

PRAYER NETWORKING



Prayer and Prayer Mobilization

SCRIPTURE FOCUS

“On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent. You who put the Lord in remembrance, take no rest, and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth.” Isaiah 62:6-7

“And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, ‘Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, “Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain?”’” Acts 4:24-25



QUOTES

“Prayer at its highest is a two-way conversation and for me, the most important part is listening to God’s replies.” Frank C. Laubach

“History belongs to the intercessors, who believe the future into being.” Walter Wink

“History belongs to the intercessor.” Rees Howells



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

As a result of the readings, discussion and activities in this session, the candidate should be able to ...

- Better understand and engage in prayer as relationship with God.
- Have a better understanding of some scriptural principles of prayer and seek to practice these in their lives.
- Become a better intercessor for others.

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- Better understand and engage in prayer networking for the sake of their focus population.

KNOWING GOD

Prayer is simply a conversation with God as we talk and listen and amazingly He talks and listens to us. Usually, we think of prayer as talking to God, but which is more important – talking to God or listening to Him?

Now think about how we often approach prayer. We talk about our “prayer life” or our “prayer time” and focus on this as if it is one more component in our fragmented life. God is always available for conversation and yet we are not. We ignore Him or relegate Him to only designated times. Special times of focusing just on God are important and needed, yet He desires us to talk to Him and listen to Him “without ceasing.”

As we listen to God (through scripture, meditation, other people, creation, etc.) our focus is not on what God can do for us. That makes the God of the Universe a servant to us! Instead, we focus on knowing Him and spending time with Him. In Revelation 3:20 (NLT) as Jesus is talking to His followers, He says, “Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear My voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.”

As we listen we are also aware of what God wants us to do. Jesus said in John 10:27 (NLT), “My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me.” Conversation with God becomes our chance to better know God and follow Him.

As we talk to God we are telling Him about ourselves – not for His information, but for what it does for us to transparently communicate and for what it does for Him for us to freely share. We also talk to Him to confess our sins so can forgive us. We talk to Him and sing to Him in order to praise Him and thank Him. We talk to Him to do His work on earth as we pray His kingdom into existence in our lives and the lives of those around us.

In this short session, it is impossible to cover all the key elements of “prayer.” But we can be reminded that when all is said and done, prayer is just a word for relationship with God.

REFLECT #1

Read the following verses and write down your thoughts about prayer.

1 John 4:10, Romans 5:8, Isaiah 54:10, Zephaniah 3:17, Psalm 139:13-18

CASE STUDY: BUILDING A PRAYER CELL NETWORK FOR UNREACHED PEOPLE

Here is an email from a missionary couple describing the actual approach they used to catalyze a prayer cell network for their unreached people group. For security reasons, their names and the name of their people group has been changed.

First, we made a list of all the people we knew. Then, we sorted it out into several basic categories:

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1. People we were confident would want to be involved.
2. People who were very strong candidates.
3. Those who we thought would be border-line in interest.
4. People in our organization and other people we did not know but with whom we wanted to meet and discuss the idea.
5. Those to whom we were referred by our contacts.
6. Those who heard about our prayer network and who came to us.

We began to work on the best way to share information about our Prayer Cell network. We decided that we would try to meet with many of our prayer network candidates in small group meetings, mainly through local churches. We traveled over 20,000 miles in 6 months making personal contacts, scheduling, and meeting with hundreds of church members interested in mission.

We were looking for “a few good, faithful pray-ers.” **We were not looking for quantity, only quality.** Due to security considerations related to our mission assignment, we were unable to speak to large groups, so we networked through individual contacts and pastors.

First, we would talk with pastors privately about our intentions, described the nature of our work, and what we hope to accomplish with the Prayer Cell network. Almost every time, a pastor would start out with a long list of candidates in their minds and then shorten it drastically after we shared the details including required confidentiality. The pastor would write each prospective prayer partner a letter or talk in person describing what they were being asked to become involved in. So, those who came to our meetings had already basically decided they wanted to be involved in some way. We met in private homes, church conference rooms, etc.

*GOD IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE FOR
CONVERSATION.*

In some churches where the pastor was not supportive, we dealt with key lay contacts and met in their homes. Those Prayer Cell groups carry the name of a person and are not identified with a church.

In each meeting, we presented the Benadari and told some of our work and the approach we were taking to reach them. We were not trying to sell people on financially supporting us and our organization – we kept the focus on praying for the Benadari. People respected and responded to our approach.

