



The Breakthrough

INTERCESSOR

Winter 2021

In the Bleak Midwinter

“

In the bleak midwinter
a stable place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty,
Jesus Christ.

The Magazine About Prayer

In the bleak midwinter,
frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
 water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on
 snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter,
 long ago.
Our God, Heaven can-
not hold Him, nor earth
 sustain;
Heaven and earth shall
flee away when He comes
 to reign.
In the bleak midwinter a
 stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty,
 Jesus Christ.
Enough for Him, whom
cherubim, worship night
 and day,
Breastful of milk, and a

mangerful of hay;
Enough for Him, whom
 angels fall before,
The ox and ass and camel
 which adore.
Angels and archangels
may have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
 thronged the air;
But His mother only, in
 her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the beloved
 with a kiss.
What can I give Him,
 poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I
 would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man, I
 would do my part;
Yet what I can I give Him:
 give my heart.

IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER, CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

The Breakthrough
INTERCESSOR

WINTER 2021

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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.



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.





How many of us have been disappointed that God did not answer our prayers as we wanted? Most of us have probably done that. Our founder and prayer warrior Catherine Marshall was no exception. But through it all, she learned a key spiritual principle that is important for all of us to learn.

Some of Catherine's greatest disappointments occurred around the births of her grandchildren. Her son, Peter, and daughter-in-law, Edith, had three children, but only one survived: Catherine's first grandchild. Peter Christopher, was born at an unhealthy weight. Catherine had asked for prayer from her close friends, the Sherrill's, for the baby. Two days later, the baby died. It was devastating for Catherine, but out of her sorrow, new truths came to her.

In 1969 Edith had a strong baby girl, Mary Elizabeth, who was Catherine's joy. Then came July 22, 1971. Amy Catherine had been born with the same genetic problem that Peter Christopher had. It was so rare that only 40 cases had been reported. Catherine approached this challenge with the faith of a prayer warrior. "No tears, no death. If we have enough faith, God has told me the baby will be healed!" Around the clock prayers were lifted in faith that Amy would be healed.

The baby died on September 4th. Blaming her lack of faith, she fell into the bottomless pit of depression. In her lowest moment, she said: "It's as if God has gone too." She stopped writing, "I found out I don't know anything about God." She refused to take phone calls.

One year later, she came out of the depths of despair. When asked what she had learned, she said, "Not to take myself so seriously. I began to see that with Amy Catherine I didn't have faith in God, I had faith that the strength of our belief determines the outcome [of prayer]. That thinking puts us in the center rather than God."

A good reminder for prayer warriors is that we pray in faith that God will answer our prayers according to His will which is always in our best interest, and sometimes exactly as we prayed, and sometimes not. Although difficult to swallow at times, it puts the right focus on faith in God, not

Thank you for faithfully supporting our ministry!

J. Michael Smith, Esq
Chairman of the Board

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

His Hands

BY JEWELL JOHNSON

**“Jesus put forth his hand and, touched him.”
(Matthew 8:3)**

Healing hands of Jesus—
touching lepers,
healing with His word.

Loving hands of Jesus—
taking children in His arms,
enfolding them into His heart.

Giving hands of Jesus—
feeding multitudes
with a little lunch.

Helping hands of Jesus—
turning water into wine
at the Cana wedding.

Wounded hands of Jesus—
bearing scars
meant for us.

Praying hands of Jesus—
at the Father’s throne
He ever pleads for us;
We are not alone.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jewell Johnson is a mother of six children and grandmother to nine. Besides writing, she enjoys reading, quilting, and playing the piano. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, she taught a Bible class for adults.

WAYS TO GIVE

Thank you for
your support!

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

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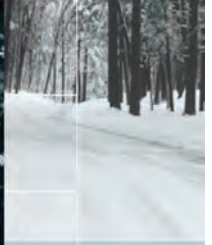
If you would like to make a stock gift, please contact our office for directions.

Leave Your Legacy

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."

