

The Breakthrough
INTERCESSOR
Summer 2023

*His
Celestial
Shore*

The Magazine About Prayer

*Some glad morning
when this life is over*

I'll fly away

*To a home on God's
celestial shore*

I'll fly away



The Breakthrough
INTERCESSOR

SUMMER 2023

Vol. 44, Issue 2

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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.



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



When In Doubt, Pray

Doubt is common to believers. We doubt our salvation; we doubt that God will provide for us financially; we doubt that God is going to answer our prayer for healing; and it goes on and on. Paul explains our dilemma in 1 Corinthians 13:12 (KJV): “For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.” We can’t see God now, but one day, we shall see Jesus face to face, just as we see ourselves clearly today and know we exist, one day, we will see Jesus face to face, to know without any doubt that He exists.

So, we all doubt at times, even the best. The Bible says to be merciful to those who doubt (Jude 1:22). So, if we are not to judge others who doubt, then we shouldn’t beat ourselves up either. After Jesus’ resurrection, the angel told the two Mary’s to go tell the disciples to meet Jesus in Galilee. They went and met Him on the mountain where they were to meet. When they saw Him, some worshiped Him, and some *doubted*. Even the Apostle James had to actually thrust his hand into Jesus’ side before he would believe.

We have a spiritual antidote to doubt and fear—faith. We all have a measure of spiritual faith, or we wouldn’t be followers of Christ. The question is: how do we increase our faith to address our doubt? Romans 10:17 tells us that faith comes from hearing the Word of God. The more we immerse ourselves in the Word of God, the more faith and the less doubt we will have.

Secondly, prayer helps our unbelief. A man brought his son, mute and demon-possessed, to Jesus. Jesus said to the man, “All things are possible for those who believe” (Mark 9:23). The man immediately linked his faith with the healing and cried out with tears: “I believe, help thou my unbelief” (Mark 9:24). Jesus immediately healed the boy.

So, each and every time the fear and doubts come, pray that God will help your unbelief. Get into the Word of God, and watch the doubts roll away.

God bless you all as we all continue to pray, even through times of doubt, for it is the answer to our breakthrough. Thank you for your faith, your prayers, and your support.

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

J. Michael Smith, Esq
Chairman of the Board



*Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.... He said to them, “Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish.
John 21:3,6 ESV*

As a nursing home chaplain, I have seen first-hand how the people who live in long term care facilities often wonder why God has allowed this to happen to them or if He has anything left for them to do. But whether we live in a nursing home or in a mansion on Main Street, we all get discouraged or get completely off track of God’s plan for our lives. The good news of the Gospel story, though, tells us that Jesus is waiting for us, and He still has a job for us to do. He hasn’t forgotten about us. He knows what we have been going through. All night, while we have been failing to catch even one fish, Jesus has been awake and watching for our return. Right now, He is preparing for us to join Him in the morning for a feast. The Bible is God’s message—not just for fishermen or disciples in the time of Jesus, but for everyone. God wants us to know that no matter what has happened or how many times we have failed, Jesus still has a job for us to do!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Life has a funny way of giving us some unexpected detours, and my wife Nancy and I have had more than a few. Today we are getting ready to celebrate 50 wonderful and crazy years together, and we have two sons, six lively grandsons, and one very special granddaughter! I love to write devotionals, poetry, and even a few songs.

Prayer for the Strains of Life

BY PETER MARSHALL

Father, many among us are tired, wearied with the strains that life imposes upon us, the pressures under which we are forced to live. We remember the days that are gone and how harassed we were. We remember under what tension we have lived, and we know that Thou didst not design us to live like that. We remember the fears and anxieties that brooded over us like a fog, and we know that no child of Thine should ever be frightened by such specters.

We thank Thee, our Father, for a moment like this, when we may forget the sounds that have beat upon our eardrums with relentless monotony. We thank Thee for a moment in which we can no longer hear the chattering of typewriters, the jingling of bells, the jangling of money on counters, the whining of cash registers, the ringing of telephones, the noise of traffic.

And now, we forget these—and think only of Thee. Make within our hearts a quiet place. We release to Thee our demand to see what the future holds. We rest in Thee, content to know only Thy love and care in this present hour.

We release to Thee our struggle to cram too many activities and accomplishments into every hour. We rest in the knowledge that all of eternity, an infinitude of time, is Thy great gift to us.

We release to Thee the greed and overambition that has made us try to grasp too much of life too quickly. Help us to be content with simple tasks directed by Thee, done heartily and joyously as unto the Lord.

We release to Thee our impatience with other people and with circumstances. We ask Thee for the grace of patience and for the ability to relax when we must wait.