Every time we met with individuals or a group, we would give them a “Prayer Folder.” Nice folders were purchased and given to each person. They contained a variety of articles describing the work, prayer needs, our goals in prayer, etc. Articles were printed on colorful paper to catch their eye. We also had a flyer with photos and descriptions of the Benadari people, plus other information including security guidelines. We felt it was important that each person left with something nice in their hands and with specific prayer items to pray for on a daily basis. Thus, they could start immediately after leaving the meeting.

The resulting Prayer Cell groups that were formed range in size from 3 to 15 persons, with the average being about 10. There are just under 400 people from a variety of backgrounds in about 39 Prayer Cell groups. One church has 3 groups of less than ten in each group. We purposely

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suggested the groups be 10 or less so communication would be easy for them. How and when they meet and how they organize is their call; we just shared with them our vision of reaching our unreached people group with prayer as the foundation.

Some basic characteristics of the people who eventually felt led to get involved were as follows:

- People for whom prayer was a way of life
- People who loved mission and had a great heart for sharing the Gospel with the lost
- People who could keep confidential and sensitive information
- People who were open to connecting and praying together regularly in small groups of 10 or less people (prayer cells)
- At least one person in each prayer cell who received our emails

The groups caught the vision and excitement of how we are doing mission on the cutting edge among an unreached people group and wanted to be involved. Several wanted to start other prayer cells for us. We told them to go to it. Those to whom we told this we trusted to know how to emphasize the security needs, etc.

We even set up one prayer cell in the Hampton Inn in Statesville, Alabama when a pastor called us on the phone saying he had heard about it and asked if he could join us! That was

*WE MET THE CREAM OF THE CROP IN
THESE CHURCHES.*

great! People get excited about this! Although organizing and traveling to meet with hundreds of church members was hard and tiring, it was a pure blessing to us and definitely worth it. We made friends that will be special to us the

remainder of our lives. We met the cream of the crop in these churches. Many of them were key leaders and opinion shapers in their churches. All wanted to be involved in some way and many wanted to give money. Some already have given money. There will be adoptions of the Benadari to evolve from this. Several made the verbal commitment to us to do so. We felt we could have added another 50 prayer cells if we had stayed another 6 months.

We continue to communicate with our Prayer Cell groups several times each month since returning to the region. Beyond prayer support for the people, it is a good mission education opportunity, as we have sent informative stuff about the Benadari, Islam, and other related subjects to them.

PRAYER IN MISSION

Many of us repeat the mantra that prayer is the key to reaching lost people and seeing God accomplish His purposes on earth. Yet often, we fail to “practice what we preach.” Prayer is THE KEY WORK if we are to be faithful servants and see God accomplish His purposes through us for a lost world. To remind ourselves of this, let’s look at the following scriptures from the Holman Christian Standard Bible.

The Role of the Holy Spirit in Acts

Acts 1:8 – *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

PANORAMA

Acts 2:4 – “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

Acts 2:33 – “Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.”

Acts 4:8 – “Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders...”

Acts 4:31 – “And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.”

Acts 6:3 – “Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.”

Acts 6:10 – “But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.”

Acts 7:55 – “But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.”

Acts 8:29 – “And the Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go over and join this chariot.’”

Acts 8:39 – “And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.”

Acts 9:31 – “So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.”

Acts 10:44 – “While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.”

Acts 11:24 – “...for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.”

Acts 11:28 – “And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius).”

Acts 13:2 – “While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’”

Acts 13:4 – “So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.”

Acts 16:6-7 – “And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.”

Acts 20:23 – “...except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me.”

Acts 20:28 – “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.”

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Acts 21:4 – “And having sought out the disciples, we stayed there for seven days. And through the Spirit they were telling Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.”

The Role of Prayer in Acts

Acts 1:14 – “All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.”

Acts 1:24 – “And they prayed and said, ‘You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen’”

Acts 2:42 – “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”

Acts 6:6 – “These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.”

Acts 8:15 – “...who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 9:11 – “And the Lord said to him, ‘Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying.’”

Acts 9:40 – “But Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed; and turning to the body he said, ‘Tabitha, arise.’ And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up.”

Acts 10:2 – “He was a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God.”

Acts 10:9 – “The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray.”

Acts 10:30 – “And Cornelius said, ‘Four days ago, about this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing...’”

Acts 12:5 – “So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church”

Acts 13:3 – “Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.”

Acts 14:23 – “And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.”