Trusting & *Obeying God*



BY ROY BORGES

After serving 31 years in the Florida Department of Corrections my hope of ever getting out faded away. But I believed that God had given me eternal life when I accepted His Son, Jesus Christ, as my Savior, and that He knew what was best for me. Psalm 37: 4 expresses this: “Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.” The desires of my heart changed when God began to use me for His purposes and hundreds of my stories were published all over the world.

My life suddenly had purpose and meaning. God made a way for me not only to write hundreds of articles and stories, but to know Him better. Proverbs 3:5-6 told me to “Trust the Lord with all [my] heart, and lean not on [my] own understanding; In all [my] ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct [my] paths.” As I learned to trust God, He began to bless me in unimaginable ways that I never dreamed could happen. Then He opened the prison doors and He continued to show me His will everyday as the blessings overflowed. My life took on more meaning as God deepened my capacity to obey, and thus, develop my character. Just as fire refines ore to extract precious metals. God refines us through difficult circumstances. When we are tested, we can complain or we can try to see how God is stretching us to be the person He wants us to be.

Abraham shows us one of the greatest acts of obedience in Gen. 22: 1-19. He traveled fifty miles to Mount Moriah near Jerusalem. Over the years, he learned many tough lessons about the importance of obeying



God. This time, he was prompt and willing to obey.

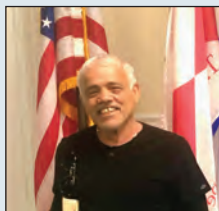
Obeying God is often a struggle because it may mean giving up something we truly want. We should not expect our obedience to God to be easy or to come naturally.

I wanted to get out of prison more than anything. I've never met anyone who didn't want to get out of prison. I thought I had to file motions with the court, or that I had to prove I was innocent. I thought the only way I could get out was through convincing the court that I was not guilty of the robbery charge. But I needed to trust God to free me in His timing. God wanted Abraham to trust Him, and just like Abraham, I learned to trust in God's timing and His ability to provide. God is in control of everything. He changes the hearts of people, and the circumstances that surround them. Trust and obey, it is the only way to be happy with God.

I am learning that lesson more now than ever as God blesses me here at Landmark Baptist Church. I

am able to tell people about all the great things that He is doing in my life—He is opening doors for me to tell people about His goodness. I watch and pray for God’s will to be done in my life. Many of the things that I want to do now take time and patience, and I have to trust God’s timing to accomplish them. But I know from past experiences that God will make a way for these things to happen. Committing everything to Him means trusting that He cares for me more than I care for myself. I had to wait 31 years for God to open the prison doors, and now I know that wait was for my good and that I can trust Him no matter how long I have to wait.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



After over 30 years in prison, Roy’s prayers were answered and he was released in 2021. “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.”



Coworkers in Christ

BY SYLVIA LEVITT

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, our coming King. This is a Praise report to my good friends at Breakthrough. I want to begin by giving thanks to God for Breakthrough. Your whole team has been a blessing to me for years. When I think of the goodness of Jesus and all He has done for me my soul cries out “Hallelujah,” and I thank Him for saving me. I’m giving my testimony, praying it will be a blessing to someone.

Some years ago my husband was dishonorably discharged from the Navy for involvement in drugs. He decided to go back to his family and leave me in Virginia with very little income and two small children, one with special needs, to care for on my own. Soon after, I was laid off from my job and had no idea what to do. My mother was a praying woman and, following her example, I began to pray, asking God to help me and show me the way he would have me go.

At this time I had very little money. There were days I had no idea how I was going to feed my children.

I had always loved to read. One day, I decided I wanted to reread a book on prayer by Joyce Dawson.

In the back of the book there was a phone number to call for prayer. I called the number and the lady told me they no longer had a prayer team. She gave me the number to Breakthrough and when I called that number, it changed my life forever.

Although I had grown up in the church, personal prayer had never been a big part of my life. Breakthrough taught me how to believe and stand on God’s Word. After a short time, I could see things changing. Breakthrough was doing all the giving and I was doing all the receiving. I personally didn’t believe in a one-sided relationship. I began asking and believing God for seeds to sow back into the ministry.

