘You just have to have faith,’ or ‘Reason can only go so far.’ I resent it! I see nothing wrong with ‘Prove it to me first, then I’ll believe.’”

As we talked, I realized that it had never occurred to this intelligent, well-educated man that in his everyday life he often follows the reverse order—belief and acceptance first, then action. Every day he lives, he acts on faith many times with little proof or none at all, and he does not feel that he is being impractical.

He demonstrates an act of faith each time he boards a plane. He believes that it will take him to his destination, but he has no proof of it. He entrusts life itself to several unknown mechanics who have serviced the plane, as well as to a pilot about whom he knows nothing.


Each time he eats a meal in a restaurant he trusts some unknown cook behind the scenes and eats the food on faith, faith that it is not contaminated. He enters a hospital for an operation and signs a release giving permission for surgery. This is an act of faith in an anesthetist

“*If we were to insist on the “proof first, then faith” order in our daily lives, organized life as we know it would grind to a screeching halt.*

whose name he may not even know and a surgeon who holds in his hands the power of life or death.

He accepts a prescription from a doctor and takes it to a druggist, thus acting in faith that the pharmacist will fill the prescription accurately. The use of the wrong drug might be deadly, but he is not equipped to analyze the contents before swallowing the pill.





It is obvious that if we were to insist on the “proof first, then faith” order in our daily lives, organized life as we know it would grind to a screeching halt. And since life together among men is possible only by faith, as we act our trust in other people, it should not seem odd that the same law applies to our life with God.

The New Testament makes it clear that in the spiritual realm, when for some reason or other we refuse to act by faith, all activity stops just as completely as it does in the secular realm. There is no way for us even to take the first steps toward the Christian life except by faith, any more than a baby can get launched on his earthly life without blind baby-trust in his parents and other adults. We have to accept the fact of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ by faith, even as our young children accept the fact of parental love. For the child, as for the new Christian, understanding and proof come later.

In the same way, every step in our Christian walk has to be by faith.

In Jesus’ ministry of healing the spirit, the mind, and the body, faith seems to have been necessary before the divine act, not (as logic would have it) afterward.

The gospels are studded with statements of this:

And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.

Then touched he their eyes, saying

“According to your faith be it unto you... Jesus said... all things are possible to him that believeth.”

All that ever you ask in prayer, you shall have if you believe.

Much of my own problem with faith arose from an early misunderstanding of what faith is. First of all, I used to believe that faith had something to do with feeling. For example, when I had messed up some situation and had asked God for forgiveness, then I would peer inside myself to see if I felt forgiven. If I could locate such feelings, then I was sure that God had heard and had forgiven me. Now I know that this is an altogether false test of faith.



We would not be so foolish as to go to a railroad station, board the first car we saw, then sit down and try to feel whether or not this was the train that would take us where we wanted to go. Our feeling would obviously have no bearing on the facts. Yet I know now that at times my actions in the spiritual realm have been just that foolish.

Another misconception I once had was that faith is trying to believe something one is fairly certain is not true. But faith is not hocus-pocus, opposed to knowledge and reality. In fact, faith does not go against experience at all; rather it appeals to experience, just as science does. The difference is that it appeals to experience in a realm where our five senses are not supreme rulers.

Nor is faith a kind of spiritual coin which you and I can exchange for heaven's blessings. Nor is it simply believing doggedly in some particular doctrine. One can believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ and feel no personal loyalty to Him at all; indeed, pay no attention whatever to His commandments and His will for one's life. One can believe intellectually in the efficacy of prayer and never do any praying.

Perhaps one reason that the real meaning of faith eluded me personally for so many years was that it is so surprisingly simple, so practical. Faith in God is simply trusting Him enough to step out on that trust.