Acts 16:16 – “As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling.”

Acts 16:25 – “About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.”

Acts 20:36 – “And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.”

Acts 21:5 – “When our days there were ended, we departed and went on our journey, and they all, with wives and children, accompanied us until we were outside the city. And kneeling down on the beach, we prayed.”

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Acts 22:17 – “When I had returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance.”

Acts 27:29 – “And fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come.”

Acts 28:8 – “It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery. And Paul visited him and prayed, and putting his hands on him, healed him.”

REFLECT #2

1. What can you learn from the role of the Holy Spirit in Acts?
2. How have you seen the Holy Spirit at work in your life and ministry?
3. How do you currently intercede for lost people? Be specific?
4. What will you change as a result of looking at the role of the Holy Spirit and prayer in the book of Acts?

INTERCESSION

- Jesus said, “Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” John 14:13
- Jesus also promised, “If two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.” Matthew 18:19
- Paul gave “Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us.” Ephesians 3:20
- James said, “The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.” James 5:16
- John said, “And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.” 1 John 5:14-15

The dictionary speaks of intercession as “the act of interceding, meditation, pleading, or prayer on behalf of another.” Intercession is prayer offered for others as directed by the Holy Spirit.

But we often seem to grossly misunderstand the nature of intercession. In her book, *Live a Praying Life* (p. 16), Jennifer Kennedy Dean gives some assumptions we seem to have about God’s reaction to our requests:

- God says, “What a great idea! I’ll take that under advisement. Maybe—just maybe—if he can bring Me enough documentation or can make a strong enough case, I’ll consider his idea. “
- God says, “The majority of the requests in this matter are leaning in the other direction. I’ll have to deny your request. I have to go with the majority.”
- God says, “Someone else got here first.”
- God says, “You let me down so many times. What makes you think I would give you anything you asked for? You don’t deserve to have your prayer answered.”

Psalm 25:4-5 says “Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.”

Intercessory prayer is simply understanding what God wants to do and then being a channel

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for His will and power as we give voice on earth to His desires and plans. Kennedy goes on to point out the difference that an intercessor can make in a comparison of Exodus 32 and Ezekiel 22:

Israel: Exodus	Judah: Ezekiel 22
Israel breaks covenant with God (32:1-4)	Judah breaks covenant with God (22:23-29)
Israel deserves judgment (32:8)	Judah deserves judgment (22:30)
God desires mercy (32:10)	God desires mercy (22:0)
God seeks out an intercessor (32:7-10)	God seeks out an intercessor (22:30)
God finds Moses (32:11)	God finds no one like Moses (22:30)
Israel receives mercy (32:14)	Judah receives judgment (22:31)

God says, *“On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent. You who put the Lord in remembrance, take no rest, and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth.”* Isaiah 62:6-7

As intercessors, we become God’s watchmen for our generation and our world, which, like all of us, deserve judgment. The watchman image speaks of city guards who were stationed on the wall to keep a lookout for enemies and sound the alarm when there was danger. If the watchman failed to keep watch, the penalty was death. God looks out on a world that deserves judgment and asks us to intercede on their behalf. If we fail, the penalty is the eternal death of those for whom we failed to intercede.

REFLECT #3
 Read the following scriptures and write down what you learn about intercession.

Genesis 18:20-33
 Exodus 32:7-14
 Exodus 32:19-32
 Ezra 9:1-15
 I Kings 18:30-39
 Daniel 9:1-27
 Nehemiah 1:1-11
 John 17:6-26
 Luke 23:24
 Acts 7:60
 Ephesians 3:14-20
 Philippians 1:9-11
 Colossians 1:9-17

PRAYING FOR THE UNREACHED

Those people groups, cities, nations, and language groups without access to the Gospel.

I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. This is good and pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth. (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

PANORAMA

In this passage, Paul says to **intercede** but he also says to **give thanks**. The following biblical passages are presented as suggestions of how to pray in both ways for unreached people groups. God will use our prayers as channels to accomplish His will of reaching the unreached peoples. **One of the best ways to pray is to pray scripture!!**

PRAYING FOR THE UNREACHED:

Pray...

