

Timeless Tools to Help Make Praying With Your Spouse a Reality

Praying with your spouse can be one of the most intimate, healing and meaningful aspects of your relationship. You know you should, but perhaps praying together feels awkward, even scary. If you struggle with knowing how to pray with your spouse daily, or if you wish praying together were more meaningful, this is for you.

Like communication between you and your spouse, communicating meaningfully with God in prayer develops over time. Communicating with your spouse is sometimes superficial, sometimes deep, sometimes frustrating, sometimes challenging, sometimes transforming. The more you and your spouse learn about each other, the more meaningful your communication becomes. Investing in learning appropriate skills makes your communication together better.

So it is with God. Sometimes your prayer will be a quick cry, "God, help us!" Sometimes it will be about "little" things and sometimes about overwhelmingly important things. And the more you as a couple get to know God, the better your prayer life together with Him will be.

Some husbands, especially, feel intimidated by praying with their wife. Don't let that stop you. Use these ideas to start where you are and take the lead in bringing your marriage and family to God in prayer.

Here are some practical tools that will help you pray with your spouse regularly.

- **1. Pray together silently.**

If praying together has not been part of your marriage, this may be the easiest place to start. Agree with your spouse that praying together is important. Then when you're in bed together at night, or any other time, take your spouse's hand. Each of you pray silently while you're next to each other, and squeeze your spouse's hand when you're done. Simply praying while in your spouse's presence may feel like a big step forward. Go for it!

2. Agree on a daily topic.

Praying out loud together is important, but may feel difficult. Agreeing on a topic for each day may help you move forward. For example, Monday: our marriage. Tuesday: our children and family. Wednesday: our home and finances. Thursday: our church and friends. Friday: God's kingdom nearby or through missions. Each of you talk to God briefly about where you see the need in that area and ask for God's intervention.

3. Don't over-spiritualize.

High-sounding religious prayers don't work in God's ears (see Luke 18:11-14), and they don't work with your spouse, either. Whatever you do, don't try to one-up your spouse in prayer. No King James English; this is *you* talking with God. Use the same tone you would in talking with a friend. If you tend to be the more verbal one in your marriage, make your prayers shorter when praying together. Prayer is *not* the time to criticize your spouse, demean them, preach at them or make yourself look more righteous. It's a time to be vulnerable and real.

4. Keep up your own prayer life.

Prayer with your spouse is no substitute for your own personal prayer life with God. It's absolutely vital that you maintain your own daily time with God, learning, listening, praying, growing. God's relationship with us always begins with One on

one. As you allow the Holy Spirit space to continue to transform your own heart, your spiritual connection with your spouse is likely to become stronger also.

5. Invite, don't force.

If your spouse is not a believer, Paul's direction is to live together as peaceably as possible as long as your spouse is willing. (1 Cor. 7:12-16). Let your life make Jesus appealing to your spouse. If your spouse is a believer but resistant to praying together, use a similar posture. Let your spouse see you becoming a more loving, more resilient, more joyful Christian, and watch for any opportunities the Holy Spirit brings to invite your spouse to grow—and pray—with you.

6. Bring tough stuff into God's presence together.

Every marriage will face problems. Perhaps it's an illness, financial struggles, a problem child, problems between you or a big life-decision affecting your family. Pray about it together. If you disagree about money, go to God together and ask Him to show you how He would have you use the finances He has entrusted to you. If sex is a struggle between you, talk to God about how you can come closer together in this area. When facing big decisions, ask God's opinion before deciding what to do.

7. Get emotional with God.

It's a big point of spiritual growth, both individually and as a couple, to let your feelings become real in God's presence. Look for opportunities to do that with your spouse. When something great or unexpectedly good happens, grab your spouse's hand and say, "Let's thank God together for this!" When one or both of you is sad or worried, hold your spouse close and lift the situation up to God out loud. Allow each other to feel sad, upset, angry or excited in God's presence.

8. Ask for reasons other than getting things.

If all your communication with your spouse was asking for things, your relationship would always remain superficial. Any intimacy you develop together comes through doing life together, learning about each other and communicating about deeper things. Learn about God together too; consider doing a daily devotional where you read the same verses or devotional message, talk briefly together about it and then pray together about it. See your prayer life as a way of growing spiritually more than simply “getting things” from God.