I think I started with a gift of \$25.00 a month and as God began blessing me, I was able to increase my giving. This month I was able to give my monthly gift and add some for the Special Project. I now have two savings accounts and an extra checking account used only for emergencies. So many nights in the past I was awake worrying about how to make it and now if I wake up, I lay and praise God for how far I have come. I pray God will bless you as well and keep you encouraged.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

“My involvement with Breakthrough has been with prayer in my lowest times. Breakthrough has been there for me, encouraging me, giving me scriptures, and telling me I can make it. I can call breakthrough for prayer at anytime.”

A Call to Prayer

BY DAVE EVANS

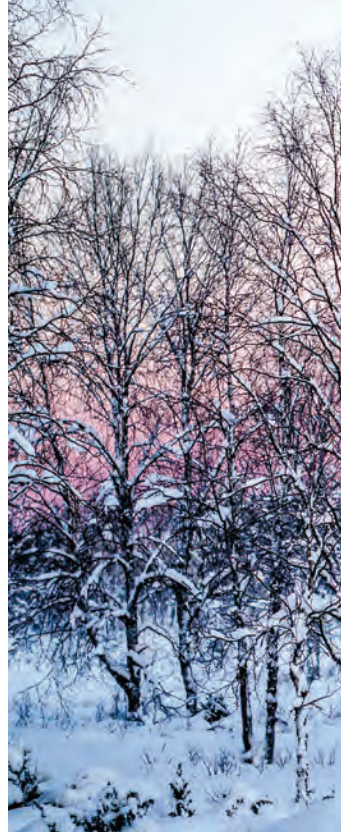
Take a look at a coin and you'll see the motto "In God We Trust." This practice dates back to the Civil War era as a response to requests to nationally acknowledge God, as well as Congressional acts in 1864 and 1865 permitting the motto's inclusion. Although this sentiment confesses trust in a God who does exist, many people do not concur with it. [According to a study by Arizona Christian University] while as recently as thirty years ago, 73% of Americans believed that there is a God, today a mere 51% do. That means America is divided right down the middle on the fundamental matter of the existence of God, and it begs the question; How can a nation that largely doesn't believe or trust in God sing "God Bless America" and expect Him to do so?

Sadly, America continues on its downward descent from God and moral absolutes. A look at current simmering civil unrest, anarchy and violence against authority, and the vandalism and burning of churches, validates this. Add to that a burgeoning contingent of those who would redistribute wealth and radically transform our nation so there is no place for God. So what would God have us to do? Listen to the Apostle Paul's recommendation: "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority" (1 Timothy 2:1-2a).

First, in our priority should be prayer—prayer for all men and prayer for our leaders.

God is calling us to pray, and our nation desperately needs it. There are so many issues that we should pray for: the Coronavirus pandemic, unemployment, crime, and the upcoming election; to name a few. But let me suggest that the problems we face as a nation are not resolved through a change of political affiliation or of philosophy. God is not registered with any political party. Indeed, as Abraham Lincoln wisely acknowledged, "I know that the Lord is always on the side of the right; but it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation may be on the Lord's side." People of our nation can only be on the Lord's side when they are reconciled to God.

Because half of America doesn't believe there is a God, we need to pray that all people, including anarchists and leaders, might be reconciled to God. And there is only one who can do that—"For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). These prayers





for the salvation of men and women align with the heart of God “who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4).

When people are reconciled to God, they undergo a change of heart and out of that change, their actions and behaviors change. This is what we need for positive changes to take place in our nation and to forestall

God’s far-reaching judgment.

The words of J.C. Ryle in the Nineteenth Century accentuate this call to prayer, “I want the times we live in to be praying times. I want the Christians of our day to be praying Christians. I want the church to be a praying church.”

Will you answer this call to prayer?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dave Evans has had numerous works published in a variety of periodicals over the years. Recently, he served as the Body Care Pastor of a small church and in prior years he was a teacher at a Bible College. He also founded and served in a Prayer Booth ministry in his community.