And now as we go back into the think of life, may a quiet heart and mind attend us, to make straight our path, to open all doors ahead of us, to smooth the way in every human relationship. In Thy name, who art ever the Prince of Peace. Amen.

From *The Prayers of Peter Marshall*. Used with permission.



My Adventures in Prayer

BY LUCY NEELY ADAMS

My whole body was tense and tired as I stood watch over my nine-year-old son, Scotty. “Yes, it is appendicitis,” the doctor responded, announcing the cause for our emergency trip to the hospital. “We must operate immediately.”

Before Scotty was rolled away for surgery, I read from the bedside Bible and prayed the Lord’s Prayer with him, shedding a few tears. Then off he went.

The hospital waiting room had plush red sofas that seemed to whisper sweet rest to my weariness. I had never faced such an emergency alone. My husband Woody was the rock in our family, and I leaned on him for security. But this day of crisis came when he was a long way from home at a ministers’ retreat.

I sighed as I plopped down on the cushions, and my eyes were drawn to the magazine rack. A small booklet titled *Adventures in Prayer* caught my attention. On the cover was a lady with a radiant smile, so I reached to pick it up. Her name was Catherine Marshall. After reading only one story, I knew that she had things to share that I had never experienced. I was fascinated. Each story revealed a personal crisis, and prayer was the turning point. She was assured that God had heard and answered in various ways. Her prayers read like conversations with a real person.

Immediately I realized that I had never spoken to God in that way. To think that I could talk to Him about anything was an exciting, amazing revelation. I had been going to Sunday school since childhood. Joining

the church at 10 years of age was just something to do with my friends. When Woody and I decided to marry I knew that he was going to be a minister. My response was, “That will work out great; I plan to be a social worker, so we can help lots of people,” not knowing that it took much more than “social work” to be in ministry. So we married, and now, after 12 years of a very happy and productive marriage, here I was at 32 years of age—in a spiritual daze. Was I missing something?

No, I was missing SOMEONE! In spite of my religiosity, I had no relationship with God through His son Jesus Christ. Yes, He was my Savior, but not the Lord of my life. The prayers I prayed were from books. The Bible was only a textbook from which I learned many facts. The man named Jesus came to earth, preached, was crucified, and then resurrected. That was the end of my understanding.

From deep within my searching heart, I quietly told God about my burden. “Oh God, I don’t know you. Please help me! Amen.” In that short prayer I begged for an understanding of what it meant to be a Christian.

Out of doors it was a hot July afternoon, but inside of me it felt like springtime. I became a new person with hope and joy in my heart. As I continued to read more exciting stories, I looked up to see my husband hurrying over to me. We immediately went to Scotty’s room, where we met him being wheeled in from surgery. The doctor’s report was for full recovery and freedom from pain. God’s report was that I was on my way to freedom from a form of religion with no deep meaning to one which included more adventures in prayer.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lucy Neely Adams exchanged several letters with Catherine Marshall for many years after this turning point. Lucy now lives in North Carolina and has been a Breakthrough intercessor since 1989.

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WAYS TO GIVE

Q 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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Aside from being a proper fraction, sixteen-and-a-half is an equitably low number. In terms of human age, it is young. Yet by that time in my life, that fraction represented my complete existence. It stood as the symbol of my entire lifespan, the collection of time as I had known it to exist.

Throughout that time, I had known only a single person by a name that had become particularly repugnant to me. That name was Jack. The Jack that I knew was my stepdad. He was a raging alcoholic, and my acquaintance with him was anything but pleasant.

I estimate that I was no older than four when Jack came into our home and into my life. I can't clearly remember a time that he wasn't there. When he was drunk, Jack was violent and abusive. He hurled vulgarities and insults incessantly. To demonstrate his hostility, he also threw objects and smashed household items.

Because of Jack, fear was a persistent force that had befriended me. I could always depend on it being present, day and night. There was never a time when I was not afraid of what would happen next.

When I was fifteen, another dispute arose, resulting in Jack knocking Mom against the kitchen stove. Realizing that I was crossing a line from which there would be no turning back, I stepped in. The fight itself was brief and surprisingly even. And it marked my official entrance into adulthood.

Soon after, another skirmish occurred. On that day I witnessed Jack pulling Mom across the floor by her hair. I then met him with a wooden club. That second encounter was decidedly in my favor. In fact, it was so extremely one-sided that it effectively ended all fights in our home from then on.

It was essentially a modern-day reenactment of David and Goliath—a scrawny teenager squaring off against an overbearing monster. That ugly, bloody confrontation was nothing that I took pride in. It was just a culmination of unpleasant circumstances in which I had often feared for our safety and hoped for survival. Ultimately, it was the hand of God that protected us.

