

5 Ways to Become a Prayer Warrior

We are living in one of the most uncomfortable times I've ever known. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought the world to its knees. Workplaces are closed, and the global economy teeters on the edge of collapse while everyone shelters in place. Fear is spreading faster than the virus itself.

In April, I asked the Holy Spirit to help me understand what's going on and how the church should respond to this crisis. As I prayed in the spirit, I sensed He spoke to me: "Remember Rees Howells—and pray like he prayed."

Rees Howells was a humble missionary who established the Bible College of Wales in 1924. During the years leading up to World War II, he led his students to pray for the defeat of dictators like Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. They also prayed fervently for Allied forces during the Battle of Britain, Dunkirk and D-Day.

Before his death in 1950, Howells became a model of what prayer can accomplish. Like Daniel, Ezekiel and Elijah, Howells believed God can use one person's faith-filled prayers to change history. And like the apostle Paul, Howells taught that Christians must engage in intense spiritual warfare against invisible demonic forces.

Biographer Richard A. Maton wrote: "Rees Howells was taught by the Holy Spirit that any person, government or international situation that hindered the spread of the gospel would become a legitimate target to be challenged and defeated through intercession. It was the Lord's will for the gospel to go to every person, and anything that got in the way of God's plan had to be confronted."

If there were ever a time in history when we need the faith of

Rees Howells, it's 2020—when dark spiritual powers are conspiring to stop the next great spiritual awakening. Our comfortable Western churches cannot hope to defeat this enemy. We must become a praying church again.

I don't feel qualified to be an intercessor of the same caliber as Rees Howells, but I'm asking God to train me for battle. Are you willing to be a spiritual warrior? Here are a few ways to begin:

Become more aggressive. When Elisha told King Joash to take arrows and strike the ground in preparation for a battle, the king halfheartedly hit the ground only three times. Elisha said, "You should have struck it five or six times. Then you would have stricken Aram until you had finished them" (2 Kings 13:18-19). Too often we get small victories because we don't pray with enough intensity.

Ask big. We can limit what God wants to do by praying in a puny way. Rees Howells and his small band of prayer warriors in Wales asked God to remove Adolf Hitler from power. We must stop being so timid and begin to ask for global miracles.

Combine fasting with prayer. There are certain spiritual obstacles that need an extra push. When speaking of a demon that needed to be cast out, Jesus told His disciples: "But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Matt. 17:21). With all of us sheltering in our homes, this is the perfect time to fast and pray.

Do a night watch. There are moments in our lives when the Lord may woo us to spend time with Him in the night hours. Many of us are too distracted by the busyness of life to hear God call us to a season of prayer. Yet the Lord is looking for people who will listen to His battle secrets. Will you let Him pray through you?

Go to the depths of prayer. People who have allowed God to use them in intercession know certain situations require travail.

The apostle Paul also knew this level of agonizing travail, and he told the Romans the Holy Spirit “intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Rom. 8:26b). Too often we are too busy, too lazy or too distracted to venture into this realm of selfless intercession.

When Rees Howells engaged the spiritual forces operating in Nazi Germany, he said: “This is the battle of the ages, and victory here means victory for millions of people.” We, too, must know that millions of souls are hanging in the balance. If we really want the world to find Jesus in the midst of this dark crisis, we must allow the Holy Spirit to pray through us in a deeper, messier and noisier way. Please enlist now.

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