A Great

BY JONI TOPPER

I recently had a conversation with the owner of a company who had just hired a new employee. “How are things working out for both of you?” I asked. He expressed a little frustration and said he was not sure if it was going to be a good fit. Feeling the anxiety of this employer and drawing on my own work experience as an employee, I wondered if expectations were clearly defined. Sometimes we take on a task naively thinking we understand the goal.

As we are working for the kingdom of God, sometimes we also assume we know what the result of our labor should look like. Isaiah 55:9 warns against this, saying, “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

One day last year, I found myself frustrated by the simple task of watering plants. The summer was the one of the hottest on record where I live in Texas, so an early morning hour was set aside to tend the garden before the day melted into 100

degrees or more.

On this day, I prayed as I watered my plants: “Lord, why am I stuck home watering plants? I should be doing something noble and great, something that would benefit mankind, not just these plants.”

The response I felt in my spirit from God was, “Joni, the first job I ever assigned mankind was to tend a garden. Who are you to decide this is not important?”

Those words stopped my whining. They have come to mind numerous times since then and always affect me the same way. They cause me to reflect with humility. God knows that I long to do great things in His kingdom. The question is, do I understand that the greatness I long for may not look great to anyone but God?

The Bible is riddled with stories of people who we consider to have taken brave risks or bold actions. Sometimes, they acted deliberately for God. Sometimes, God just used their actions for his divine purpose because he is after all, God. Do you think that the prostitute who hid spies under the hay on her roof in return for safety in the midst of a siege was acknowledged by her piers as great? She was just trying to save her own life, but God used her actions in a great way. Was she great, or is God great?

What about directing a friend away from a dangerous situation

Job Description

involving drugs because that person might feel trapped into making a harmful choice? Or befriending someone whose loneliness left them considering suicide? Or helping a spouse with a chore because the day had he or she feeling defeated? Are these not acts of greatness? Are they not the very moments God is living in and through us?

As a disciple of Christ, it is easy to get caught in the lie that I am the savior of a situation. That person you steered away from drugs may have a child at home who is going to desperately need their parent later that day. The lonely person could be the sole caretaker for someone who is ill. Your spouse may be rejuvenated in their spirit by your willingness to help bear the load. But are we the great one in any of these situations or is God?

A friend in her 30s recently expressed a strong desire to be great on a Facebook post. In a matter of minutes people chimed in who were in their 40s, 50s and 60s, expressing

that they longed for greatness as well. I realized these desires of our hearts are rich and full and they spur us on in our mundane moments. They spur us to great actions. Yet the truth is, the greatness we tend to seek is that of our own name and the recognition we long for is from the world. O, that our hearts would seek the face of God rather than the applause of man. As we run to Him in prayer, He draws us closer; He grows us beyond our self-imposed boundaries.

May we live, and move, and breathe in His likeness, trusting that the desire of our heart for greatness will be fulfilled as we are obedient. May we respond with humble hearts when God instructs us to act in simple obedience.

For in him we live and move and have our being, “For we are also his offspring” (Acts 17:28).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Joni is a pastor's wife for 25 years, grandmother, teacher, women's ministry leader, worship leader, accompanist and vocalist. These are words that describe Joni, but her favorite description of herself is “One who desires to look like Jesus.” She is passionate about sharing her gift of music with the world, and has written for ministries, devotions, and is currently working on her own book.



Continuous Broadcast

BY JEFF FERRIS

The radio broadcast beamed from a low-powered AM station, and the words reached my ears. They have played in my mind for nearly forty years. The words I heard that day came from the pen of a lonely prison inmate and resounded with enough conviction to penetrate my soul.

From the Arizona State Prison Complex to the syndicated radio ministry in Texas, the haunting words came flowing over my dashboard as I drove around Southern Michigan. The content of the letter was simple. Its verbiage was unsophisticated. But I knew God was speaking to me through it.

It was 1982 and I was a newlywed at the time. My lovely brown-eyed bride of just a few months was working on her job at a local hospital. That clear Sunday afternoon was too quiet without her at my side as I drove home from church, so I turned on the radio and dialed up the voice of Chaplain Ray of the International Prison Ministry in Dallas, Texas. The man had my complete attention. During prayer several months earlier, I had inexplicably felt a burden for those who were incarcerated, and I knew I would someday minister to them.