- For the promised time to come when all the earth will be filled, as the waters fill the sea, with an awareness of the glory of the LORD. (Habakkuk 2:14)
- God's Kingdom will come among the Unreached Peoples. (Matthew 6:10)
- God will send workers to the unreached peoples. (Luke 10:2)
- The unreached peoples will be saved by God. (Romans 10:1)
- God will open the door for the spreading of the Good News among them. (Colossians 4:3)
- The Good News which has been proclaimed to them will spread rapidly and be honored wherever it goes. (2 Thessalonians 3:1)
- They will know the truth. (1 Timothy 2:4)
- They will be called by the Holy Spirit to belong to Christ. (Romans 1:6)
- They will be given special favor by God so they can believe in Christ. (Ephesians 2:8)
- They will be born again. (John 3:3)
- They will truly listen to the Good News. (Romans 10:14, 17; Matthew 13:14-16)
- Their hearts will be opened by God. (Acts 16:14)
- They are given a new heart. (Ezekiel 36:26)
- They believe in their heart that God raised Jesus from the dead. (Romans 10:8-10)
- They confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord. (Romans 10:10)
- They will truly repent. (Luke 13:3)
- People from the unreached people groups will be convinced by the Holy Spirit of their sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment. (John 16:8-9)

JOIN IN THE BATTLE FOR THE SOULS OF THE UNREACHED:

Pray...

- In the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. (Ephesians 6:18)
- With the full armor of God. (Ephesians 6:11)
- Against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:12)
- Against those things that keep people in spiritual bondage. (Ephesians 2:1-4, 4:17-19)
- That they will be freed from the deception. (1 Timothy 4:1-4)
- That God will open people's spiritual eyes (Colossians 1:9, Ephesians 1:17-19)
- That the Holy Spirit will convict them of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8)

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GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR THE UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS:

Thank God that . . .

. . . people from the unreached people groups will stand with people from every nation and tribe and people and language in front of the throne and before the Lamb and worship Him. (Revelation 7:9)

- Every nation has been given to Christ as His inheritance. (Psalm 2:8)
- Jesus has sheep from every people group. (John 10:16)
- Jesus' sheep know His voice. (John 10:16)
- Jesus has already ransomed with His blood people from every tribe and language and people and nation. (Revelation 5:9)
- People from every nation will return to God and bow down and worship Him. (Psalm 22:27)
- People from every race and nation and language will obey the Lord. (Daniel 7:13-14)
- . . . the Gospel is the power of God to save everybody who believes. (Romans 1:16)

EXPLORE

For further study explore the following resources:

The Lord's Prayer as a Pattern of Life for the Believer (<http://www.newtestamentprayer.com/articles/lordspr.htm>)

Global Prayer Digest (<http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/>)

REFLECT #4

As we pray, sometimes we are hindering our very requests. Do we really want God to work? Do we want it enough to let God root out the hindrances in our hearts, minds, and actions?

Read the following verses and note the hindrances.

Psalm 34:15-17

Psalm 66:16-20

Isaiah 59:1-2

1 Peter 5:5-6

Luke 20:46-47

Mark 11:22-25

Matthew 17:19-20

1 John 5:14-15

John 15:16-17

Ephesians 6:10-13

James 1:5-7

James 4:3

1 Peter 3:7

Which of these hindrances are in your life?

What will you do to change this?

LEARNING FROM PAUL'S PRAYER REQUESTS

Brothers and sisters, pray for us. (1 Thessalonians 5:25 NLT)

PANORAMA

As the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul is obviously a great model for us to follow. When he asked for prayer in his epistles, he also gave us models for how we can ask for prayer and how we can also pray for our co-laborers.

Dear brothers and sisters, I urge you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to join in my struggle by praying to God for me. Do this because of your love for me, given to you by the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:30 NLT)

Paul asked believers to pray specifically:

- that he would be protected from unbelievers (Romans 15:31; 2 Thessalonians 3:2)
- that his service would be accepted by fellow believers (Romans 15:31b)
- that God would open doors for him to speak about God's mysterious plan (Colossians 4:2-3)
- that God would give him courage to witness fearlessly and freely (Ephesians 6:19-20)
- that he might make the message clear (Colossians 4:4)
- the gospel message would spread rapidly and people would respond (2 Thessalonians 3:1)

Many church people who pray for missionaries communicate this:

“God bless the missionaries. We don't know what they are doing or what they need, but we assume that you do, so help them out please.”

Those who are sent out need to do a better job of informing people how to pray and those who are sending need to do a better job of praying specifically and consistently. Using Paul's prayers as clues will help us do a much better job as we pray and work together.