Our survival is also attributed to my friend Rob, whom I met in seventh grade. Rob invited me to attend church with his family. He also led me to a personal relationship with Christ.

As I grew in my faith, I began to understand some of the characteristics of our Heavenly Father. And if He carried a moniker other than "God," it would not be a name like "Jack." Surely, anyone bearing that name had to be like the

Jack that I had always known and feared.

Though Jack's drinking continued, the fighting ceased after the altercation involving the wooden club. For well over a year, there were no physical confrontations. And then, Jack died of a self-inflicted gunshot. The sole person that I knew by the name of Jack was gone forever. He was fifty-five. I was sixteen-and-a-half.

A few hours after Jack's death, there was a knock at our front door. The man who stood on our porch identified himself as a pastor. We didn't know him. We had never met the man. And we didn't understand how anyone outside our immediate family had knowledge of what had happened that day. It turned out that the pastor came at the request of one of our relatives.

The pastor greeted us warmly and expressed genuine concern. He was sincere, soft-spoken, and kindhearted. After sharing Bible passages, he prayed with us.

I cannot guess how long he stayed or recall a word that he spoke. Nor could I recite a verse that he had read. Yet, his visit was remarkably unforgettable. What was equally astonishing was that this minister's name was *Jack!*

It seemed impossible. Until that moment, I was convinced that the names "God" and "Jack" could never be duly associated. Suddenly, I wasn't too sure.

A short time later, I began attending Pastor Jack's church. He and his wife Carolyn presented themselves as living examples of integrity. They sacrificed happily. They gave joyfully. They served untiringly.

As I spent time with Pastor Jack, I witnessed an uprightness that I had never seen lived out daily in the real world. This began to completely reshape my opinion of the name "Jack."

Pastor Jack is forever connected to my life and family. It was Pastor Jack who stepped into the water and baptized me. It was Pastor Jack who officiated my wedding ceremony. It was Pastor Jack who dedicated our children to the Lord. They have grown and gone on to minister to others.

Inspired by Jack and Carolyn, Ginny and I volunteer in various forms of ministry, reaching nursing home residents, jail inmates, children and teens.

Concerning both men named Jack, they could have easily been named Adam, as referenced in scripture: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (I Corinthians: 15:45, 47-49 KJV).

For me, one man named Jack represented the first Adam—corruption and death. The other symbolizes the second Adam and exemplifies the light of God and the character of Christ.

Against one I stood, toe-to-toe and eye-to-eye. With the other I've walked, shoulder-to-shoulder and heart-to-heart. In a matter of hours, one man left with a gunshot, the other appeared with a knock on our door.

Today, I am pleased to say that I know a man who continuously displays

the peaceful attributes of our Savior. Without fear or apprehension, without shame or regret, I would gladly introduce him to all.

His name is Jack.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A career-long tool and die maker, Jeff answered a calling to write professionally while out of work in 2006. By embracing that role, his efforts quickly excelled, leading him on a literary journey strewn with an assortment of printed works. These include numerous inspirational articles published on multiple platforms, radio show script-writing, song lyrics and ghostwriting memoirs. He also edits for other writers. Since December 2010, Jeff has made extensive writing contributions to Pathway Christian Newspaper in his hometown of Toledo, Ohio, where he lives with his wife, Ginny, with whom he has three adult children and five grandchildren. Visit Jeff at reachinword.com





A Peaceful Spirit

BY SARAH MERLY

When I drive along the country roads of Lincoln, Virginia, to the headquarters of Breakthrough every Tuesday morning, I know that God will brighten my day. Yes, He already does so on every other day I'm in, whether it's through your letters to the editor or your testimonies of answered prayers. But Tuesday is a day I can count on. It is a day when, no matter what headaches are going on in my personal life, I go to our historic brick building and find wisdom and joy in a simple smile. Virginia Payne's smile.

Our prayer coordinator, Jeannie Ryan, once told me that Virginia is a member of the Greatest Generation, someone who believes in working hard not until retirement, but until passing. And it's true. Although her back is slightly hunched over and she walks rather slowly, Virginia is always cleaning around the building. Her unique matriarchal spirit flows into every corner of the place. And when I walk down the steps in my room to greet her, a smile always shines on the elderly African-American face of her indubitably Southern soul. If she asks me, "How are you?", all of a sudden the question doesn't seem so tired and weak anymore. It feels like new life.

