

# Do You Ignore or Acknowledge God's Protection?

I was going to a birthday party. Like any great *Pappy*, I stopped on the way to the party to get my grandson, Elijah, a present for his first birthday.

He was at the age where he mimicked sounds. If you asked him, "What does a doggie say?" His reply was "Arf." How did he get to be so cute?

As I walked into the little toy area of a drug store, I spotted the perfect toy. A drug store doesn't have a really big toy section I found out. But here it was: a cute, fuzzy, battery-operated puppy. A long cord was attached to the toy, with a small box on the other end. It had two buttons on it, to make the doggie bark and walk. Now this was a cool toy! It was well worth the \$ price tag.

A little while later, when Elijah opened it, he was so excited. Because he is a little genius, he learned how to push the correct buttons very quickly. He pushed one to make the puppy bark and one to make it walk. It was by far his favorite gift and he dragged it with him everywhere.

However, as I watched him play with the toy, I became concerned about the cord that attached the doggie to the little control box. Several times Elijah got tangled up in the cord. My immediate fear was that he could be harmed if the cord wrapped around his neck. I dug the box out of the trash and read the outside. It said, "Recommended for 3+ years of age." Now I had a dilemma.

How could I take the toy away from the birthday boy? Simple. I waited until he took a nap, and I confiscated the dangerous toy. Protecting my grandson took precedence over his happiness with the toy. And the amazing thing is, he doesn't even know I

protected him. He may *never* know. He, in fact, never missed the toy. But regardless of how he would react, his protection from harm and trouble was paramount in my mind.

In Psalm 32, David declares to the Lord: "You are my hiding place; You will preserve me from trouble; You will surround me with shouts of deliverance. Selah" (v.7). Then in Psalm 61:7 he writes, "May he sit enthroned before God forever; oh, prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him."

Dozens of times in the Psalms alone, David acknowledges God's protection. Make no mistake about it. The Lord God is our protector. He goes before us to make the crooked places straight. He is our rock, our fortress and our deliverer. His shield surrounds us. "The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a *refuge* in times of *trouble*." (Ps. 9:9, emphasis added).

Please do not miss this: It is His *love* and *faithfulness* that protect us. Our happiness is not as important as our protection. His hand of protection is over us, even when we don't realize it.

For instance, we may have had a flat tire, and that may have protected us from danger ahead. Or perhaps we missed an appointment, but that protected us from a bad situation. Even a broken relationship that we simply did not understand may have been a means of protecting us from what was to come. If we walk in the Light of His Word, our way is protected. We are covered in ***perfect love*** and ***covenant faithfulness***.

This week as you walk the path of your Christ journey, acknowledge His protection. Thank Him for it, even if it is not readily visible. Trust that your times are in His hands. Continue steadfastly, praying and believing. If you sense trouble coming, run into His shadow. Find refuge in Him as your stronghold.

The storms will blow. That is inevitable. Trials and

temptations abound. Satan came to kill, steal and destroy. Remember this: Your *protection* is more important to your Heavenly Father than your happiness. Be strong and of good courage. The Lord your God is with you—*everywhere you go*. And you are protected; I promise.

### **Prayer Power for the Week of April 27**

This week thank God every day that He is your hiding place and a refuge in times of trouble. Thank Him for His continual protection over you and your loved ones, and that He is with you everywhere you go. Remember the persecuted church around the world, and continue to pray for Israel's protection. Thank Him for His mercy on our nation and cry out for repentance and revival to spread across the land. Pray for unity among believers and for a release of concerted prayer for our national, state and local leaders, for a harvest of souls, and a return to honoring God as a nation and as individuals (Ps. 32:7; Ps. 9:9; 2 Chr. 7:14).

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## **9 Things Parents Should Never Say to Their Children**

In another blog, I addressed the power of the tongue by noting that your tongue is a wild animal: You need to chain it, tame it and train it. Chain it by being silent when you know nothing good will come out of your mouth. Tame it by vowing each day that you will harness and control your tongue. And train it to breathe life-giving words into those you love.

When it comes to your kids, your tongue can do a whole lot of damage, if you're not careful. Never underestimate the defeating power of a few careless words. So here are nine

things that you should never say to your kids:

**1. “Why can’t you be more like \_\_\_\_\_?”** Comparisons are toxic and they serve no positive purpose. Comparing your child to their brother, sister or friend only tears down your child and makes them feel like they’re not good enough or don’t measure up. Treat each child of yours as an individual. Never say, “Why can’t you do well in school like your sister?” Do say, “What can we do to help you do your very best in school?” Each of your children is unique. It’s important to treat them uniquely.

**2. “I don’t have time right now.”** One Saturday morning, when my son, Marky, was a little boy, he showed me his ball and glove and said, “Dad, let’s play baseball.” Of course, since I’m Mr. Family Guy, I said, “Sure, son.” Right? Wrong. No, I said “I don’t have time right now. I’m fixing the toilet. Just give me a few minutes.” Well, the minutes turned into hours and when I was ready that afternoon to play ball, my son said, “No thanks, Dad.” When we say, “I don’t have time,” what we’re really saying is, “What I’m doing is more important than what you need.” or “There’s something else I’d rather be doing.” Is there anything more important for us to do than to spend time with our children and family?