9. Pray for your spouse out loud.

It can provide an awesome sense of security to hear your spouse thank God for you and ask Him to be with you. Bring your spouse before God out loud often. As a husband, this is one of the most powerful ways you can support your wife. As a wife, this is one of the best ways you can encourage your husband. Thank God for the specific things your spouse brings to your marriage, and ask Him to be with them in specific challenges they are facing right now.

10. Just do it!

Even in our troubled world there's much truth to “the family that prays together stays together.” If you already pray together, commit to doing it more regularly and more deeply. If you aren't praying together, start small but just do it. So what if it's uncomfortable? You and your spouse are both sinners, both finite. You must have the presence of God in your marriage if it is to be successful and if you want to fulfill the purpose God has for your union. Start where you are and just do it!

Your turn: *What is the status of your prayer life with your spouse? What is the next step you need to take in growing your prayer life together? Leave a comment below. {eoa}*

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Dave Ramsey's Daughter Has 3 Lessons for Your Kids

A 2015 study reported 80 percent of Americans are trapped in debt. For younger Americans, the number gets worse. In PragerU's latest video, "How to Raise Kids Who Are Smart About Money," Rachel Cruze, daughter of Dave Ramsey and regular guest contributor on the Dave Ramsey Show, says the solution to America's debt problem begins with starting financial literacy at a young age.

Growing up in the home of financial expert Dave Ramsey, Cruze was familiar with the topics of debt and wealth and shares three childhood lessons which prepared her for financial responsibility as an adult.

First, says Cruze, put your kids to work. According to Cruze, it's important for kids to understand the connection between work and money from a young age and encourages parents to pay kids for age-appropriate jobs like mowing the lawn or cleaning their room. This practice teaches them that money comes from work and not a parent's wallet. In turn, kids can buy the things they want with the money they earn. "When children work for the things they want to buy, the purchase feels like an accomplishment, not an entitlement," says Cruze.

The second lesson Cruze shares is to let your kids make

mistakes with their money in order to prevent expensive mistakes in the future. As an example, Cruze tells a childhood story of wasting her money during the first game at Opryland Theme Park in Nashville. She quickly ran back to her parents and asked them for money, promising to pay them back. What her father, Dave Ramsey, told her next has stayed with her for her entire life: “Rachel, when the money’s gone, it’s gone.”

Cruze’s third and final lesson is to teach your kids to make saving a habit. Saving is a difficult discipline even for many adults, so start training the saving muscle as soon as possible. Even kids must learn the fundamental truth that if they do not save money, they will not have money.

Childhood is the easiest time to learn saving habits because they are still financially supported by their parents. Children should begin by saving money immediately after getting paid, not from what is left over after buying what they want.

Cruze concludes that it’s less about the amount saved and more to do with developing consistency. “So start today: Help your kids to become fluent in the language of money and how to handle it. Because if you don’t, well, all I can say is—get the basement ready.”

3 Valuable Tips for Showing Patience in Your Marriage—Part 1

The first tip I want to share with you is *prayer*, but don’t just pray for patience. I am sure you all heard the preacher’s

story about the guy who prayed for patience, and he lost his job, his house burned down, and he had a flat tire all in the same day. Of course, that's a myth, but many of us have a concern about praying for this fruit.

If you are not intentionally trying to grow fruit, the process may seem more painful than it needs to be. However, if you desire to grow spiritual fruit, I have a safe prayer for patience that you can pray.

“Lord, I ask you to help me to respond patiently today.”

This prayer can help if done every day. You can add, “I want to express your patient love toward my spouse today. God, I know that my spouse is your child. You were beaten and died for any sin they committed today. Please God; let me express your patience today in responding patiently to my spouse.”

A focused, intentional prayer can keep you mindful of the fruit of your agreement so that your spouse can taste from you today. Imagine how you would feel if your spouse was praying this prayer for themselves today. Imagine if two spouses were praying this prayer within the same marriage. Imagine if they followed through on a regular basis to respond patiently.

Wow, would their children be messed up. They would actually see two parents being patient toward one another. Imagine what that could do for their faith and character. I know we are only dreaming, but dreams often come true for those who pray and work toward being the answer to their prayers.

The second tip that will move you toward patience is *detachment*. Many spouses can fall into a really bizarre belief pattern. They may believe that their spouse is deliberately trying to offend them or purposely causing them pain. Oh, I know every once in a while, many of us get in a mood where we deliberately try to frustrate or anger our spouse by doing something due to our lack of patience. It's important that you don't make all their annoying behavior all

about you. It's not all about you. They would probably have this behavior no matter whom they had married. They are honestly just being their human, sin-fallen self.