REFLECT #5

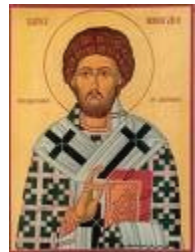
1. Do you already have a prayer team? If not, how can you build one? If so, how can you increase it?
2. Write a list with 5 specific prayer requests.
3. Identify scriptures that people can pray for these requests.
4. Send this list of Scriptures to intercessors that are/will pray with you.

EXAMPLES FOR US TO FOLLOW

Boniface, Lioba, and Thecla

The savage Teutonic people of Northern Europe were brought to Christ by missionaries in the eighth century. The most famous of these gospel-bearers was Boniface. He asked Tetta, the abbess of Wimborne, Dorset, to send him assistants. Tetta sent Lioba and Thecla to his aid.

Boniface appointed these women as heads of monastic institutions observing the Benedictine rule. Their work endured even after he had been butchered by pagans. Boniface relied on his “daughters” as more than heads of abbeys. He called on them to be his prayer partners.



In a famous letter to the “...revered and dearly loved sisters Leobgith and Thecla, and to

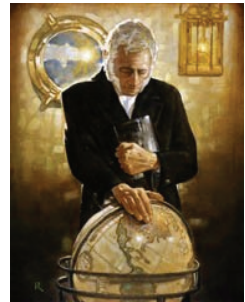
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Cynehild,” he wrote: “I urge and direct you, beloved daughters, to pray to our Lord frequently, as we trust you do constantly, and will continue to do, as you have in the past ... and know that we praise God, and our heart’s yearning grows that God our Lord, refuge of the poor and hope of the lowly, will free us from our straits and the trials of this evil age, that His word may spread, and the wonderful Gospel of Christ be held in honor, that His grace be not fruitless in me... And... pray that I may not die without some fruit for that Gospel.” Read more here: (<http://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/601-900/thecla-a-woman-to-tame-the-wild-teutons-11629749.html>).

George Mueller

The terms “Faith Ministry,” “Living on Faith,” “Living on Prayer,” and other similar descriptive phrases all go back to George Müller, who made the decision to found and operate his many ministries without ever asking anyone other than God for money. During his lifetime, he received (and gave away) over \$7 million dollars (in 1890’s era money – equivalent to \$165 million today) through prayer alone.

His life was characterized by prayer, faith, and self-denial in the cause of Christ. During his lifetime, he established 117 schools which educated more than 120,000 young persons, including orphans.



Mueller made the commitment to:

1. *Not to receive any fixed salary*, so he would rely on God
2. *Never to ask any human being for help*, however great the need might be, but to tell God and trust Him to meet the need.
3. *Take Luke 12:33 literally*, so he never kept any money but spent and gave it all away as God provided it to him.
4. *Take Romans 8:8 literally* and never be in debt to anyone but trust God to provide.

Mueller acknowledged that this was a hard lifestyle to get used to, but he said it had great benefit for him spiritually. “*For it will not do, it is not possible, to live in sin, and at the same time, by communion with God, to draw down from heaven everything one needs for the life that now is.*” Read more here: (http://www.prayerfoundation.org/prayer_heroes_george_muller.htm).

Moravians

On August 13, 1727, in Herrnhut, a small band of believers called the Moravians experienced a revival. Two weeks later, twenty-four men and twenty-four women committed to spend one hour each day praying for their community and the world. This prayer effort would last 100 years! There is little doubt that this was one of the primary seeds of the modern missionary movement. The Moravians became committed to beginning and sustaining all their efforts in prayer. They became known as “God’s Happy People.” Out of this prayer movement came the first concerted Protestant missionary efforts.



PANORAMA

The first missionaries, two young men, went to share the gospel with the slaves of the West Indies and departed on their journey believing that they must become slaves themselves to gain access to the slaves. Within fifteen years of the revival and ensuing prayer chain, the Moravians had established mission in the Virgin Islands, Greenland, Turkey, the Gold Coast of Africa, South Africa, and North America.

They endured incredible difficulties and many of them died in the midst of their missionary efforts. But this did not stop them from continuing to go out to the hard places.

The eighteenth-century revivals in America and England were influenced by the Moravian mission and prayer movements. One link we know of is that Peter Boehler, a Moravian missionary in England, who was instrumental in the conversion of John Wesley (a key figure in the English revivals and the father of the Methodist movement). Wesley wrote of Boehler, "Oh what a work hath God begun since his coming to England! Such a one as shall never come to an end, till heaven and earth pass away!"