**3. “I don’t think you can do it.”** What your child hears is, “I don’t believe in you.” Knowing you believe in them gives your kids strength, courage, motivation, tenacity and more. Take that belief away and the damage will be huge. When you’re tempted to say something like this, instead say, “You’ve got some big obstacles, but I’m here for you, cheering you on and ready to help you to do your very best.” While you don’t want to fill your kids with false hope or inflated pride, you do want to encourage them in their goals.

**4. “You’re such a disappointment.”** Your kids can mess up, and they will. We all do. But if you want your children to learn from their mistakes, address their mess and how it can be

fixed without hanging it on them. The label of *failure* is a heavy load to carry, and most kids won't hold up. Try saying, "Your [bad grade, bad choice, etc.] is disappointing, but I love you no matter what. What can you learn from this?" Separate who your child is from the mess they've made.

**5. "Don't be such a wimp."** This should never be said to a boy or a girl. But, for a boy, it's basically saying, "You don't have what it takes to be a man" and can damage him to the core for quite some time. Saying, "You throw like a girl" to your son can have the same effect.

**6. "You're such a bonehead."** Telling your child they're stupid is implanted in the hard drive of their mind and is difficult to delete. It's certainly no way to motivate them.

**7. "Can't you do anything right?"** When a parent says this to a child in the heat of the moment, it's not only saying that the child messed this one thing up, but also that they mess up everything. It's always dangerous to use broadbrush words like always, never, everything or anything.

**8. Why didn't you make the starting team?** Your daughter or son probably tried really hard to make the starting team, but landed on the B squad. They probably already are disappointed about it and don't need anyone to pour vinegar into their wound. Instead, they need to be praised for doing their best and for even making the team.

**9. "So you made a B+, why didn't you get an A?"** When something like this is said, here is what a child hears, "Nothing I do is good enough for my mom or dad." If they did their best, we should praise them. If they didn't, we should challenge them to give it everything they've got the next time.

By the way, the 5 Toxins of the Tongue that Can Poison Your Marriage also apply to your relationship with your children. It might provide you with further insight on this topic as well. And these 5 Types of Powerful Words for Your Marriage

are likewise applicable to your children and will help you to build them up.

What other hurtful things have you said to your kids? How did you remedy the situation? Share your experiences below.

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## 9 Things Men Look for in a Godly Woman

A friend asked me recently, “Why are there so many eligible bachelors around? I mean there are many men who have everything going for them yet they are still single ... why?” In answering her question, I referred her to the following words from the sages; “Whether a man shall be made or marred by marriage greatly depends upon the choice he makes of a wife.” “Nothing is better than a good woman nor anything worse than a bad one. Before taking the irrevocable step choose well, for your choice though brief is yet endless.”

Men are always careful about the choice of their wives. That is why you find that a man may go out with just any kind of lady, even shower her with the most expensive of gifts, yet abandon her to marry one who isn't as exposed, as beautiful, as well connected, as educated as the one he was dating.

In choosing a wife, there are many things a man looks out for, but these 9 stand out:

1. A wise man doesn't marry for beauty and good looks alone, because as we know it, even gold when seen

everyday becomes commonplace, so does the most beautiful face, unless the woman possesses a beautiful nature in her.

2. Men do not choose talkative women, and ladies who cannot keep their secrets.
3. Any woman who cannot rely on reason to solve the daily difficulties in a relationship, and who cannot be seen as her man's best friend, would hinder rather than help her man grow.
4. In marriage and love relationships, attributes such as gentleness, patience, generosity, loyalty and love, are far more valuable to a man than any personal attractions or social class, or intellectual accomplishments of a lady. As most happily married men attest, these qualities contribute more to their happiness in the home.
5. The way a lady dresses is one of the ways that reveals her character according to psychologists. Any refined, "wife material" woman, will not dress up garishly and tastelessly with a view to display herself.
6. A man wants a good-tempered woman, although it is a very difficult thing to discover from a lady, as women have a way hiding their tempers in a smiling face.
7. Every man wants to marry an industrious woman especially during these harsh economic times. "A lazy mistress makes lazy servants, and, what is worse, a lazy mother makes lazy children."
8. While a man will spend on you, and show you love with his money, men still want a woman who is frugal and has the power to abstain from unnecessary expenditure.
9. A woman who fears God, and is prayerful is a treasure to the man.

Although this list isn't exhaustive, I have decided to limit it to the qualities spelled out by the Wise Teacher in proverbs 31:10-31—the virtuous woman. You might be thinking that maybe all a man may consider when thinking of a wife

might be: beauty, wealth, sophistication, talent and other physical qualities.

While those may count, they aren't all men seek. Most times they look for the good, sensible and affectionate woman. Because as a wise man once noted, "(T)hat man takes to himself one of the bitterest of earth's curses who marries carelessly instead of seeking with all diligence for those qualities in a wife that are the foundation of lasting happiness."

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## **3 Ways to Stoke the Fire of Personal Revival**

So many people ask me how I keep my personal passion for God burning so hot all the time. I tell them its very simple; there are three things you must do: Read the Word of God, and pray and fast on a regular schedule. The Word of God is so clear on how we are to keep the fire of personal daily revival going.