Detachment allows you take a step back and diffuse yourself. You will probably have to say it out loud, "This is not about me. This is who they are. They are not trying to be mean or spiteful, they're just being themselves." If you can step back, you can take whatever the behavior is more patiently.

How you choose to frame your spouse's behavior is largely how you will respond. If you see it just as a personal attack and that they are out to get you, the response you have will most likely be less patient. But if you can frame it as them simply being themselves, you might be detached enough to be patient.

How you see your spouse's behavior is your choice. Your spouse does not control how you see them. You can control how you see their behaviors as part of the blessing of having an imperfect and human spouse who loves you and not as an all out alien attack to steal the joy out of your life.

Spouses must refuse to view their partner's annoying quirks as deliberate offenses. This is a choice—to refuse your previous interpretation of your spouse's behavior and choose a more gentle and patient way to view them.

After you apply prayer and detachment, a third tip I would offer in the area of patience is to "stop." That is, stop believing and behaving as if you have the power to change your spouse. First, God has never commanded you to change your spouse. He has only called you to love your spouse. Nowhere in Scripture do you see it spelled out to change your spouse.

God, Himself, alone can change a person. We have limited powers of change. The limits of your power are to change yourself. Beyond changing yourself, you are powerless. You are, and are forever, powerless to change any human being including your spouse.

Powerlessness at first seems difficult, but when you truly accept your powerlessness toward your spouse you're finally in reality. Once you are in reality, you will be so less angry and controlling you might actually come across as being more patient. Actually, you are just accepting reality. The reality is you cannot change your spouse. So I encourage you to "stop" doing what God has already made impossible to do.

See, if you believe a lie, you behave in a peculiar way. Now we all know God didn't give you the lie so you could change your spouse. You got this lie straight from the enemy. Just look at the fruit of strife, contention and discord that proves it's straight from hell itself. A seed can only produce what it is. Apples produce apples, and lies produce strife.

I found out that when I was able to give up the lie that I could change Lisa, I was able to relax. After I relaxed, I found often enough I was much more accepting of who she is right now. I didn't need her to be better to love her. I actually started to like her more, and patience seemed to be much easier for me.

Now that you are dangling out there in being powerless, how does change occur? Change can occur as a reaction or action toward your circumstances. So your changing can influence change.

There is another way change can occur. It's another secret I have learned on the road of marriage. It's a powerful secret. To utilize this secret, you must be fairly squeaky clean in your behavior toward your spouse.

Now if you are not squeaky clean, this secret may backfire on you, so be careful. Before you start, honestly ask yourself about how your attitudes, behaviors, and service toward your spouse are currently. If you feel good about your attitudes, behaviors and service to your spouse, proceed. Proceed to the One who designed, created, gave birth to, fed and clothed your

spouse all these years: her Father, the Living God of all the heavens and earth.

Acknowledge who He is, and I recommend gratitude toward him for who your spouse is. Then go to Him who can change both you and your spouse. Approach Him with gentleness and let Him know your situation or the difficulty you're having with His child. Then do the dangerous part.

Ask if the problem is you. "Father and Father-in-law, God, if I am believing wrongly, acting wrongly, or in anyway the problem, correct me. Change me and don't let me be wicked in any way to your precious child, my spouse."

Then be quiet and see if the God of heaven and earth has anything to say to you. If he does, thank Him for the correction. Repent and follow His direction to you immediately.

If he does not speak to you correctively, and your own heart does not convict you of any sin, proceed gently, "Father, if I am not the issue then change in my spouse what you alone can see so we can both glorify you." Now be silent, don't give God advice or any insight about your spouse.

Leave your prayer place with faith that God is both able and willing to change your spouse. Change may not be immediate, but I have experienced miracles of God where he changed Lisa or me.

So in short, I am totally powerless to change my spouse, but God is willing and able. Turn yourself and your spouse over to God, and He is able and willing to make change. You see patience avoids trying to change your spouse's behavior that you struggle with.

Check back on Friday as we discuss a more tips on how to be patient in marriage! {eoa}

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What One of the Weirdest Miracles in the Bible Can Teach Us About Redemption

I think a lot of people don't realize that pain from physical illness often carries emotional or spiritual baggage too. I'm sure some of you reading this can relate and perhaps experience shame, fear of death, anxiety or feelings of rejection that accompany your physical sickness (this often happens with chronic illness). Very rarely does sickness only affect our bodies, but the church doesn't always address this reality.