So you could imagine my excitement when, as I was figuring out what to include in the summer issue, ministry director Delouis Pace asked me to interview Virginia. Although I don't usually write for the magazine, the interview and resulting article didn't feel like work to me. It felt like setting aside time for my frail heart to grow, to breathe in this lovely lady's gentle and faithful spirit.

Virginia was born and raised in Clarke County, Virginia, as one of six

children. She started work as a help right after graduating high school. “Been workin’ ever since,” she told me at the kitchen table, her face beaming with pride. I was proud, too, though it ached to think that being a maid might have been her only job opportunity as an African-American woman in this era of the South. Yet she looked so content, while I, a journalism student at one of the most prestigious colleges in the United States, struggled with contentment.

Indeed, her first ten years as a help were really difficult for her. I didn’t want to pry too much into things, since her face looked drawn. But I could only imagine what she and her husband (“We were together for 65 years,” she said) went through before she needed to quit and find another family to cook and clean for.



Thus, in the ‘70s, Virginia met Catherine Marshall (then Catherine LeSourd) and her family at Evergreen Farm—“right over the hill here,” she gestured.

Back then, Catherine’s mother, Lenora Wood, needed help at the farm house. A friend from a Bible study Virginia attended found out, and then asked Virginia if she’d like to work for Lenora. That led Virginia into a spirit-filled community in which to serve, and she loved it. Even though she could only work one day a week—Tuesdays—her time with the LeSourd family helped her learn how to know God for herself.

The LeSourds weren’t the only ones to help guide her Spirit, however. Before Breakthrough was founded, Catherine co-founded Chosen Books with her husband from the basement at Evergreen Farm.

“There were a lot of authors at Evergreen,” Virginia said. “People would come to spend the night from all over...Max Cleveland, he was a Congressman and a double amputee, and he wrote a book. He came from Washington—oh, I don’t know how many times he drove out here—to do his book.”

When Catherine bought the building Breakthrough currently works out of, authors would come to work on their books there, too. “All the rooms upstairs had people in there working, and downstairs...The building was full of people,” she reminisced. I could tell that she loved meeting so many bold Christians from so many different parts of the country.

Shortly after she described what life at Chosen Books was like, Virginia invited me into the prayer room. The prayer room at Breakthrough is, needless to say, the most sacred place in the building. A large wooden cross hangs on one of the walls, which are painted white and teal. Elegant chandeliers also hang on the walls, alongside beautiful windows. When I come in early, I love to sit on the old plush sofas, listen to the chirping of the birds, and pray.

Virginia walked slowly ahead of me and pulled out old pictures of Catherine and her friends who started Chosen Books. She loved pointing out everyone she used to know, who now lived, as far as Breakthrough is concerned, only in her memory. “There’s Len, Timmy, John...Catherine, and Dick Schneider...This is at Catherine’s house over across the hill...”

Eventually, we walked back to the kitchen table, and I asked her what Catherine was like.

“What was she like?” Virginia repeated. “A very good Christian woman.” She started to laugh. “I can remember when several of the grandchildren would get into an argument, and she would make them apologize right there...She was a very kind, loving person...It was a good Christian household, and that was the first Christian household I worked in.”

Even after Chosen Books faded away, Virginia kept working for Catherine and her family. This continued into the start of Breakthrough.

“As far as I know...at the time, she would get a lot of letters from people asking her to pray for them,” she said. “She was getting so many prayer requests that she couldn’t do all of it, and she thought there was somebody out there to help her pray for these people. It was small, ‘cause it was in the basement of the farm house, but then it grew larger and larger and larger. Now see where it is today!...It’s a great learning experience for me, and I’m still learning.”

As we closed our little interview, she began expressing to me what all her years at Breakthrough mean to her. “Breakthrough means...peace...You walk in this building and you just feel like everything’s wiped off your shoulders



from the week before. You just come in, and you do your day's work, and you feel so light and so full of peace. Then you go home, and that stays with you until the next week...You just keep being fed, I would say, and that's good. I learn more and more all the time, and I enjoy it very much. It means a lot to me.

That was yesterday, but even as I work alone in the office today, I can feel the peace Virginia talked about. When I went to the prayer room earlier this morning, I felt compelled to take off my shoes and stand barefoot on the carpet, just to soak in God's majesty for a bit, as the barefoot Moses did before the burning bush. Even though I've been at Breakthrough for just a few months, the Lord's presence in this place has been such a refuge for my soul. And I think it has something to do with the prayers and humble faithfulness of a lady named Virginia.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sarah Merly is a journalism student at Patrick Henry College and an editorial intern at Breakthrough. When she is not studying, you'll find her volunteering, exploring the national parks, or sharing why she's proud to be a Floridian.