Lets start off with Mark 1:35, "Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed

to a solitary place; and there He prayed." Before the day even got started the Son of God knew the importance of being ready to face the day and all it had for Him. Your early morning prayer time lets you connect with God first thing in the morning without you waking up late and rushing around. Honestly if you start your day rushed, you're rushed all day. So wake up early and start your day as Jesus did with the Father.

Psalm 119:9-11 says, "How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You."

When we have the Word of God hidden in our heart, it will guide us in all our ways, its truly a light unto our path. The Word says people are destroyed for the lack of knowledge. The book of Proverbs is all about knowledge, wisdom and understanding. Get into the Word and remember John 1:1, which says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Or Matthew 6:6, which says: "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly." When we have a dedicated time to spend with God the word declares he is already there in the Secret place waiting for us. How exciting is that!

The King of the universe wants to meet with me on a regular basis. I don't know about you but that makes me feel really important. That makes me feel like He wants to invest in my life and really has a plan and a purpose for me. Here are some good scriptures that encourage me to meet with God daily. Remember Acts 3:20, "Then times of refreshment will come from the presence of the Lord." This means I can have a daily time of refreshing for the Lord? Yes please sign me up for that.

And don't forget Psalms 37:7, "Be still in the presence of the Lord, and wait patiently for him to act." When we wait on the Lord he will act and he speak to us.

In Matthew 6:18, Jesus warns "That your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you." When we fast we are saying to God we want to draw closer to you Lord. I personally take every meal time that I would skip and spend that time with God in reading and prayer.

If you really want to know where a huge portion of your time goes, it's eating. We spend so much time and money and it. This is why in Isaiah 58—the fasting chapter in the Bible—says a fast means to abstain from food. It's the No. 1 thing the flesh cries out for.

When we fast, our heart and mind turns back toward God at a greater measure. Consider Ecclesiastes 10:10, which says, "If the ax is dull, and one does not sharpen the edge, Then he must use more strength, but wisdom brings success!" When we feel our lives getting dull, it's time to fast and regain our Focus with God.

Finally, meditate on Psalm 119:107: "I am greatly afflicted; revive me, O Lord, according to Your word."

When we read the Word of God, spend time in prayer and fast, God will keep us and, if necessary, he will put us back on the right track. And fasting will help you like the Word says in Psalms 119:37: "Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, and revive me in Your way."

When you have a daily time with God, it makes life work! Read. Pray. Fast.

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## **Waging War With Prophecies Over Your Life**

I'm a big proponent of pressing in to the Holy Spirit for battle plans. While spiritual warfare Scriptures—like putting on the whole armor of God (see Eph. 6) or casting down imaginations (see 2 Cor. 10:5)—are always true all the time, I believe certain weapons and certain strategies are most appropriate at certain times.

For example, God once told Joshua to have men of fighting age march around the city once a day for six days, then march around the city seven times on the seventh day with the priests blowing the trumpets, then let out a battle cry on the last long blast (see Josh. 6). That strategy brought the walls of Jericho tumbling down, but that's not the right strategy for every battle.

Indeed, we see many warfare strategies in Scripture. The key is to discern and execute the warfare strategy God is breathing on during any given season and for specific situations. In this season, I believe there's wind on a strategy Paul gave his spiritual son Timothy: "This command I commit to you, my son Timothy, according to the prophecies

that were previously given to you, that by them you might fight a good fight" (1 Tim. 1:18).

### **Waging War With Your Prophetic Words**

The Amplified translation of that verse exhorts us to "be inspired and aided" by the prophetic words "that you may wage the good warfare." The New Living Translation tells us that the prophetic words "help you fight well in the Lord's battles." And the Message Translation tells us the prophecies should make you "fearless in your struggle, keeping a firm grip on your faith and on yourself. After all, this is a fight we're in."

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Indeed, this is a fight we're in—it's a good fight of faith against unseen enemies. "For our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12). Thankfully, the unseen God—and unseen angels—are on our side. The angels are an important part of this spiritual warfare equation.

Think of Daniel. He had a prophetic vision that took him into prayer and fasting for three whole weeks. That prophetic vision, prayer and fasting was followed by an angelic encounter from which we can learn plenty. The angel told Daniel from the first day he started praying out that prophetic vision, God heard his words and an angel came because of his words.

"For from the first day that you set your heart to understand this and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me for twenty-one days. So Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had

been left there with the kings of Persia" (Daniel 10:12-13).

## **Unleashing a Heavenly Host**

Angels are still warring in the heavenlies. God can dispatch them—Jesus said He could pray and God would send 12 legions (that's 72,000 angels) to rescue Him (see Matt. 26:47-54.) God told Moses He would send an angel before him to drive the enemies out of the land (see Ex. 33:22). But angels also obey the voice of His word (see Ps. 103:20). That includes the written Word and true prophetic words.

So, we see that waging warfare with the proven prophetic words we've received is scriptural—and that angels hearken unto the voice of His word. The question is, how do we wield this weapon? We pray it through. We decree it. We declare it. We meditate on it so that it gets down so deep in our spirit that when we pray it, decree it and declare it, it carries authority that comes through faith.

We're fighting a good fight of faith more than we're fighting any enemy. The enemy is real, but the fight is often the fight to believe God's Word is true in the face of contrary circumstances. Scripture is the final authority and it's our sword, but tested prophetic words are like arrows in our quiver that we can shoot into the spirit realm to hit the target of God's revealed will. It's time to go back and review some of your prophetic words and rise up against the enemies that are standing in the way of your destiny.