I remember when I first started learning about God's heart for healing I came to a point where I really had to wrestle with God. I don't know if I would say I was angry with Him, but I was really struggling. I remember not being able to reconcile what I knew about God and His ability and desire to heal, but not seeing those close to me experience breakthrough. And the pain I saw was not only physical, but emotional too. It was so hard to watch. In this place, God spoke to me about one of the weirdest miracles in the Bible and revealed some much-needed insight:

In a nutshell:

- Let's look at this healing story from John 9: "As Jesus passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked Him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned. But it happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. I must do the works of Him who sent Me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.'"

When He had said this, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva. He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means "Sent"). So he went away and washed, and returned seeing" (John 9:1-7).

- All Jesus has to do to heal somebody is speak a word. However, in this story, Jesus healed by spitting!
- Why do you think Jesus went through all this drama? God asked me to reread the story and highlighted to me that the disciples connected the man's born blindness with his own sin or his parents' sin.
- Remember that under the old covenant, people who served false gods were cursed by their children being born blind (Deut. 28:28).
- In Jewish culture at the time, when people saw a child born blind, it was assumed that they were cursed for serving other gods. As a little boy, the blind man was likely spit on whenever he walked down the street. Can you imagine a life of being spit on and cursed?
- So then, when Jesus healed by spitting, he used the thing that the world used to curse the man his whole life to heal him. ... He did this as an emotional and spiritual restoration!

Jesus healed the man wholly and tri-dimensionally. The man walked because he was healed physically; he leapt

because he was healed emotionally and he praised God because he was spiritually restored (Acts 3:6-8).

- God wants us to be whole, not just well.

Where You Hurt Is Where You Heal

The very area that has caused you pain is the very area that God wants to heal you, not just physically but emotionally and spiritually too. Just as we see in this story, God is a redeemer of all things, and He knows what we need better than we do. The blind man asked for physical healing, that he might see again. However what Jesus had in store, even though it looked crazy, was exactly what the man needed to receive wholeness instead of just a partial healing. Who knew that spit could be so powerful?

Jesus Is Compassionate

I want to propose to you that perhaps today is your day of wholeness. The kindest King wants to lavish His love on you. Don't pull away in fear but rather embrace what He's doing, even if it seems weird or strange. I want to encourage you that if you have a physical illness that is also causing emotional pain, God can and wants to heal you tri-dimensionally. I release breakthrough for healing over your body, soul and spirit today. Do you have any out-of-the-box stories of God healing you or someone you know? I'd love to hear about it in the comments. Let our souls make boast in the Lord. {eoa}

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Kris has a passion to use his experience and his prophetic gift to assist world leaders in achieving their goals and accomplishing their mission.

This article originally appeared at .

Rick Warren: Beware of These Early Warning Signs of Devastating Pride

“So then, Your Majesty, follow my advice. Stop sinning, do what is right, and be merciful to the poor. Then you will continue to be prosperous” (Dan. 4:27 GNT).

Too often when life is going well, we miss the warning signs of an impending fall.

Pride blinds us. So does the spotlight.

It’s why I tell people who’ve seen some success in life that they need to go home and change some diapers, mow their own lawns, and wash their own dishes. When you have some success, make sure you keep in touch with your roots so you don’t miss the warning signs of a fall.

Nebuchadnezzar’s life is a clear picture of this. God cared enough about this pagan king to warn him about what was coming his way in Daniel 4. The Lord didn’t just remove him from power. God gave him a dream, he brought Daniel to interpret the dream, and Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar what was going to happen and how to avoid it. Read it for yourself. You can’t get much clearer.

Daniel told the king, "So then, Your Majesty, follow my advice. Stop sinning, do what is right, and be merciful to the poor. Then you will continue to be prosperous" (Dan. 4:27 GNT).

Daniel gave him three steps: Stop sinning, do what's right and be merciful to the poor. Success would follow.

But the king missed the sign.

Is it possible you are missing one, too?

It could be conflict in a relationship. You're just passing it off as the other person's problem, but God wants to show you that you're off track in some area of your life.

It could be a temptation you're battling against because you're continually putting yourself in a bad situation.

Maybe it's chaos and confusion in your life. Both are signs you're not well-connected to God. You're trying to do life on your own terms.