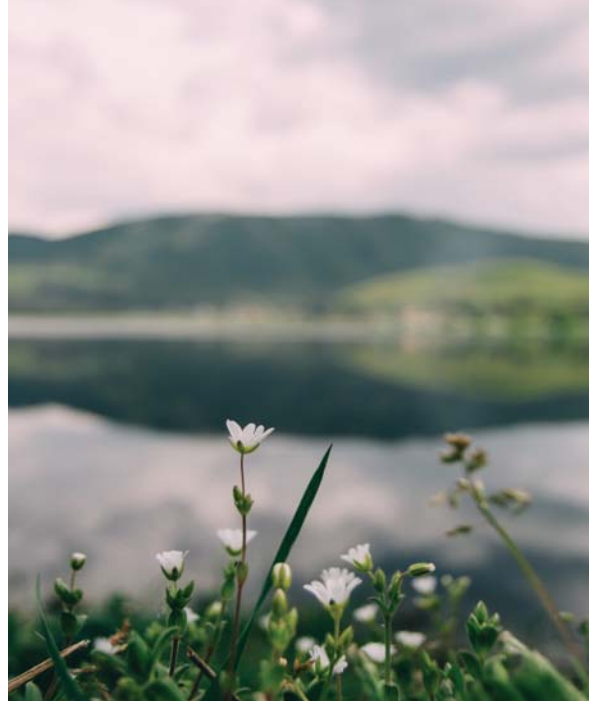
Excerpt from *Beyond Our Selves* by Catherine Marshall. Used with permission from Marshall-LeSourd LLC.

Prayer From My Heart

BY SHEILA Y. SMITH

When He calls to me, I listen, I listen close
Of all the ones I can learn from, from the Holy Spirit is the most
He reveals to me a word or a need
He speaks only Truth, so I believe
Some things for prayer are sent my way
I know that He listens each and everyday
When the spirit puts something or someone on my heart
I lift those to the Father, all not just a part
To speak to Him every day is the most important thing I do
I pray for others I pray for myself, too
Some things I give thanks for and do everyday
Then, I listen with my heart, the Spirit's presence is so real
Yesterday, I prayed only from a list given to me
Other words I prayed from memory
Some prayers I repeated over and over again
Dear Lord, I would always start and In Jesus's name, I would end
Prayer was something I did and was not a big deal
Then I had an encounter with the Holy Spirit that was real
The Spirit comes to reveal the Father's heart
To listen to Him is my part
I know to pray from deep within, to the surface my prayer does rise
Sometimes I sing my prayers, other times there are tears in my eyes
When I pray from my heart, I know that Father hears every word I say
Much more than yesterday, my prayer is so real today
I pray from my heart not just from a list or memory
I feel the Holy Spirit rising up in me
When I pray from my heart the Holy Spirit speaks clear
When I pray from my heart, He is so near
Before the first word from my lips comes praise
All praise to Jesus, my heart and hands I raise
Then in silence before Him I am still until I hear
I hear Him whisper in my ear

I pray from my heart because it is the Father's
heart to mine
I know that when I pray, He listens every
time
Some things I pray quickly, before I forget,
I pray for my friends, even ones I have not
met
I pray for the Holy Spirit to flow through me
I pray, Lord Jesus have your way
I pray giving thanks every day
When I pray, I am in His presence beyond
compare
Many times, of prayer with others I share
I pray as I lay down to sleep
I pray from my heart as He fills me, and my heart does overflow
I pray as I stand still, I pray as I go
As a child, I prayed, "Thank you Jesus for loving me so"
Now I pray from my heart to the Father, the Spirit, the Son
In prayer, sometimes I sing, sometimes I cry
He fills my life, my heart is why
I pray according to the Word, His will to be
I pray daily, it is a part of me
I pray from my heart as I can
He has my heart in His hand
I will pray as long as I breathe
He hears me, this I believe
I will pray with my heart until He takes me home
Home to the Father, where I belong
I will pray with my heart



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sheila began writing in her teens to fill an empty place in her life. At first, she wrote to express her feelings and pain, but now her current writings are inspired by the Holy Spirit.

ANSWERS TO PRAYER

Healing of my knee and leg so I can walk longer. "Yes, Praise Jesus, I can walk again."

- Anonymous

Successfully moved into a homeless shelter after not having a place to stay.

- Anonymous

I was afflicted and unable to walk for three weeks in March. But God, through your prayers and from your ministry, completely healed me, and I am like new! Praise the Lord! I am able to walk again and to get around my household.

