

How to Harness Divine Energy to Pursue Your God-Given Dreams

In 1909, a young Leonora Wood volunteered to go to the Appalachian Mountains to teach in a one-room mission school. There, in the impoverished town of Del Rio, Tennessee, she became something of a living legend thanks to her deep faith in the power of prayer. Leonora knew how to turn dreams into prayer and prayer into dreams, and she believed we must step toward our goals in God's presence through prayer.

Raymond Thomas was a foster teen who often stopped at Leonora's cabin in his knee-high clodhoppers to talk with her as she sat on the front porch shelling peas or darning socks. Raymond's seemingly impossible dream was to go to college.

Raymond asked Leonora to offer a "dreaming prayer" for him, and her prayer went like this: "Father, you've given Raymond a fine mind. We believe you want that mind to be developed, that you want Raymond's potential to be used to help you lift and lighten some portion of your world. Since all the wealth of the world is yours, please help Raymond find everything he needs for an education."

But she wasn't done.

"And Father, we also believe you have even bigger plans for Raymond. Plant in his mind and heart the vivid pictures, the specific dreams that reflect your plans for him after college. And oh, give him joy in dreaming—great joy."

I'm happy to share that Raymond Thomas did make it through college in four years, working 12 jobs to support himself and graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree, cum laude at that. He also served in World War II and later settled in

Vienna, where he earned a Ph.D. in physics. He went on to visit 60 countries, master multiple languages and network with some of the most important people in Europe through his job with the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission.

Years later, Leonora's daughter, Catherine, wrote Raymond that she was coming to Europe. When Catherine arrived in Rome, she found officials ready to show her sacred sites few tourists can access. In Florence, she was taken to the top of the dome of the Duomo. In Venice, a gondola awaited her. Catherine realized her childhood friend was known across Europe.

When they finally met in Vienna, Raymond told her, "The fact that I could sit on your front steps and—with no money at all—dream of going to college and achieve it, proved something to me. Very simply, what your mother said was true—any right dream can be realized. And prayer helps you know if it is right and gives you the power to stay with it."

No matter the hour or the circumstances, pray! As God begins to give you impressions and thoughts about your future, commit them to Him in serious, ongoing prayer. Many Christians have forgotten how to pray earnestly and with fervor. When did you last pour yourself into an earnest season of prayer? We get too busy, don't we?

E. M. Bounds was a 19-century pastor who wrote inspiring books on the subject of prayer. Every page is so convicting I can only read him in small doses. "How vast are the possibilities of prayer!" Bounds declared. "How wide its reach! What great things are accomplished by this divinely appointed means of grace! It lays its hand on almighty God and moves Him to do what He would not otherwise do if prayer were not offered. Prayer is a wonderful power placed by almighty God in the hands of His saints, which may be used to accomplish great purposes and to achieve unusual results."

Prayer is the divine energy that brings the power of God into

the plans He gives you, but you must learn to pray with fervor, persistence and faith. I don't know any shortcut for this. God guides His children as they learn the joy of praying to Him night and day.

*This is an adaptation of Dr. Jeremiah's upcoming book, Forward. **Dr. David Jeremiah** is among the best-known Christian leaders in the world. He serves as senior pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church in El Cajon, California, and is the founder and host of Turning Point. Turning Point's 30-minute radio program is heard on more than 2,200 radio stations daily. A New York Times bestselling author and Gold Medallion winner, he has written more than 50 books.*