And God's trying to tell you through these warning signs: "Halt! Stop sinning! Come back to me!"

If you're heading down the wrong path, God will warn you because he loves you too much to not give you a warning.

Talk It Over

- What warning signs have you seen people miss? How have you seen them fall after missing the signs?
- What kinds of warning signs do you think people miss the most often, and why?
- How have you missed warning signs in the past? {eoa}

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Spiritual Warfare Strategies: Vanquishing the Enemy's Arrows of Fear

Have you ever suffered intense worry, anxiety or fear about something in the future? It's a useless question, isn't it? Of course you have! We all have—and some of us just about every day. Fear in all its forms is the most common human emotion. And the enemy especially uses it to keep us from the blessings or freedom God wants for our lives.

My Own Future Fears

I've certainly faced my share of future fears. Some 10 years ago, I left an area and friends that I loved to move to a location where I didn't know anyone, all in order to help a ministry in some tremendously difficult times. Though I knew God called me to the move, I still had great fear about what the future held.

Some five or six years later, I felt God call me to step out into my own ministry, and make some significant personal and financial investments in order to begin. I had no idea from where the money would come, or if my efforts in ministry would have any kind of success. At times, the feelings of fear were almost overwhelming.

And more recently, I needed to have a series of difficult conversations with some people. If I thought too long about

these meetings, my mind raced with fears about their potential reactions.

The Key to Pressing Through Fear

Years ago, some profound words from a famous missionary, Elisabeth Elliot, were significantly helpful to me. After facing some almost debilitating fear herself, Elisabeth wrote: "Sometimes fear does not subside, and one must choose to do it afraid."

Elisabeth's words ring so true in my life. In every situation when I faced a significant fear, I had to do it with shaking knees, butterflies in my stomach and a lump in my throat. In each case, I pressed through the feelings of fear by holding to a promise God gave Israel: "The Lord your God who goes before you, He shall fight for you" (Deut. 1:30). Essentially, every time I envisioned the future and felt shaken by all the possible negative outcomes, I interrupted my worries with the truth that "God is going before me; He's already working on the hearts and the situations so that they're ready for when I get there."

Today, I can say that in every circumstance, God was faithful; none of what I feared came to pass.

What Do You Need to Do?

Is there a difficult task God has called you to? Is there a situation you need to confront or something you need deal with? Though you might feel fear at times, you can do what's necessary knowing that God has gone ahead of you and is preparing the way. So step out. Make that move. Deal with that issue, trusting that God is here, even in the places that you fear! {eoa}

Kyle Winkler equips people to live in victory. His mobile app, *Shut Up, Devil!*, is the #1 spiritual warfare app; and his book, *Activating the Power of God's Word*, uncovers 16

strategic declarations to transform your life. Kyle holds a Master of Divinity in biblical studies from Regent University. Get daily encouragement from Kyle on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Ché Ahn: It's Time for Davids to Arise!

Last week we hosted the HIM Global Summit Conference at HRock Church. It is such a blessing to gather and do life and ministry with the men and women who were a part of the Global Summit. Some I have known for over 30 years, and others are more recent brothers and sisters in Christ.

For every conference we hold, each speaker is free to share on whatever they feel the Lord is saying; however, there always seems to be a consistent word that is released to the body of Christ during these meetings. This year was no exception, as there was a sense that the church was being encouraged to arise and defeat the “giants” in our lands, even when we are feeling weak or insignificant. A word such as this was so empowering and refreshing as we focused on how we can bring revival and reformation to our cities, states, and nations.

Run Toward Your Giants

There went out a champion from the camp of the Philistines, Goliath was his name, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. ... He stood and called out to the ranks of Israel, “Why have you come out to line up for battle? Am not I the Philistine, and you the servants of Saul? Choose for yourselves a man and let him come down to me. ... Then David

said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a shield, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have reviled. This day will the Lord deliver you into my hand. And I will strike you down and cut off your head. Then I will give the corpses of the Philistine camp this day to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the earth so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. ... When the Philistine arose and came near to meet David, David hurried and ran toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. David put his hand in his bag and took from there a stone. And he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead. Therefore the stone sunk into his forehead and he fell upon his face to the ground (1 Sam. 17: 4, 8, 45-46, 48-49).