Student Volunteer Movements

The beginning impulse of American mission began with five students praying. In 1806, these five university students at Williams College gathered for a weekly prayer meeting. When it began to rain, they found shelter in a large haystack and continued praying for their campus and the world. As they prayed and discussed, they began to talk about their own missionary obligation and specifically talked about the needs in Asia. One of the students argued that it was too dangerous and they should wait until Asia was safer and more civilized. As they prayed they realized that they must commit themselves to do whatever God asked of them. Their freshman leader, Samuel Mills, sparked their faith and prayers exclaiming "We can do this if we will."



This became the famous "Haystack" meeting and led to a student mission movement and the birth of student mission societies. The first seven student volunteers sailed for India in 1812. Many more societies were formed and missionaries sent out in the years to come with an eternal impact all around the world.

Eighty years after the first haystack meeting, a young man named **Luther Wishard** was appointed a leader in the fledgling YMCA organization. He visited the Haystack prayer monument and realized that a similar movement was needed from his own generation.

"What they had done was ours to complete." Kneeling in the snow by the monument, Wishard pleaded with God to do it again, praying "Where water once flowed, may it flow again." Then, recognizing that his personal whole-hearted surrender to Christ must be the first step, Wishard committed the whole of his life praying "I am willing to go anywhere at any time to do anything for Jesus." (CHI)

Despite his desire to go to the field, Wishard was called by God to become a mission mobilizer and facilitate the sending of many more missionaries. He helped organize the Mt. Hermon mission conference in 1886 and 100 students volunteered for missionary service. This movement became known as the Student Volunteer Movement and over 20,000 missionaries were sent to the field as a result, with a prayer and financial support team of over 80,000

volunteers. Their rallying cry was ‘evangelization of the world in this generation,’ and despite not reaching their goal, they had a huge impact in evangelizing millions of lost people.

“Praying Hyde”



“Give me Souls, O God, or I die!” This was the earnest cry of **John Hyde**, a famous missionary to India. John’s brother Edmund went as a missionary to Montana, but while serving there, he died of fever. John began to pray about possibly taking his place, but he struggled reaching a conclusion.

During his senior year at McCormick Theological Seminary, he came to the room of his friend Mr. Konkle near midnight, saying he wanted all Konkle’s arguments in favor of going to the foreign mission field. “I told him that he knew as much about the foreign field as I did; that I didn’t believe it was argument that he needed, and that I thought the way for him to settle it was to lay it before our Father and stay until He decided for him: We sat in silence a while longer, and, saying he believed I was right, he rose and bade me good night.” The next morning Konkle felt a hand on his arm. Looking around, he saw John’s face radiant with a new vision. “It’s settled, Konkle,” said he. (CHI)

With his sense of God’s calling settled, John made preparations and departed for India. Aboard ship, he opened a letter from a friend who wrote that he would pray until John was filled with the Holy Spirit. Initially, John was angry. How dare his friend suggest that he was deficient in his spiritual life? But after further reflection, he realized that his willingness to go to India was not enough, nor was his academic study. He yielded his heart and prayed that the Holy Spirit would fill him. Revival began when he came late to a meeting one evening.

“I have been having a great controversy with God. I feel that he has wanted me to come here and testify to you concerning some things that he has done for me, and I have been arguing with him that I should not do this. Only this evening...have I got peace concerning the matter and have I agreed to obey Him, and now I have come to tell you just some things that He has done for me.”

John told them how God had freed him from certain sins. Soon his listeners were weeping and confessing their own. In 1908, anguished by the sight of sin and souls doomed to hell, he asked the Lord to bring a soul a day into the kingdom of God. Soon he upped that to two souls, and then four. God answered his prayers. (CHI) Read more here: (<http://www.theoldtimegospel.org/studies/preach23.html>).

Ibrahim

I’m sometimes asked by faithful prayer warriors, “Do my prayers make a difference?” I love to tell them of people like Ibrahim. Ibrahim was a young convert from Islam that I met deep in inner Asia in 1990. He was the first of his people group to come to faith in Christ. I remember how his face glowed with the radiance of the Holy Spirit in his life. I asked one of the church planters working in the area how they had led Ibrahim to Christ.

“We didn’t,” they said. “He came to faith through prayers.” “I don’t understand,” I said.