Chaplain Ray began to read a letter from an inmate. Though my hands gripped the steering wheel, I was hanging on every word coming

through my stereo. It was more than just the words that gripped me; it was the heart and emotion behind them.

I saw him in my mind's eye, a broken young man, less than a year older than myself, sitting in a sweltering prison cell. His letter went out as if on a reconnaissance mission, searching for a friend. Was there anyone in the free world who would care about an imprisoned lawbreaker and correspond with him? Would anyone make time for a former teenage gang member who had grown up on the streets and now bears the stigma of being a criminal? That's essentially what the letter was asking.

Yes, for reasons not fully understood, I cared. I could write. I could be that friend.

The number of listeners who heard that radio broadcast is unknown. But I knew I was the intended audience—an audience of one, apparently, as no one else had responded to Shelton's letter as far as I knew.

It wasn't long before a firm long-distance friendship developed between Shelton and I. We corresponded two or three times a month. I discovered something special about him: he was unpretentious and personable. He was not the angry, bitter, coldhearted brute that many would assume as characteristics of a convict, he was



a genuine human being. While it is true that many prison inmates are hardened and unreachable, I came to believe there was many more like Shelton who simply needed a friend.

That belief became an important part of my life and led to my involvement in a local jail ministry. As I continued to correspond with Shelton, I became a member of the Lucas County Jail Chaplaincy Committee. For seven years, I had the privilege of conducting chapel services, bible studies, and one-on-one visitations with those who were incarcerated in my own town.

In doing so, I discovered that a freedom could be found in walking through the gates of a detention facility to visit those considered unfit for society. Many would find it intimidating. To me, it felt natural and inviting. Jesus said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

As for those who reside within those walls, there is something about being locked up that brings a person to the end of themselves. It seems a decision is made and a path is chosen. For some, it is their final defeat. It is the end of any hope if hope ever existed.

For others, it is a wake up call and encourages change for the better. Hitting rock bottom causes them to look up. Shelton looked up.

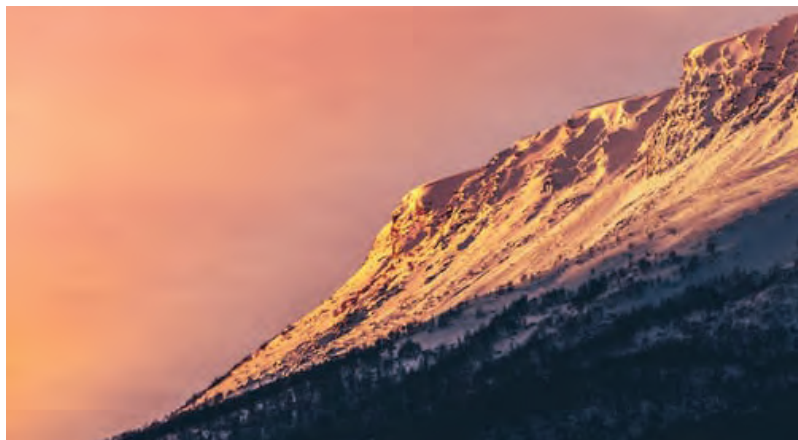
There are others like him in jails and prisons everywhere. Most inmates are simply misguided souls in need of a firm handshake and a tender ear.

Countless letters passed from Ohio to Arizona and back again between Shelton and I over the span of nineteen years. My friend was then released from the Arizona State Prison. He became a free citizen.

Shelton and I continued to communicate following his release. In time, he moved to San Diego, Cali-

fornia. After nearly two years passed following Shelton's release from prison, I boarded flight number 813 at Detroit Metro Airport. My lovely brown-eyed bride of almost twenty-one years was at my side. With three children in tow, ranging from eleven to nearly seventeen years in age, we flew to San Diego and met Shelton Ray Thomas. We were friends who had never tangibly met, but during our time together I was now visiting a brother. Shelton remains that to this day.