David knew that it wasn't in the armor that he found his strength, but in his God. This is how he could run to the battlefront—the battle was already won. As revivalists and reformers of society, we may feel that our sphere and mountain of influence is a "giant," too big for us to face or make an impact in. But we must know that we aren't to wear Saul's armor or look like the world we are wanting to influence. Instead, we must realize that in our weakness and dependence on God, He will make us strong and anoint us with favor for victory in our spheres of influence and in the nations.

But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will boast in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. So I take pleasure in weaknesses, in reproaches, in hardships, in persecutions, and in distresses for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong (2 Cor. 12:9-10).

Brian Simmons, Johnny Enlow and other speakers referenced King

David as a prophetic symbol for the season we are stepping into as reformers of culture and society.

Strategy for Reformation

One of the moments during the Global Summit that was of particular importance was when my good friend and respected prophet, Chuck Pierce, said on the opening night of the conference: Up until now HIM (Harvest International Ministry) has been known for apostles, but HIM is going to be known for the harvest. This is significant, because I also shared a word during the conference that true revival includes the reformation of society. HIM will be moving forward in reformation as we move forward in bringing in the lost!

There were other strategies for reformation shared by the speakers, such as Bill Johnson, Lance Wallnau, Mark Chironna, Patricia King and more.

Mark Chironna reminded us that reformation begins in the heart, which is why we must turn our pain into praise and our darkness into a backdrop for the Lord's glory. Lance Wallnau brought clarity to our role as revivalists and reformers when he declared that, "revival is personal, but reformation is institutional." And Bill Johnson imparted a word of wisdom for us as leaders and influencers, that all leadership has two basic functions: to protect and empower. We are empowered to rule so that we would protect and released to serve so that we would empower. This is what true servant leadership looks like.

I could go on talking about the many powerful messages that were shared during the Global Summit Conference, but you can always experience it for yourself. In the week since the conference took place, I have heard quite a few testimonies of personal revelation, breakthrough and refreshing for those who were there. Even if you were unable to be a part of the conference in person, you can still watch the sessions on and

encounter your own breakthroughs through the teachings. {eoa}

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President Trump's Evangelical Supporters Ready and Waiting 'For Such a Time as This'

Donald Trump's presidency has been filled with headlines, both positive and negative. And Americans are divided on their opinions of him as well—some remaining staunchly supportive while others are still opposed.

Those evangelical Trump supporters have been buoyed by his actions that have made good on his campaign promises—to protect religious liberty, defend the unborn, represent Judeo-Christian values on the Supreme Court and stand for America's churches.

These supporters have been waiting “for such a time as this.”

In his new book, *God and Donald Trump*, award-winning

journalist and author Stephen E. Strang tells the story of Trump's evangelical voter base through personal interviews and behind-the-scenes reports, detailing the events that helped shape the dramatic Trump presidency thus far.

"Few people outside the four walls of a church pay much attention to what God is doing in the world," Strang writes in the chapter titled "For Such a Time" in *God and Donald Trump*. "To them, acts of God are what you call tornadoes and hurricanes. But is it possible God has a plan for this nation? Is it possible He has a plan for His people? I've tried to make the case that President Trump won the evangelical vote by the largest margin in history, because, as (Pastor Robert) Jeffress said, Christians understood that he alone had the leadership skills and the unwavering persistence to reverse the death spiral of our nation."

Strang added that Trump affirmed—time and again—what Christians had been waiting to hear from a national leader. "My administration will always support and defend your religious liberty," Trump told a Kennedy Center audience during the first Independence Day celebration of his presidency. "We don't want to see God forced out of the public square, driven out of our schools or pushed out of our civic life. We want to see prayers before football games, if they want to give prayers." Before he even finished the sentence, attendees were on their feet with loud and resounding applause, after seeing too many examples of secular schools stamping on the beliefs of religious students. Trump added, "We want all children to have the opportunity to know the blessings of God. ... As long as I am president, no one is going to stop you from practicing your faith or from preaching what is in your heart."

Strang added in his book, "As I listened to those words, I wondered if people were asking themselves why Donald Trump was saying such things. For most of his life, he has not been very religious. He was more interested in making money—lots of

money—than defending religious liberty. But just as millions of Christians were praying for someone to stand up and help turn things around, here came Donald Trump, seemingly out of left field. At first most Christians didn't think much of him. Perhaps they didn't believe him. But now they're happy to know he has their back.