The church planter explained, “Ibrahim is a student at the university where I teach. He is the son of a mullah (Muslim religious leader). We normally stay away from people like him. But

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one day Ibrahim came to me and told me of a dream he'd had. In his dream, an old man handed him a book and said, 'Read this.' Ibrahim asked me if I knew what the book in his dreams might be. Apparently, he'd been asking his friends the same question because the dream had haunted him for weeks. His friends had always pointed him to the Qur'an, but Ibrahim said, 'No. It's not the Qur'an.'

The church planter hesitated and then spoke softly, "In my drawer, I had a tattered copy of the New Testament. It was written in the old script that most of Ibrahim's people could no longer understand so I had never used it in witnessing to them. I hesitated, but then sensed God wanted me to take a risk with this mullah's son. I showed it to Ibrahim. 'Could this be the book?'"

*I REMEMBER HOW HIS FACE GLOWED
WITH THE RADIANCE OF THE HOLY
SPIRIT IN HIS LIFE.*

Ibrahim opened the book and said, "Ah, I see it is in the old script. My father taught me how to read this. Do you mind if I borrow it?"

Over the next few weeks, Ibrahim read all of it and led himself to faith in Christ. We both knew that the true source of Ibrahim's conversion could only be found in prayer.¹

EXPLORE

For further study explore the following resources:

Window International Network (<http://www.win1040.com/>)
24-7 Prayer (<https://www.24-7prayer.com/>)
Operation World (<http://www.operationworld.org/>)

SELF-AWARENESS, SURVIVAL, AND SOLUTION

Obviously, this format is too short to deal with all the myriad principles and possibilities of prayer. As you go into the next phase of your life and service, how will you pray? In other words, how will you talk to and listen to God? Prayer is as simple and as amazing and as incredible as only this – listening and talking to God. Let's look at prayer in 3 areas: Loving God, knowing God's will and obeying God.

Loving God

Prayer is first and foremost about knowing God. And knowing God is about loving God. When Jesus was asked, He said the most important commandment was, "you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength." When you think about prayer, don't focus on some sort of exercises or spiritual disciplines. Your first focus is on knowing God and loving God. Don't get so busy trying to serve God that you fail to know and love Him better and better.

The amazing thing about God is that He loves us so much more than we can ever imagine. The book of Hosea is a shocking book that gives us some idea of how much God loves us. God

told Hosea to “Go and marry a prostitute so that some of her children will be conceived in prostitution. This will illustrate how Israel has acted like a prostitute by turning against the LORD and worshiping other gods.” (Hosea 1:2) Then after Hosea and Gomer had children, she returned to prostitution. God told Hosea, “Go and love your wife again, even though she commits adultery with another lover. This will illustrate that the LORD still loves Israel, even though the people have turned to other gods and love to worship them. “So I bought her back for fifteen pieces of silver and five bushels of barley and a measure of wine. (Hosea 3:2)

*DON'T GET SO BUSY TRYING TO
SERVE GOD THAT YOU FAIL TO KNOW
AND LOVE HIM BETTER AND BETTER.*

God makes it clear that we are the prostitute. God has saved us from a sinful and empty life and stooped to make us HIS spouse!! And yet we return to our prostitution and intimacy with sin and Satan. YET God, like a lovesick husband, takes us back and forgives us and wants to

restore us to a full relationship. The only question is whether we will spend the time and effort to come into a full relationship of love with God.

Knowing God's Will

As we know God, our goal for service becomes knowing the will of God. Our intercession does not arise from our own desires. Instead, we seek to know God and love Him and as a result have His desires and seek His will. Intercession becomes expressing God's desires back to Him so He can act for His glory and our needs and the needs of others.

In knowing God's will, we can gain wisdom from the amazing example of George Mueller. The following list gives his principles for knowing God's will.

1. I seek at the beginning to **get my heart into such a state that it has no will of its own** in a given matter. When I am ready to do the Lord's will, whatever it may be, nine-tenths of the difficulties are overcome.
2. Having done this, I **don't leave the result to feeling or simply impression**. If I do so, I leave myself liable to great delusion.
3. I **seek the Will of the Spirit of God through, or in connection with, the Word of God**. The Spirit and the Word must be combined. If I look to the Spirit alone without the Word, I lay myself open to great delusions also. If the Holy Ghost guides us at all, He will do it according to the Scriptures and never contrary to them.
4. Next, I take into account **providential circumstances**. These often plainly indicate God's will in connection with His Word and Spirit.
5. I **ask God** in prayer to reveal His will to me aright.
6. Thus, through prayer, the study of the Word, and reflection, I come to a deliberate judgment, according to the best of my ability and knowledge. **If my mind is thus at peace and continues so after two or three more petitions, I proceed accordingly**. I have found this method always effective in trivial or important issues.