The School of Prayer

BY ROY BORGES

Andrew Murray in the 18th century wrote a book titled *With Christ in the School of Prayer*. The school of prayer started for me in 1989 when I went back to prison for the third time as a habitual offender. I learned about prayer in those 31 years I spent behind prison fences in the Florida Department of Corrections. However, the greatest truth I learned about prayer was that it was the most important part of my Christian life. It was something that I had to do every day, like walking, talking, and sleeping.

Jesus talked to His Father every day. Shouldn't I talk to my Creator every day? Of course, He knows everything. He knows what I think and what I do before I ever do it. But that doesn't mean He doesn't want me to talk to Him or to check with Him before I make a decision. He wants me to trust Him with everything I do, and who is better than God to go to for advice and help? Prayer forces me to trust and patiently wait.

God always responds to those who seek after Him, and the way that we seek after Him is through prayer. The God who loves us and sent His Son to die for us also created a way for us to communicate with Him. As Hebrews 11:6 (KJV) says, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." God assures us that all who honestly seek Him -who act in faith that they will be rewarded.

As I have prayed over the years, God has taught me many lessons about my relationship with Him. I have included them below.

1. *God knows all there is to know about me, which means I can't hide anything from Him.* Psalm 139:1-6 supports this: "O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knows my downshifting and mine uprising, thou understands my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knows it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it."

2. *God hears me.* Psalm 139:4 says, "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knows it altogether."

3. *God does the impossible for those that believe in Him.* Consider Mark 10:27: "And Jesus looking upon them saith, 'With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.'" It's easy to become discouraged and frustrated when goals seem so far away, but take courage that God is always working. We must remain faithful in prayer.

Prayer aligns our hearts with God's heart. It opens our spiritual eyes so we can see what God is doing. We speak to God, and He answers us. Thus, the school of prayer enables us to move forward. Without it, we can do nothing.



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."



Prayer Wings

BY CHELLE NANCE

I am an intercessor. God leads me to pray for others in specific ways, at specific times. I once heard a message based on Jesus feeding thousands with a boy's lunch of five loaves and two fish (Matthew 14:13-21). The speaker closed with, "What are your loaves and fish? What can you offer to Jesus?" My answer was prayer and support. I offered them to Jesus and asked Him to use them. Doors started opening, and opportunities to pray for and support others have never stopped coming.

I contacted an American ministry organization called *Breakthrough* last year. They produce a magazine called *The Breakthrough Intercessor*, which I had the privilege of writing for many years ago. Unfortunately, I'd lost my copy of the magazine. The Director of Ministry, Delouis, responded and sent me another copy. My spirit was stirred by her response. God prompted me to contact her personally and told me to pray. Many emails and intense moments of prayer ensued. Now, Delouis has a special place in my heart, even though we've never met, and though she lives on the other side of the world! After a time of intercession for Delouis and reading one of her emails, I was inspired to write "Prayer Wings" for her, my beautiful sister in Christ.

"With all prayer and petition pray [with specific requests] at all times [on every occasion and in every season] in the Spirit, and with this in view, stay alert with all perseverance and petition [interceding in prayer] for all God's people" (Ephesians 6:18 AMP).

God knows no distance nor borders. When I pray here in Australia, God answers there in America. If you have a loved one in need who is far away, I pray you will know in your heart that being distant from them has no bearing on the power of your prayers for them. May you release them into God's care as you cover them with your prayer wings.

When you're weary and burdened
With the load that you bear
I come with my prayer wings
To uphold you in prayer

When you're seeking direction
Feeling lost and nowhere
I kneel with my prayer wings
To guide you in prayer

When you're troubled or worried
For those in your care
I am here with my prayer wings
To enfold you in prayer

When you're longing for answers
On the verge of despair
I reach out with my prayer wings
To surround you in prayer

When you're tired and lonely
Needing help from somewhere
I step in with my prayer wings
To sustain you in prayer

When you're full of confusion
But unable to share
I stand with my prayer wings
To shield you in prayer

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.
-James 5:15 NIV



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chelle lives in Sydney, Australia, with her husband of 27 years and two sons. She's an intercessor with a passion to see others drawing closer to God and deeper into His Word. She loves walking alongside and supporting those who are struggling and encouraging people through her writing and poetry.

Are you a writer?

*The Intercessor welcomes
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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.

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The Quiet Place

BY JEWELL JOHNSON

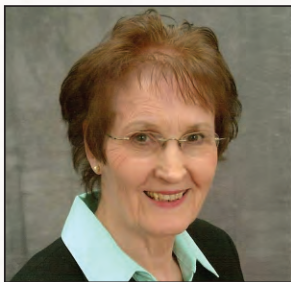
“Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray.” Luke 6:12

I have a quiet place
Where I go each day—
God and me alone.