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*website here. You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter.*

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# **Discerning the Difference Between Holy Spirit Conviction and Demonic Condemnation**

In order to bind our flesh, thoughts, feelings and confusion when hearing directions in our mind; we need to define the difference between Holy Spirit conviction and condemnation which comes from the enemy or our flesh. If you search inside yourself, you can feel your spirit man.

When the Holy Spirit starts to manifest you can feel an overwhelming joy or it can be similar to when we feel the presence of the Lord upon us.

The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin or when we are heading in the wrong direction. When the Holy Spirit convicts us, we might feel slightly grieved or disappointed. When He is convicting you, pay attention!

Be aware of what the Spirit of the Lord is trying to teach you. Be open to receiving His correction and what He is showing you that you need to repent of and change in your life. The word repent means to turn around. When the Holy Spirit convicts us, we need to turn around, change the way we did something or the direction we are thinking of proceeding.

When the Holy Spirit corrects or convicts us, I like to

describe it as the “get in–get out” theory. He is going to correct and discipline us and show us what we did wrong. He is going to get in and get out. He is not going to badger us or nag at us about the same thing. He is going to show us the mistake, lay it upon our heart to repent and ask for forgiveness and then He is going to expect us to move on. He will keep convicting us until we do something about it.

However, He won't make us feel depressed, guilty or ashamed like the enemy will. As we grow in our walk with the Lord we will be able to more quickly identify when it is conviction from the Holy Spirit or condemnation from the enemy.

When we receive condemnation from the enemy, it is different. He wants us to stew on what we did wrong and let it build up inside us. He is hoping we will take on the emotions of guilt, regret, blame and shame. He wants these emotions to plant a seed inside us; telling us that we are no good, that we will do it again and nobody is going to forgive us for our mistakes.

These are a few of the lies that the “father of lies” will plant in our mind. The key to our victory is to remember they are just lies. Don't take the lies in; rebuke them (take authority over them) and refuse to think anything else then what the Word of God says about you.

The enemy is going to attempt to twist and turn our thoughts. He wants to make it hard for us to accept the forgiveness that Christ offers. He wants us to be mad at all the people involved. He will try to plant thoughts in our mind that we should be mad at God because, *A good God could have prevented it from happening.*

He is going to repeat old lies to us and have us go to an emotional place we don't care to visit again. He wants us to wallow in our self-pity. He will take the low self-esteem that we may have struggled with in the past and will attack us

again with those feelings of self worth and doubt. Don't listen; don't take it in. We are more than conquerors, bought with the blood of Christ, wanted and accepted by the Father. Meditate on the Scriptures and fill your mind with those thoughts and truths!

An easy way to discern between Holy Spirit conviction and condemnation from the enemy is that the Holy Spirit does it quickly. He comes in and disciplines, convicts, correct and then loves on us. Once it is over, we might think about it for a few minutes and then we move on. It's done, it's handled, we feel released, and we have given it back to the Lord, never to pick it up again!

The enemy wants us to stew on our situation and stay mad at the person or ourselves. Before we lived as Christians extending the grace He gave to us to others when we would get mad at someone it would take us three days to get over it. I think the enemy still uses that today. When we let guilt, regret, blame and shame in, it still takes us three days to get over it. When the enemy condemns us it usually takes three days to make a turn around.

How did you react in the past when you received bad news or had a situation that did not have the outcome you expected? Did it take you three days to blow it off? He will steal your time by getting you depressed, so you sit on the couch and do nothing. We need to take time to get in the Word and overcome our thoughts, fears and condemnation! We should be binding our minds to the mind of Christ; instead of allowing unnecessary thoughts to come into our minds. The next time you can't blow something off, ask yourself, "Is this Holy Spirit conviction which only lasts a few minutes or enemy condemnation which lasts three days?"

"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" (Luke 11:13).

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. God desires to give us good things if we ask” (Matt. 7:7).

God will give us good things if we ask. His Word states He will. We need to put ourselves in a position of hearing from God. God may be silent for a period of time while seeking Him for an answer. When God makes us wait for the answer it doesn't mean He is ignoring us. We need to be careful when waiting to hear from the Lord. It is in the waiting, that the enemy will use that time to counterfeit in a wrong answer. The enemy will use our lack of patience, control and the things that make us act out of God's timing to get us out of God's will.

God's timing is perfect and in the waiting is when we grow and learn. In waiting we develop perseverance and learn how to stay on the path that He has set before us. When we are seeking an answer, we don't know why God makes us wait. Is it for our benefit such as; cleaning some junk out of our trunk or defining us to more effectively hear the voice of the Lord.

We might have to wait on someone to do something, so our answer can come to pass. It doesn't matter what we are waiting for or how long we are waiting, as long as, we are continually pressing in to get the direction God wants for us.

We need to make sure when God is silent we don't take on our old behavior patterns, thoughts and habits. We need to wait silently for God. Don't try to analyze and come up with your own answer. There is growth in waiting, intimacy in waiting and learning in the waiting. Guard your mind, thoughts and heart during the waiting. Then when you hear the answer there will be no flesh involved.

When the Holy Spirit is giving you conviction or a word of knowledge, it won't leave you until you act on it. The same word will keep coming to you. It is like a basic computer

program that we used to write years ago. The program tells us what to do line by line, but we always have a "go to" line in the program. Therefore, no matter what we do, or in this case, what we try to avoid, He is always going to bring us back to the original instruction.