This experience—initiated by a prayer, a letter and a radio broadcast—has persuaded me that one person can have a positive impact on the life of another. We must not think we are incapable of that. Just reach out to someone. A message worthy for the airwaves is that the world is ripe with friends who have never met. The simple act of listening can help us find them.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



A tool and die-maker by trade, Jeff answered a calling to write professionally while out of work in 2006. Upon sitting down and stepping into that role, he has authored numerous inspirational articles published on multiple platforms. He has written scripts for radio shows, song lyrics, and has ghost-written autobiographical projects. Since December 2010, Jeff has made extensive writing contributions to Pathway Christian Newspaper in his hometown of Toledo, Ohio, where he resides with his wife, Ginny, with whom he has three children and four grandchildren.

Are you a writer?


*The Intercessor welcomes
submissions!*

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.



**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!



Send to...

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20160

Breakthrough would like to thank Sandra E. Huber for her gift

In Honor Of

Nevin and Gail Huber



A serene winter landscape featuring a dense forest of evergreen trees covered in snow. In the foreground, a calm body of water reflects the snowy scene. The sky is overcast and misty, creating a soft, atmospheric effect. The overall color palette is dominated by whites, greys, and the dark greens of the trees.

Let's *Keep* Christmas

BY PETER MARSHALL

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

LUKE 2:8-11



Changes are everywhere.

Many institutions and customs that we once thought sacrosanct have gone by the board.

Yet there are a few that abide, defying time and revolution.

The old message, “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord,” is still the heart of Christmas.

It can be nothing else.

And this message can neither be changed—nor quite forgotten. Although there are many things that tend to make us forget.

The idea of Santa Claus coming in a helicopter does not ring true. No interior decorator with a fondness for yellow or blue or chartreuse or pink could ever persuade me to forsake the Christmas colors of red and green.

I must confess that modernistic Christmas cards leave me cold. I

cannot appreciate the dogs and cats the galloping horses the ships in full sail, the ribald humor... or any of the cute designs that leave out the traditional symbols of the star... the manger... the wise men on their camels.

Angels there must be—but they need not be modernistic angels in evening dress with peroxide permanents or avant-garde hairdos.

There is no need to search for stories new and different. There is only one after all—and no modern author can improve it:

“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold,

I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.”

We all feel the pressure of approaching Christmas. The traffic is terrible... You can't find a parking space... The stores are crowded... Mob scenes make shopping a nightmare.

You are thinking about presents—



wondering what in the world you can get for so-and-so. You think of friends and loved ones who are so hard to shop for. You can't think of anything they need (which is rather strange when you take time to think of it).

Maybe there is nothing in a store that they need. But what about some token of love—what about love itself... and friendship... and understanding... and consideration... and a helping hand... and a smile... and a prayer?

You can't buy these things in any store, and these are the very things people need.

We all need them... Blessed will they be who receive them this Christmas or at any time.

Let's not permit the rush to crowd Christmas out of our hearts... for that is where it belongs. Christmas is not in the stores—but in the hearts of people.

Let's not give way to cynicism and mutter that "Christmas has become commercialized."

It never will be—unless you let it be. Your Christmas is not commercialized, unless you have commercialized it.

Let's not succumb to the sophistication that complains: "Christmas belongs only to the children."

That shows that you have never understood Christmas at all, for the older you get, the more it means, if you know what it means. Christmas, though forever young, grows old along with us.

Have you been saying, "I just can't



seem to feel the Christmas spirit this year?"

That's too bad.

As a confession of lack of faith, it is rather significant.

You are really saying that you feel no joy that Jesus came into the world... You are confessing that His presence in the world is not a reality to you... Maybe you need all the more to read the Christmas story over again, need to sit down with the Gospel of Luke and think about it.

I thank God for Christmas.

Would that it lasted all year.

For I have observed that on Christmas Eve and on Christmas Day all the world is a better place, and men and women are more lovable.

Love itself seeps into every heart, and miracles happen.

When Christmas doesn't make your heart swell up until it nearly bursts... and fill your eyes with tears... and make you all soft and warm inside... then you'll know that something inside of you is dead.