“Not everyone appears so happy about this new Donald Trump, however,” Strang continued. “If you're secular, you see the world through a different lens. You may not even believe God exists. And if that's the case, you feel there's no reason to be concerned with such things. While people decry 'the downward spiral,' calling for restoration and renewal of the culture, Hillary Clinton and her supporters have been saying that everything is just fine. When Trump raised concerns about the moral decline in America, he was lampooned by the media as a hypocrite. Leftists, meanwhile, were marching in the streets for abortion on demand, and celebrating the right to take the life of an unborn child right up to the moment of birth. They were glad same-sex marriage has been validated by the Supreme Court, and that marijuana is being legalized in state after state. And when it comes to old-fashioned morality, the mantra of the secular culture these days is simply, anything goes. But most Americans recognized the problems; they didn't have to be religious to perceive that something is wrong with the way this country has been going.”

Set for release on Nov. 7, almost a year to the day from the presidential election, *God and Donald Trump*, which contains a foreword from presidential hopeful and former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, takes an incisive look at these and other factors that drove those conservative and evangelical voters to the polls.

Strang is an award-winning journalist and successful businessman who began his career as a newspaper reporter at the Orlando Sentinel before founding a Christian publishing house and media company while interviewing and writing about

nearly every Christian leader in the country over the past four decades.

For more information on “God and Donald Trump” visit [and view the book’s video here](#). Visitors to the site can also download a free chapter and pre-order the book.

God and Donald Trump is published by Frontline, an imprint of Charisma House, which has published books that challenge, encourage, teach and equip Christians, including 13 *New York Times* best-sellers.

Finding Your Divine Purpose, One Step at a Time

Following God’s will. Finding your purpose. Discovering your calling. Those were all the things I heard through the years that seemed to plague me more than inspire me. There have been so many sermons given and books written on this subject of vocation. My heart’s desire was to discover what God had for me. I wanted to live my life fully for Him. Yet, despite my efforts to find answers, I never really felt like I could figure out what God’s unique plan was for my life.

In my early 20s, I was bothered by the fact that I hadn’t had some big revelation as to what I was supposed to be pursuing. I’d get new books and pray for God to enlighten me. I searched His Word for some secret passage that would speak to my heart and say, “This, Kristi! This is what I created you to do!” I had no real “Aha!” moment. His answer came softly and gently. It came to me through the years in moments when I was *doing* more than just *thinking* about what I should be doing.

“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as for the Lord and not for men” (Col. 3:23).

I can't even remember the exact moment when I felt like the light bulb finally went off in my head about the deeper meaning of this verse. I had studied the various spiritual gifts and taken several tests to figure out what my strengths were. However, it really was in the mundane moments of just living out my faith that I felt like God was sweetly whispering to my heart, “That's it!” It was in showing kindness and patience as I waited in line with impatient people around me. It was taking the time to make eye contact, compliment others and smile. Every so often, strangers would tell me they saw something in me that seemed different. They weren't seeing me, they were seeing Jesus. It always threw me off, too. I was waiting for some big, flashy service opportunity to feel as though I were serving the Lord fully. Yet God showed me that even in the little, behind-the-scenes moments, He was at work.

“Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16).

I know I'm not alone in the over-analysis of discovering my calling. I know God speaks to everyone differently. Some people really do have “Road to Damascus” moments like the apostle Paul did when God called him to the ministry and literally stopped him in his tracks. However, for the rest of us, it feels like there is so much pressure to pinpoint this one thing that God is pushing us toward. It's taken me time to figure this out, but I've learned through the years that it's the daily choices that really count.

In Psalm 119:105 we read that God's Word acts as a light to our path and a lamp to our feet. I often picture myself holding a lamp out in front of my feet in order to see the next step on a dark night. Lamps only give us enough light for

the step that's right in front of us. It's natural to want to see the big picture, but sometimes we just have to trust God with the next step.

Now that I'm in my 40s, I see this at work as I look back over my life. This little step of faith and that tiny skip to obey His Word through the years have all added up to a walk with the Lord through many seasons of ups and downs. Sometimes that next step feels insignificant and other times you know it's going to be life-changing.

God uses His Word to prepare us for His Will. He gently nudges us as we read His Word to step out in various ways. He equips us with His strength as we move forward with Him. We just have to be brave and take that next step.

"Be doers of the word, and not hearers only ..." (James 1:22).
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Kristi Clover is a homeschooling mom to five kids and wife to her high-school "crush." Aside from her family (and chocolate), she's passionate about encouraging women in their faith and inspiring them in their daily lives as moms, wives and homeschoolers by offering "simple solutions for a more joy-filled life."