We can try to ignore it, but the Holy Spirit is going to keep bringing it to us until the conviction becomes so uncomfortable that we must act on it. As soon as we act on it, we feel released by the Spirit of the Lord and know we have been obedient to what He has called us to do.

How do we know if it was your flesh? If it was your flesh you could have ignored it. Think about the times you thought you were suppose to apologize to someone and didn't. What about the time you "felt" you should call a friend and didn't? Many of you have been taught when you have a problem to "stuff" your feelings. These are examples of how our flesh can control our actions. When it is our flesh, we can ignore our feelings or what it makes sense to do in the natural. It is an emotional response that we can push aside.

God has given His people free will. He is a gentleman and doesn't force us to do anything, sometimes causing us to take an alternative route to what He wants. Suppose God sent your friend to witness to you and your friend was disobedient and didn't do it. Do you think He is going to sit there and give up on you or use someone else?

There are probably many instances that God had to use someone else to do something. What if the first person didn't hear clearly, didn't act on what they were supposed to, was scared to do it or wasn't sure if it was the voice of the Lord or their own feelings?

Our God is a God of second chances. Let's be obedient to act on what direction the Lord gives us. There will be times we make mistakes, act in our flesh, miss a God appointment or

allow the enemy to condemn us. Thank God He gives us a lot of grace to get through those times when we make mistakes.

Spend some time in prayer. Reflect and think, “Are there times I was convicted versus condemned? How can I learn to hear the voice of the Lord faster?” Discern the next time you get a direction and ask yourself, “Where did it come from?” I pray you will notice the difference between your flesh, Satan or God and conviction and condemnation. May the Holy Spirit increase your discernment!

**Kathy DeGraw** is the president and founder of DeGraw Ministries.

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## The Reviving Power of Revival Stories

“There is a fresh wind coming to the prayer movement!” This declaration was the Lord’s response to my intercession concerning the weariness that had come upon the prayer movement in America.

A short time later, my attention was drawn to a dream given to Julie Meyer, a prophetic worshipper from the International House of Prayer in Kansas City. This dream validated my own concerns for the prayer movement and confirmed that the Lord was about to infuse intercessors with life and strength once again.

In Julie’s dream, she saw seven ambulances lined up, each with lights flashing. With great alarm in her spirit, she looked inside the first ambulance to see what was going on. She saw someone lying lifeless on a gurney. Next to the patient was an

attendant who was working furiously to revive him. Julie immediately knew this attendant was an angel. The heavenly attendant then said to her, "I can't find a heartbeat."

As Julie went from one ambulance to the next, she found the same scenario—intercessors on gurneys with angels attending them, but unable to find heartbeats. One of the angels looked directly at Julie and confided, "It's the intercessors ... "

This dream resonated deeply within me. For a number of years, I have watched as the strength of the prayer movement has waned. Intercessors have prayed years for revival. But many of them have experienced hope deferred, and, as the Bible teaches, this has made their hearts weak or sick (Prov. 13:12). Traveling across America, I can attest to the truthfulness of the dream. It's hard to find a heartbeat.

### **Tell the Old Stories**

As Julie's dream continued, suddenly one of the angels shouted, "I found a heartbeat! But it's very faint."

The other angels grew very excited and shouted, "What did you do?" They, of course, wanted to do the same thing to generate a heartbeat in their own patients.

The first angel replied, "Tell the old stories. When I started telling him stories of what God did in the past, his heart started to beat."

With that, the angels began telling the intercessors about the First Great Awakening, the Second Great Awakening, and other outpourings—right up through the Healing Revivals and Tent Meetings of the 1940s and '50s. As they did, the hearts of the intercessors started beating again.

At this point in the dream, an angel looked at Julie and directed her, "Tell the old stories of what God did in past revivals." Then the angel emphasized something that stirred my

heart deeply.

“Tell the intercessors to put themselves in the storyline, because the old stories are their stories.”

What a powerful and motivating thought: Past revivals are our revivals. Think about it.

We're all part of the same plan, which began centuries ago. Our role in this saga is just another act of the same play. Our battles are part of the same war they fought, and our awakenings are part of the same outpouring. Theirs is an earlier phase of ours; ours is a continuation of theirs. We're one body with one cause. God sees it all as one.

Each generation's intercession and efforts do not have to stand on their own. We can align with past movements and agree with past prayers—and add to them!

When we put ourselves in the storyline God is writing, we begin tapping into the strength and life of what He did years ago. We begin to experience the eternal purposes of God—not just those we feel are for our time. We experience the synergy of the ages.

This revelation opened my heart to a myriad of storylines that we as a generation could put ourselves into. We could see ourselves in the storyline of Charles Finney and believe revivals would be rekindled in our day that would save entire towns. We could agree with the prayers of Reese Howells for a revival anointing that would shake nations. We could join the efforts of Martin Luther King Jr. and see another wave of racial healing come to America with increased effectiveness. We could see our role in the greater plan of God, and in bringing ourselves into the story, release multiplied power for today.

**Come Alive Again**

Clearly, heaven's strategy is being released for seeing America fulfill her God-ordained destiny as a light to the nations of the earth. As we tell the old stories of revival—moves of God birthed through prayer—we are prophesying life and commanding hearts of intercession to beat again.