In this quiet place, we talk.
I tell Him my troubles—
He gives me His peace.

In the quiet place I linger—
Strength He renews,
Joy He bestows.

From the quiet place I rise,
Equipped for the day—
The battle called life.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jewell Johnson lives in Arizona and is mother to six children and grandmother to nine. Besides writing, she enjoys reading, playing the piano, and quilting.



Sweet Hour of Prayer?

BY STEPHEN CLARK

There's an old hymn you may be familiar with. Its lyrics declare, "Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer! The joys I feel, the bliss I share..."

Singing the hymn is easy. It feels good. However, for most of us, actually praying for an hour is not as sweet as it may seem at first.

While it's easy to fill our time with any number of pursuits, praying for an extended time is challenging. But it is possible, and the rewards of sustained, attentive prayer are many. I have found that an hour is actually very doable, especially if I remember the following truths:

Prayer is an essential spiritual discipline. By choosing to intentionally pray for an hour, you demonstrate your commitment to developing and maintaining a healthy spiritual life.

Prayer connects us with God. It is only when we are solidly connected to the very source of our life that we can be effective for Him.

Prayer benefits our lives. It places us at the feet of our Savior where we can receive His blessing, guidance, and comfort.

Prayer benefits the body of Christ. It helps us remember that we are responsible to intercede for our fellow believers.

"Praying for an hour is like sitting down for a leisurely meal with a friend rather than ordering a burger and fries at the drive-up window," says Ralph Wilson. "As you spend the time together, you find a lot of things to say."*

Here are some tips to help you:

It's okay to use your Bible or other materials to guide you as you pray. A hymnal can help you offer praise and worship. A list of requests from your church or even your address book are excellent guides as well.

When you pray, be yourself. Feel free to talk to God just as you would talk to a friend or relative.

Be comfortable. Sitting, standing, kneeling, or even walking around is fine!

If you are alone, pray out loud. Hearing yourself as you pray can actually improve your ability to concentrate. However, it's okay to allow moments of silence so that you can listen to the Spirit respond to you.

If something you need to do comes to mind, write it down to review later. Writing these to-dos down makes them less of a distraction since you know you won't forget them later.

In addition, structuring and timing your praying will keep you on task and allow you to feel like you are making progress. Wilson offers the following structure to help you fill up one hour of prayer:

- **Preparation** (one minute): Focus on who you are praying to. Ask the Holy Spirit to keep you on task and guide you in your praying.
- **Confession** (four minutes): Bring your sins to God and lay them down at the cross. Seek forgiveness and restoration as promised in 1 John 1:9.
- **Praise and thanksgiving** (nine minutes): If you have a hymnal, sing or read the lyrics of a song of adoration. Sing other songs you know, or play a video of a hymn from YouTube. Express your thanks to God.
- **Petition** (nine minutes): Bring your current challenges to the Lord. What's on your heart that you most need His help with? Tell him all about it!
- **Intercession** (nine minutes): Lift up the names of your relatives, friends, co-workers, etc. Speak their name and what their needs are. Freely ask God for their salvation, healing, provision, spiritual growth, and more.
- **Prayer for your church** (twelve minutes): Ask God to pour out His Spirit anew on your congregation. Pray for the church staff and volunteers. Remember those who can't make it to church and pray for them.
- **Prayer for our nation** (eight minutes): Pray for all our public officials, that they would be imbued with God's wisdom and a heart for justice and righteousness.
- **Prayer for other nations** (eight minutes): Pray that God would intervene in wars and famines, that innocent people would be protected and provided for. Lift up missionaries and ask God to make their work fruitful.

And that's an hour! It's very likely that, as you follow this structure, the time will pass more quickly than you expected. In truth, it will have been a wonderfully sweet hour of prayer!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stephen R. Clark is a writer who lives in Lansdale, PA with his wife, BethAnn, and their two rescue cats, Watson and Sherlock. His website is www.StephenRayClark.com. He is a member of the Evangelical Press Association and a regular contributor to the Christian Freelance Writers Network blog.

*"Rediscovering the Prayer Vigil," www.christianitytoday.com.



His Peace

BY CATHERINE MARSHALL

This morning the Lord asked me to look up the Scripture verse “the things that belong unto thy peace.” With the help of a concordance, I found it in Luke 19:41-42 KJV. The scene is a hill overlooking Jerusalem.

“...[Jesus] beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.”

Lord, what do You want me to understand from this? What are the things that belong to my peace?