- Bertha

I had asked for prayer for my time in nursing school. The ten-week term prayed over is finished and I PASSED thanks to everyone who prayed. That was an extremely difficult time and several students didn't pass.

- Kathy

My relationship with my daughter has been restored, as well as with a friend of 25 years. My husband is feeling better as his doctor was able to fix his medication.

New priest applicant found for two Episcopal churches in West Texas.

- Mary

Praise and thanks for God's love and faithfulness and for healing me. I also thank all who spent time to pray for me when I went through a number of health challenges. By grace God has restored my health.

I am doing physical therapy and walking much better. Also, I am required to continue working from my home office at this time. Thus, I am able to continue my therapy nearby and don't yet have to travel for my job outside. This gives me more time to heal.

- Monica

P has been sober and drug-free over a year after numerous prayer requests. Praise God!

-Bridgitte

God gave me a place to live with all of my animals that I can afford.

- Briana

Grandma B (86) passed her driver's test and now on her new license shows "safe driver" in gold.

- Anonymous

You began praying for A's back 4/15 and when I asked him today how he felt, he responded, "Baruch ha Shem" (Bless His name!).

- Barnaba

"Normal" test on mammogram!

- Earlene

My son, D, has had several good doctor's check-ups and is doing well in spite of many serious conditions!

- Velma

My husband didn't believe people would be praying for him if they didn't know him until he he got his Breakthrough prayer card in the mail.

- Dawne

I've asked for prayer for God to change my husband's heart about having children, and although we don't have one on the way yet, his heart has changed! I am absolutely amazed!

- Anonymous

My daughter went to church. My son is considering rehab. God has blessed us with a place to live. Praise the Lord!

- Davina

My granddaughter was safely delivered and she is thriving under the care of her loving parents!

- Terry

My 82-year-old mom, G, now has stabilized with her dementia. Praise be to our Lord. She even scored 1 point higher during her last neurological memory exam and is easier to work with. This is a miracle since I have had to be a full-time caregiver for her since February of 2020.

- Judy

Worker's compensation that started in 2015 now applied me for social security benefits. Answered prayer!

- Nettie

My daughter told me about a woman she worked with who was facing a court decision regarding her grandchildren's custody. Alleluia, it was decided in her favor.

-Linda

R's symptoms from an autoimmune disease have improved. He has now regained full vision!
C, his stepdaughter, is now in remission after her third bout with cancer and has set a wedding date.

- Marie

Both Z and D got jobs.

- Carol Ann

My son, B, is progressing through Marine bootcamp in San Diego.

- Nancy

My granddaughter, S, had over 70 hours of surgery on her back for scoliosis and also struggles from epilepsy. After her surgery she had many seizures, but now she is healing well and her MRI shows no damage to her back or brain. She was able to enjoy Easter and is getting back to normal life.

- Heather

I asked for prayer for finding creative ways to share my faith. The Lord blessed me. I gave out free masks with tracts to strangers. I also handed out copies of a poem about dogs with a gospel message on the back!

- Christine

I didn't ask but got a card in 2019 for prayer being said for me. I was given strength to accept his dementia and death in October of 2019.

-Lillian

S's spine surgery went well and she is in good recovery. H's second dose of COVID vaccine went well with minor discomfort.

- Maria

That I have been able to work from home, despite battling Lyme disease. That I made a bonus and am able to better navigate my finances. That E and A are doing well with their babies.

- Monica

My brother, B, has the newest invasive pacemaker and was discharged today with no restrictions. He manages a cattle ranch and is excited to return back to his passion and family.

- Jeanne

Housing relocation successful, and blessed with job and pet.

-Janet

As soon as I asked for prayer for M, things broke through. M's real estate business had been stagnant for over a year. As of April 2021, he is now in Escrow with a client and should close 4/28 on the first house.

- Ruth-Angela

G is trying to give up smoking, after prayers for almost ten years. God's provision for us through COVID has been amazing; business has been thriving, allowing me to give.

- Shelley

My daughter is getting better every day.

- Anonymous

My one daughter, K, is not addicted to drugs anymore. She is drug free! Praise God!

- Pamela Ann

Summer 2021



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