I am reminded of the Old Testament story of Ezekiel standing before a valley of dry bones. When Ezekiel obeyed the Lord's command and prophesied life, the breath of God blew upon those dry bones. And from that graveyard arose an exceedingly great army (Ezek. 37:1-14).

As we tell the old stories of God's outpourings in the earth, we will witness what Ezekiel did: a hopeless, lifeless movement will rise up as a mighty force in the earth once again. Only this time, it will bring forth much more than we've seen through past moves of prayer. Intercessors are tapping into past anointings as well as receiving new mantles to pray with apostolic authority, prophetic revelation and a contagious zeal.

Releasing stories of God's outpourings will release a fresh wind of the Holy Spirit over the praying church. Tongues of fire will spring up on the heads of intercessors around the world, and a storytelling anointing will ignite within them. They will go forth as a powerful prophetic voice to unleash a mighty wave of revival that will circle the globe. This new move of God will be the next, greater phase of outpourings we connect with, which commenced long ago.

Tell the old stories of what God did in past revivals and draw life from them. After all, they are *your* revival stories; outpourings you are destined to carry forth—with multiplied power—into today. Put yourself in God's great storyline and command your heart to beat in sync with past prayers and past movements that are still paving the way for the greatest Great Awakening!

*This article is derived from Dutch Sheets' teaching, "Hope for Awakening," which is available from this online store. To read a transcript of Julie Meyer's dream in it's entirety, visit .*

**Dutch Sheets** is an internationally recognized teacher, conference speaker and author of *The Power of Hope*. He has written more than 20 books, translated into over 30 languages. His first work, *Intercessory Prayer*, sold nearly a million copies and is being used to empower believers worldwide for passionate prayer and societal transformation. He and his wife, Ceci, make their home in the Dallas area.

*For the original article, visit .*

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## **10 Earmarks of a Humble Heart**

Jesus says in Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Let's face it: Humility isn't a very popular word. Yet, all throughout the Bible, the Lord instructs us about the benefits of being "humble-minded."

I love James 4:6. It says, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." In other words, the humble get the help!

I believe humility is often misunderstood and even viewed as a weakness. But it's the exact opposite. Humility places us in a position to receive God's grace and become everything He's called us to be.

A humble person is also a *happy* person. They can take joy in their life and what God has called them to do, regardless of what the world thinks about it.

For instance, you may think your current circumstances and responsibilities from God are mundane. The proud person always wants to do something they think the world will admire ... something others see as “important.” But the truth is we don’t have to do something important to *be* important.

We are important because God loves and values us. Our worth comes from Him. As we receive His love and find our true worth *in Him*, then we can truly enjoy our purpose in life and live in contentment.

So many people are miserable, constantly comparing themselves to others who are smarter, prettier or more successful. But the “poor in spirit” have the ability to be happy with who they are.

My husband, Dave, is a perfect example. Years ago, the Lord instructed him to leave his job in the engineering field to help establish *Joyce Meyer Ministries*.

At that time, God spoke to his heart and said, “If you do what I am calling you to do ... and allow Joyce to do what I’ve called **her** to do, then you will have a lot of peace and happiness.”

Dave is an extremely vital part of this ministry. We are a team, and he oversees all of the business and financial aspects of the organization. However, it takes a truly humble man—a man who is secure and knows that God approves of him—to be OK with his wife being the one “out front.”

I can honestly say that Dave is one of the happiest people I know. He knows what God has asked him to do ... and he is doing it with joy.

What are some other character traits of a humble person?

1. The humble can always ask for help, and they don’t insist on everything being done their way.

2. They are quick to forgive others, difficult to offend, and content to wait on God for vindication when they have been wronged.

3. They are patient and don't get frustrated with the weaknesses of others.

4. The humble person is a peacemaker. In fact, we **need** humility to maintain peace in our lives. Romans 12:16 says, "Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Do not pretend to be wiser than you are."

Wow! Just imagine if we all decided to adopt just this one command from the Bible. It's the way that leads to peace with ourselves and others.

5. A humble person knows when to be quiet. It's certainly not wrong to talk, but a humble person is comfortable allowing others to have center stage and doesn't feel the need to speak their mind in every situation.

6. A humble person sees their own weaknesses and can readily admit them. When we open up to others about ourselves, it can actually encourage and help them realize they're not the only ones who deal with things.

7. A humble person happily serves other people, and they don't do it to impress others. They do it unto God, knowing their reward will come from God.

8. A humble person is **very** thankful. This is one reason they're usually so happy. When we live with an attitude of gratitude, it releases joy and power into our lives.

9. A humble person has a tender conscience and is quick to repent.

10. A leader who is truly humble treats everyone with respect. How a leader treats people is the quickest way to find out

their level of humility.

First Peter 5:6 says, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."

The older I get, the more I realize the importance of humility. In John 15:5, Jesus says, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who remains in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit. For without Me you can do nothing." I often pray things like: "Lord, I can do absolutely *nothing* without You today. Please help me—I need Your grace in every situation."

I encourage you to pray and ask for God's help. By His grace, you can begin to develop an attitude of humility ... *and discover the life you really want.*

**Joyce Meyer** is a New York Times best-selling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries Inc. She has authored 100 books, including *Battlefield of the Mind* and *Get Your Hopes Up!* (Hachette). She hosts the "Enjoying Everyday Life" radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit .

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## How I Prayed for My Son's Future Wife

What are the two top things a mom prays for her kids? I'd venture to say their salvation and their spouse.

My son, Michael, asked Jesus into his heart at the tender of age of 5 (those sweet memories are for another blog post) and he will soon marry his college sweetheart.

When I began going to God many years ago, asking Him to

prepare just the right woman for Michael to be his wife, he was in no way interested in girls. Now he is smitten! *To be honest, his wedding day is sneaking up on me far too quickly.* After Georgia football has owned him for the past 5 years, certainly I would get him back for a few ... before sweet Audrey claimed him as her own, right?

I absolutely adore the future Mrs. Bennett. But my introduction to the "other woman" in Michael's life provoked a strange feeling in me, I must admit.

His freshmen year, I remember walking into his college dorm room with his favorite cake that I made for his birthday. Only to find that another cake was already there. White on white. Who made Michael's favorite cake? Surely not one of his football- playing roommates. *Little did I know* it was the girl I had been praying for!

But as I think about what praying for Michael's wife has *really* produced, it is this:

### **A change in me.**

Isn't this how it works? We pray for someone else and the Spirit starts working on us.

So here are a few things I've learned while praying for my son's wife—

#### 1. *I've gained a greater kingdom perspective*

I've learned that God is in the business of building his kingdom and not my own. In His timing and not mine. I've asked God "to not awaken love before it so desires" (Song 2:7) in Michael's heart, and now God says it is time. It is time for Michael to be more fruitful as a man of God with a wife at his side than without her, for "two are better than one because they get a better return for their labor" (Eccl. 4:9). (You see, I always feel better about my kids growing up and leaving

me when I have a Bible verse to back it up!)

## 2. *I'm becoming a better woman*

In describing to her son with vivid living color the qualities of an excellent woman, the mother of King Lemuel asked the question, **“Who can find a virtuous wife?” (Prov. 31: 10)**. It was not easy in the Old Testament days to find a wife of noble character, nor is it today. So if Michael were to find a woman that fit this description, she would be a rare find!

Yet the bigger question God posed to me was this: Would Michael know *what to look for* in a wife? I realized a large part of his knowing would be the type of woman he found in me.

What did he find when I was in the kitchen at 6:00 AM making his lunches, up late with him when he was sick or confronted with circumstances that did not go my way? A joy-filled woman? Did I open my mouth with wisdom and was the law of kindness on my tongue when I had to discipline or instruct Michael as he was growing up? Did he find me hungering for and seeking after God, reading my Bible and trusting Him?

To be honest, some days yes and some days no. But the desire to model to my son that I needed Jesus just as much as he did kept forgiveness flowing between us and our relationship real.

## 3. *I've become a better wife myself.*

**“She does him good and not evil all the days of her life” (Prov. 31:12 )**.

What mom does not want her son to have a faithful woman stand by his side to the very end? Yet, I found the more I prayed this for Michael's wife, the more the Holy Spirit whispered—“This needs to be a bigger priority in your marriage, Beth. Find creative ways to bless Jon, focus on him, do what he likes and help him succeed in ways he never could

if he were not married to you.”

4. *I'm learning to let go and smile!*

**She smiles at the future (Prov. 31:25 ).**

I'm learning to smile even though my son is leaving to lead his own home. I'm learning to smile when I think of someone else making eggs for him in the morning, folding his socks and watching him light up at a good home-cooked meal. I've seen God's faithfulness these past 23 years and I can't help but smile believing “that the Lord will bless my latter days more than the former” (Job 42:12).

Yes, He is showing me that my best days are ahead! I have had the privilege of planting God's Word in the soil of a young boy's heart, seeing it bear fruit and now smile, thinking that the union with his wife will produce even greater things for the kingdom.

Looking back, I see now that praying for my future daughter-in-law was not about Michael finding the perfect person. (Although I believe he has!) It was about me following Jesus more fully, offering up my fears and pride along the way, and letting His Spirit refine me so that I could fully enjoy this season of life.

July 11 is going to be an **awesome day** and I will be full of thanksgiving and praise to God for “He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord” (Prov. 18:22).

**Beth Bennett** *is a Certified Christian Life Coach; Director of Coaching with Ministry Ventures. This is adapted from her blog.*

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# 3 Ways to Discern God Is Moving You in a New Direction

There invariably will come a time in our spiritual journey when the Lord will solicit our cooperation in permitting Him to guide us in a new way. His preference is that we would sense His leading, fully cooperate and move in the new direction.

However, as is all too often the case, He must intervene in the affairs of our lives due to the fact that we are comfortable and entrenched in our present course of action.

To secure our attention and place us on the pathway God desires, there are strategies that He employs that are very effective. As much as we are not to be ignorant of Satan's devices (2 Cor. 2:11), we must be even more knowledgeable of the ways of the Lord (Ps. 25:4). Knowing God's ways will result in us experiencing His mighty acts (Ps. 103:7).