This article originally appeared at .

Why You Might Be Unknowingly Surrendering This Vital

Position in Prayer

Like most people, I love the book of Daniel for many reasons, not the least of which it is only 12 chapters long. Yet, within those 12 chapters exists enough mystery, supernatural experience and foundational doctrine to spend an entire lifetime studying without completely mining its depths. Most believers are familiar with some of the events that take place within Daniel if only from the children's storybooks they read in Shabbat or Sunday school. The book contains the "Fiery Furnace," "The Handwriting on the Wall," "The King's Dream of the Statue of Four Kingdoms" and "The Den of Lions."

However, within the book, in the middle of these supernatural events is a key to why these events took place and the key to have the supernatural take place in your life when you are under spiritual attack.

As this amazing book begins, we are introduced to Daniel and three other Jewish men: Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, who had been taken as slaves to Babylon from Jerusalem. These four men are the key figures in each of the events mentioned above.

As the events unfold, we find these four faithful followers of G-D living among a pagan people under the authority of a pagan king. From the very outset of the book, we find the faith and commitment of these men being tested by those around them.

In Daniel 1:5-16, we find the four Israelites rejecting the king's delicacies and instead choosing to follow the dietary laws found in the Torah. Their faithfulness to G-D's commandments not only provided health and wellness, but as we read in verse 17, it appears that as a result of their faithfulness, G-D blessed them: "As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in every *branch of* learning and wisdom. And Daniel had understanding in all *kinds of* visions and dreams."

The next test comes in Chapter 3, when the king sets up a golden statue and commands everyone to bow down and worship the statue when music would play. The punishment for not worshipping was being cast into a fiery furnace. The response of Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah is found in Daniel 3:17-18: "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if *He does not*, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up."

In Daniel 3:28-29, we read that the result of this faithfulness was that instead of Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah worshipping the false golden statue, the king worships the G-D of Israel.

Then Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him. They have defied the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. Therefore I make a decree that every people, nation, and language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill, because there is no other God who can deliver in this way."

The next test takes place in Daniel 6, and it is in the details of this test that we find a supernatural resource that Daniel understood. It was the key to his victories and will, if implemented, provide the key to your victories over the spiritual attacks of the adversary.

In Daniel 6:5-10, Daniel's adversaries have devised an attack against him. They have convinced the king to decree that for 30 days, nobody could pray to any other god or man than the king. Rebellion against this decree would result in the guilty

being thrown into a den of lions.

In Daniel 6:10, we read both Daniel's response and the key to his victories.

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house. And his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled on his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously."

Daniel didn't simply pray as a result of the decree. His prayer wasn't a prayer of response or reaction to the actions of the king and those who had come against him. Daniel's prayer was a continuation of his committed prayer life. In other words, Daniel didn't change because of what the king did. Daniel refused to change because of what the king did. Daniel, even though he was a slave in a foreign country and was far away from Jerusalem and the Temple of G-D, remained consistent in his service to G-D. He knew that he could not participate in the Temple services and sacrificial system, so he stopped what he was doing at the time of the sacrifices and prayed. In other words, while he could not do everything, he did everything that he could to observe the commandments of G-D.

In other words, Daniel's prayers kept him in a spiritual connection with the sacrificial system that provided atonement. The deliverance over the enemy's attack came because of the faithfulness of these four men. They were able to be faithful because, through prayer, they kept in connection with the sacrificial system.

So what does this mean for us today? The truth is that the key is exactly the same. We should be as consistent in our prayer life as Daniel was—for the same reasons. If we want to be victorious against our enemy's attacks, we have to remain connected to Yeshua as our perfect and complete sacrifice.

Daniel wouldn't even let the threat of a den of lions keep him from praying. Yet, it seems that in our lives, we, without even the threat of lions, willingly surrender the power of dedicated daily prayer connection simply because we are too busy to pray. Then we wonder why it seems we are losing the spiritual battles in our lives and continue to fail when tested. If we can learn to be consistent in our prayer life no matter what, we will find that at the end of every battle and test is victory, just as Daniel's consistent prayer life brought victory in Daniel 6, which ends with this proclamation of victory by the king:

I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel. "For He is the living God, enduring forever; His kingdom shall never be destroyed, and His dominion shall be forever. He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian (Dan. 6:26-28).

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Eric Tokajer is author of *With Me in Paradise, Transient Singularity, OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry and #Man Wisdom: With Eric Tokajer.*