Surely, this ties in with the “rest” that was the other message given me this morning.

“There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works” (Hebrews 4:9-10 KJV).

In the midst of disquiet about so many things in our life right now—my trying to make progress on my novel, the Chosen Books situation in general, my declining eyesight due to cataracts, poor sleep, etc., the message Jesus wants me to have today seems to be simply, “Peace! Rest in Me. I am here to give you, Catherine, the precious gift of peace of mind and spirit.”

How glorious! He confirms it in Scripture after Scripture (*italics added*): “May grace (God’s favor) and *peace* (which is perfect well-being, all necessary good, all spiritual prosperity and freedom from fears and agitating passions and moral conflicts), be multiplied to you” (2 Peter 1:2 Amplified).

“For though the mountains should depart and the hills be shaken or removed, yet My love and kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace and completeness be removed, says the Lord, Who has compassion on you” (Isaiah 54:10 Amplified).

Praise You, Lord Jesus! Praise You!!

The next day...

I discovered yesterday that the beautiful freedom the Lord gave me in His gracious promises of “peace” carried along with it the joy of a moment-by-moment obedience.

That is, during the day I made the discovery that I had departed from the habit of looking directly to Jesus for the answer to small daily decisions; that the only way I will keep a pliable, obedient spirit in the larger decisions, is to look to Him and to obey in the smaller ones.

I had slipped badly on that. I’m always getting hung up on the tensions, or seeming tension, between freedom in Christ Jesus and obedience.

James, however, makes this connection beautifully:

“But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does” (James 1:25 NIV).

Or to approach all this another way. I see that Satan has small chance of getting at us—of accusing us and destroying our rest (as he has with me so often over “small” things like sleeping pills, or the lipstick issue I faced years ago on Cape Cod) when we are faithful in present-moment obedience, steadily looking to Jesus, asking, “Shall I do this? Or not?”—and then obeying.

Thus this obedience results in liberty—and the two go hand in hand.

ANSWERS TO PRAYER

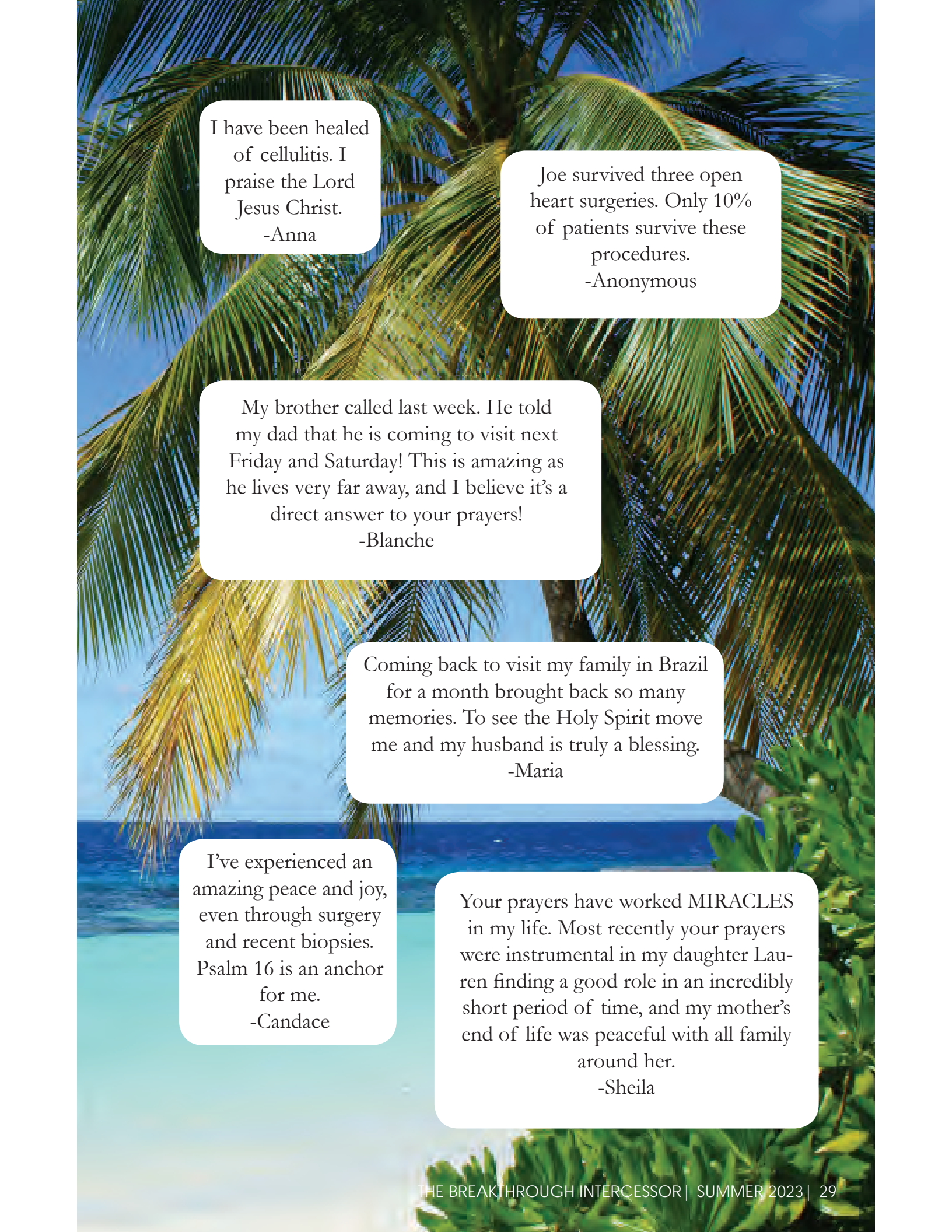
Family is getting restored—slow but sure.
-Pamela