Here are three ways God works to move us in a new direction:

- Disruption of Our Plans
- Dissipation of Resources
- Dissolution of Relationships

## **Disruption of our Plans**

The Apostle Paul had received an apostolic commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. In keeping with his mandate, he targeted key cities in the Roman Empire to visit. Yet, the New Testament narrative informs us that on at least one occasion he was not able to fulfill his objective because God saw fit to stop him. "They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia and were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. When they came near Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not allow them" (Acts

16:6-7).

Like Paul the apostle, while attempting to do the will of the Lord, perhaps you were heading down a certain roadway and you ended up “hitting a wall” and were stopped in your tracks. From that point on, no matter how hard you worked, you were incapable of making significant progress. Initiatives and projects that were originally inspired by a lofty vision and deep passion ended up languishing, some of them even terminating.

When stuck at an impasse, it is a natural tendency to return to familiar surroundings. We see this in the lives of the disciples after Jesus’ death. They went back to fishing even though they had clearly been mandated to forsake their vocation and follow Christ (See Luke 5:10-11; John 21:3). Because they were commercial fishermen, there may even have been economic motives behind their actions. Nevertheless, we see clearly that there was no lasting provision and no permanent peace in returning to past environments.

When God leads us out of a place of familiarity and the way forward is blocked, what is the solution?

There are some breakthroughs reserved for us that can only be accessed through prayer. We must seek God until we receive a clear answer from heaven. Whether it was Paul’s night vision of the man in Macedonia summoning him, or the voice of Jesus speaking to the disciples on the seashore in Galilee, the New Testament Christians received clear direction from the Spirit and were able to regain momentum and experience breakthrough.

### **Dissipation of Resources**

When God wants us to move in a new direction, He may also permit us to experience the dissipation of resources. Elijah had been powerfully used by the Lord to declare prophetically the purpose of God in dealing with Israel. “And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the

Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word" (1 Kin. 17:1) And just as the prophet had foretold, the word of the Lord came to pass. "And there was a severe famine in Samaria ... "(1 Kin. 18:2).

During the famine, God looked after Elijah. He gave him specific instruction relative to how he would be sustained. "Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, 'Get away from here and turn eastward, and hide by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. And it will be that you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.' So he went and did according to the word of the Lord, for he went and stayed by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank from the brook" (1 Kings 17:2-6).

Cherith which means "place of covenant," was where the Lord demonstrated His faithfulness in taking care of Elijah. However, the day would come when the brook would run dry and the birds would no longer fly (see 1 Kin. 17:7). Although Elijah had come to depend on such provision, God seemed to have no compunction at all cutting off these resources.

### **Has Your Brook Dried Up?**

Have you experienced something similar? Your streams of resource have dried up. You struggle to make ends meet and you do not know how you are going to keep going. During such a time, trust that the Lord will soon speak to you like He did to Elijah. "Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, 'Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you'" (1 Kin. 17:8-9).

More than a cute cliché, you will see that the place where He leads you will be the place where He feeds you. Where the Lord

guides, He provides!

## **Dissolution of Relationships**

A third way the Lord works to set us in motion in a new direction is through the dissolution of certain relationship. (Please note: we are not addressing covenant marriage relationships here). We see this clearly in the life of David. The heart of King Achish, once favorable to David, turned away from him." Then Achish called David and said to him, 'Surely, as the Lord lives, you have been upright, and your going out and your coming in with me in the army is good in my sight. For to this day I have not found evil in you since the day of your coming to me. Nevertheless the lords do not favor you. Therefore return now, and go in peace, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines'" (1 Sam. 29:6-7).

An unanticipated meltdown in a relationship can cause great pain. Abandonment and unanswered questions will naturally follow. One vital truth to come to grips with is that God will on occasion send certain people into our lives for a short season or perhaps even a brief encounter.

God-sanctioned, transitory connections, though nonsustainable, serve a purpose in facilitating the plan of the Lord. Being able to differentiate between what is intended to be provisional and what is meant to be permanent will enlighten one of the Father's intention for the relationship.

Here is a powerful truth to embrace when a key connection you value has dissolved for no apparent legitimate reason: The Lord is turning the hearts of men in the direction He desires (Prov. 21:1) and is in fact making it easier for you to let go and move forward into your next assignment. Therefore, do not take the matter personally and become bitter with people as though they are rejecting you.

## **Trusting in God's Good Guidance**

You may not understand what is currently happening in your life. Does it seem to you that God has messed up your plans? Have resources dried up? Has a relationship disintegrated?

Sometimes Father God's ways do not make sense to us. Scripture even attests to this reality. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Is. 55:9). This is because the LORD possesses infinite knowledge and perfect wisdom. He is eternal, Almighty and omniscient. He sees the end from the beginning and is completely aware of the final outcome of all things.

No matter how it may appear on the surface, He is actively involved in the affairs of our lives. On occasion, He may even interrupt our plans resulting in us experiencing a sense of anxiety due to a perceived loss of control. However, as uncomfortable as we may become, we must trust that He is leading us along the best pathway for our lives. "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye on you" (Ps. 32:8).

Trusting God at all times is a non-negotiable prerequisite for living supernaturally in the kingdom!

**Glenn Bleakney** is the founder and president of Awake Nations Ministries. With uncompromising conviction and in the power of the Holy Spirit, Awake Nations with Glenn Bleakney is taking the gospel of the kingdom to the nations of the world. Many lives have been saved and transformed through the power of God manifest before their eyes through signs and wonders! Learn more about Glenn Bleakney at [.](#)