Obeying God

As we love God, we come to know His will. A true test of our sincerity is whether we obey God's will. As we pray, God often chooses us to be the hands and feet that answer the prayers. It is an easy thing to call Him Lord but Jesus said that if we love Him we will obey His commands (John 14:15).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES ~ BEFORE YOU GO

Imagine

Imagine that you are married and you also work in a two-person office with your spouse. So basically, you are together most of your time. Now imagine telling your spouse that you can only talk to him/her between 6 and 7 in the morning and for a minute or two before meals. The rest of the time you are going to ignore each other.... How often do we treat God like this?

Lifestyle

Many Christians around the world have avoided the spiritual discipline of fasting. Consider doing an extended fast for one week, 10, 20, 30 or even 40 days. You will be amazed at how God can work through the fast. There are many ways to fast, such as:

- Full Fast: Eat no solid foods and take no drink apart from water.
- Partial Fast: Skip one meal a day.
- One-Meal-a-Day Fast: Eat only once a day, drinking water otherwise.
- Juice/drink fast. Eat no solid foods. Drink water and juice (fruit/vegetable)
- Daniel Fast: Eat no meat. Eat only vegetables and fruit and drink water.

Formation

What are the spiritual disciplines that you need to address in your life? What can you do to encourage an ongoing conversation with God? How are you focusing on your set-aside time with God? Have you considered using a prayer journal to better track how God is working in your life?

Language and Customs

Try to rethink your "prayer" vocabulary. Talk to God while trying to avoid using any "religious" language. Talk about prayer with other people without using religious terminology.

Stretch Life-on-Life

Are you involved in prayer with other people? Do you meet regularly to pray together with a prayer partner? A prayer group? If you are married, do you pray regularly with your spouse?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR PRAYER NETWORKING

Johnstone, Patrick. *Operation World*. London: Gabriel Resources, 2001.

A country-by-country guide to praying for the countries of the world.

PRAYER NETWORKING

Jennifer Kennedy Dean. *Live a Praying Life*. Birmingham: New Hope Publishers, 2010.

A very insightful workbook that leads you to discover the biblical truths about prayer.

Sheets, Dutch. *Intercessory Prayer: How God Can Use Your Prayers to Move Heaven and Earth*. Bloomington: Bethany House Publishers, 2016.

This is a very practical and powerful book that helps you better understand the why and how of intercessory prayer.

Brother Lawrence. *The Practice of the Presence of God*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003.

Quote: “During your meals or during any daily duty, lift up your heart to Him, because even the least little remembrance will please Him. You don’t have to pray out loud; He’s nearer than you can imagine.”

Duewell, Wesley. *Touch the World Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986.

Another book on intercession that is full of practical suggestions. It is well written and very powerful.

White, John. *Daring to Draw Near*. Downers Grove: IVP Books, 1977.

Willard, Dallas. *Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering our Hidden Life in God*. New York: Harper, 1998.

Willard is a master scholar who writes with insight. He focuses on experiencing God by knowing Him as an essential part of the here and now, rather than only as a part of the hereafter.

Taylor, Dr. & Mrs. Howard. *Hudson Taylor’s Spiritual Secret*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2009.

Foster, Richard. *Prayer: Finding the Heart’s True Home*. New York: HarperOne, 2002.

Foster states that “coming to prayer is like coming home.” He deals with the various forms of prayer such as contemplation, healing, blessing, and forgiveness. He also deals with the prayer process and addresses wrong understandings.

Hybels, Bill. *Too Busy Not to Pray*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008.

As pastor of the Willow Creek mega-church, Hybels and his constituency have very busy lifestyles. He has found that prayer cannot happen just on the run and that he is too busy not to pray. This book is a description of the lessons he has learned. “Most of us have trouble finding time to pray.”

Murray, Andrew. *With Christ in the School of Prayer*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007.

A historical classic that is still very effective and very practical. Quote: “The Father waits to hear every prayer of faith. He wants to give us whatever we ask in Jesus’ name...Many complain that they don’t have the power to pray in faith an effective prayer that accomplishes much. The message I want to give them is that the blessed Jesus is waiting and longing to teach them this.”

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NOTES

¹Excerpted from Garrison, David. “Extraordinary Prayer” in *Church Planting Movement Journal*, Apr-June 2006: 67-70

AUTHOR

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