We hope that there will be snow for Christmas. Why? It is not really important, but it is so nice, and old-fashioned, and appropriate, we think.

Isn't it wonderful to think that nothing can really harm the joy of Christmas?

Although your Christmas tree decorations may include many new gadgets, such as lights with bubbles in them, it's the old tree decorations that mean the most... the ones you save carefully from year to year... the crooked star that goes on the

top of the tree... the ornaments that you've been so careful with.

And you'll bring out the tiny manger, and the shed, and the little figures of the Holy Family, and arrange them lovingly on the mantel or in the middle of the dining room table.

[...] There will be the fragrance of cookies baking, spices, and fruit cake... and the warmth of the house shall be melodious with the lilting strains of "Silent Night, Holy Night."

And you'll listen to the wonderful Christmas music on the radio or television. Some of the songs will be modern—good enough music perhaps—but it will be the old carols, the lovely old Christmas hymns that will mean the most.

Excerpt from *Let's Keep Christmas*, used with permission from Marshall-LeSourd LLC.





My Morning Walk

BY PETER CALIGIURI

Don't weep for me when I'm not here
Or worry where I've gone
I'm just out on my morning walk
Before the break of dawn

Up—up the narrow way it leads
And as far as I can see
The blood-stained steps of Jesus
Mark out His path for me

To feel the warm wind touch my face
And see His garden blooming wild
And hear His song ring out so clear
Time to come home my child

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter and his wife Nancy have been married for 48 years and have two sons, six lively grandsons, and one wonderful granddaughter. They live near Tampa Florida where they are members of Generations Christian Church.

Two women from church are recovering from COVID. One has made full recovery, the other has been able to come back to church.

- Jolaine

Post-treatment symptoms for malignant tumor are manageable. We are all feeling better.

-Rosario

Grandma B- has great blood work, good eyesight, and feels encouraged.

- Anonymous

Alcoholic husband has stopped yelling, screaming, and crying after he prayed as a believer. Marriage is being mended by God's grace.

- Jeanine

Enabling our youngest daughter and her family to move closer to be with family.

- Ginger

Sister, J-, who is in final stages of lung cancer has accepted Jesus as her Savior and is praying with pastor. Niece is doing well after surgery.

- Anonymous

God blessed us with another good employee for my business. Both my children are growing closer to God.

- Shelly

Healing from serious digestive issues for all of September, lost 18lbs, and couldn't keep anything down.

- Ross

Grandson recieved very last antibiotic in supply for ruputred appendix and was able to be in best children's hospital in area.

- Anonymous

Echocardiogram showed that baby's heart is normal after concerns from ultrasound.

T-'s vision, motor skills, and reflexes have been improving after stroke.

- Lisah

God is restoring my family and ability to follow athletic dreams—two things that seemed impossible!

- Kriston

God has answered prayers to help granddaughter with money needs.

- Claire

Granddaughter's seven-and-a-half-hour surgery went well and she has recovered remarkably.

- Heather

Son is healing after eye surgery to prevent blindness.

Niece's brain aneurysm removed and is recovering well.

- Jeanne

I recieved medication to help nasuea and migraines that I was very sick from.

- Russell

Pastor's daughter has experienced a real change in her life. Mother calls it a miracle.


- Shirley

My prayer for getting money returned on a lost item have been answered.

- Heidy

Family members are recovering from mental and physical illnesses. C-'s breast cancer is in remis-sion. K- amd A- had a healthy baby boy.

- Janelle



**The Lord has stopped the
bleeding in my stomach
- Anonymous**

**Stable health, no progression
of stage four kidney disease.
- Karen**

**We got to see my dad by special per-
mission for his birthday in a window
visit. We could feel the presence of
the Lord there with us.**

- Blanche

**My pneumonia is gone!
- Jolaine**

**L's esophagus has
healed and she is home.
- Eugenie**

**Several times your Breakthrough
prayer warriors have turned
around what was meant to tear
down our family, our health, and
the ministry.**

- Bob and Dixie

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