Praise Report: God answered our prayers, and my son got FMLA-approved for work!
-Winella

Just yesterday, September 1, when my wife Lea could not visit F.E. in jail, she was informed that it was because F.E. had threatened self-harm. Well, we were very anxious about the trial today, but much more concerned about his safety. But today the trial was canceled, and the court ordered a psychological evaluation be done on F.E. He is now being watched carefully, and this is also an answered prayer, because this is the beginning of psychological help for F.E. So, thank you so much for your prayers.
-Anonymous

I received a card telling me I was being prayed for from 4/11 to 5/1. I just wanted to say thank you. So much has gone on during these three weeks, including my 15-year-old car dying. I was able to buy a newer used car with very low mileage at a great price! The timing was amazing.
-Ann

Our home sold to the right buyer!
-Margaret



I have been healed
of cellulitis. I
praise the Lord
Jesus Christ.
-Anna

Joe survived three open
heart surgeries. Only 10%
of patients survive these
procedures.
-Anonymous

My brother called last week. He told
my dad that he is coming to visit next
Friday and Saturday! This is amazing as
he lives very far away, and I believe it's a
direct answer to your prayers!
-Blanche

Coming back to visit my family in Brazil
for a month brought back so many
memories. To see the Holy Spirit move
me and my husband is truly a blessing.
-Maria

I've experienced an
amazing peace and joy,
even through surgery
and recent biopsies.
Psalm 16 is an anchor
for me.
-Candace

Your prayers have worked **MIRACLES**
in my life. Most recently your prayers
were instrumental in my daughter Lau-
ren finding a good role in an incredibly
short period of time, and my mother's
end of life was peaceful with all family
around her.
-Sheila

My grandson,
whom you all
prayed would be
born early this
year, is now an
eight-month-old
joyful baby boy.
-Chris

So far, this has been Jana's best
day yet here. She had an MRI
this morning, and so far, there
aren't any signs of stroke or other
damage. Infections are clearing up
nicely. IV's are still flowing, and
Jana has been more "with it" and
aware of everything all day.
-Brad


I called a few months ago for
my sister-in-law who has mild
dementia. She was admitted to
the hospital with severe pneu-
monia and a heart problem.
She's home now.
-Anonymous

My left shoulder
is healed. Thanks
for the prayers.
-Jamarcus

Elizabeth has left the hospital, and my daugh-
ter has brought her home to her husband and
her two children. Thank you, Father, for saving
Elizabeth's life!
-Mary Louise

My calcius in my heart
lowered. Doctors said it
was impossible.
-Lee

The cut on my
left foot is healed.
-Brooklyn



Your prayers have helped my son, David. He is getting along well in spite of his many chronic health problems—he was even able to go on a vacation with his brother. This is the first time this has occurred. Praise God.

-Anonymous

Jamie called her mother! My friend had not heard from Jamie for 3 years. Jamie said she is in a faith-based recovery program now (for alcohol and meth); she reported being physically better with all drains out. She also told her mother she was going to come visit her!

-Anonymous

My granddaughter in senior year had bullies verbally attacking her. My daughter talked to the principal, and they removed my granddaughter from the other girls classes. Plus my granddaughter is going to the school until 11:30, then does classes at home in the afternoon. So far she hasn't had any problems!

-Cathy

Thank you for praying for my friend Irma. The Lord delivered her from the covid virus.

-Patricia

Dave has fully recovered and celebrated his birthday with his family.

-Janice

Summer 2023

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